



NOVA SCOTIA AQUACULTURE REVIEW BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: *Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act, SNS 1996, c 25*

- and -

NSARB-2025-001: Public Hearing on Application for Boundary Amendment for Marine Finfish Licence/Lease AQ#0814x and New Marine Finfish Licence/Lease AQ#1430 and AQ#1431, WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership, Whycomagh Bay, Inverness County, Nova Scotia (the "**Application**")

Affidavit of Donald Davis affirmed on February 19, 2026

I affirm and give evidence as follows:

1. I am Donald Davis, of Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. I am the General Manager of Aquaculture of the Applicant, WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership ("**WFN**").
2. I have personal knowledge of the evidence affirmed in this Affidavit except where otherwise stated to be based on information and belief.
3. I state, in this Affidavit, the source of any information that is not based on my own personal knowledge, and I state my belief of the source.

Professional Background

4. I hold a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) from St. Mary's University (1985) and Executive Master of Business Administration from the University of Fredericton (2019). I have professional experience in operational management, financial oversight, and regulatory accountability. A true copy of my CV is attached as **Exhibit A**.
5. My professional background also includes senior executive and financial management roles within First Nations organizations, government economic development agencies, and private-sector operations. I have extensive senior leadership experience across aquaculture, commercial fisheries, and Indigenous economic development. I have direct operational oversight experience spanning hatchery, marine farming, and processing operations, as well as broad responsibility for commercial fishing enterprises.

Employment with We'koqma'q First Nation & WFN

6. I began working with We'koqma'q First Nation in May 2014 as the Director of Corporate Services. At that time, I held the position through a contract with Grant Thornton. In December 2014, I transitioned into the same role as a direct employee.
7. From 2014 to 2022, I held various roles with We'koqma'q First Nation and WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership ("**WFN**"). In 2022, I left my role as Chief Executive Officer with We'koqma'q First Nation.
8. My previous roles with We'koqma'q First Nation and WFN are as follows:
 - (a) Chief Executive Officer – Commercial Operations and Development (Jan 2021 – Jun 2022): I was responsible for WFN's commercial operations, including aquaculture and commercial fishing activities, as well as oversight of the security company and gas bar operations.
 - (b) President, WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership (Apr 2020 – Jan 2021): Reporting to the Chairman of the Board, I was accountable for operations at the hatchery, farm, and processing plant. I also oversaw WFN's commercial fishing operations, including groundfish, lobster, elver, crab, shrimp, and redfish.
 - (c) Chief Operating Officer (Feb 2016 – Apr 2020): Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, I was responsible for all commercial operations of WFN.
 - (d) Director of Corporate Services (May 2014 – Feb 2016): I oversaw finance, commercial fisheries, information technology, and reception for WFN.

WFN's Operational Personnel

9. In May 2025, I began my role as General Manager, Aquaculture and am responsible for all We'koqma'q First Nation's aquaculture operations, through WFN. The aquaculture operations include the trout aquaculture sites in Whycomomagh Bay (the "**Farm**"), the hatchery in Big Falls, NS, and the processing plant in Aberdeen, NS (collectively, the "**Trout Operation**").

10. My responsibilities include, but are not limited to, oversight of aquaculture operations, production oversight, staff management, and implementation of farm management and compliance systems.
11. I ensure that WFN's Farm operations are conducted safely, efficiently, and in compliance with regulatory and environmental requirements, while supporting workforce development and long-term economic sustainability for the We'koqma'q First Nation community.
12. Anthony Philips of We'koqma'q First Nation is WFN's Farm Manager. He has six years of operational experience with WFN, and has held significant leadership experience within the community, including many years sitting on Band Council. A true copy of his CV is attached as **Exhibit B**.
13. In 2018, WFN retained consultant, Melissa Rommens, of Sustain Aqua, as a biologist, to provide science advice for the Farm operations, regulatory compliance and certification development. This is an ongoing consultancy.
14. In May 2025, WFN retained consultant Jeffery Nickerson of MJ Aqua Services Inc., to provides strategic, operational, and regulatory support to WFN to advance its aquaculture development, sustainability objectives, and long-term operational capacity. His current engagement is structured as an ongoing consultancy, providing advisory and management services on an as-needed basis to support farm operations, training and mentoring staff, regulatory compliance, project development, and other management services.
15. WFN's organizational chart for the Farm is attached as **Exhibit C**.

History of WFN's Trout Operation

16. WFN's investment in the Trout Operation was part of a long-term strategy to develop business opportunities capable of generating independent revenue within the community for the benefit of the Band members. As government funding for the community continued to decline, expanding into aquaculture became essential to support community initiatives.
17. The goal of WFN's Trout Operation is to achieve financial stability, sustain meaningful employment for its community members, and build a vertically integrated fishery that can

endure for generations. While the lease and license for site 0814 also provides for the cultivation of salmon, WFN has no intention to cultivate salmon at the Farm.

18. From the beginning, WFN's goal has been to create a fully integrated aquaculture system. Today, that vision has been achieved, with a trout farm, hatchery, and processing plant all under one operation. The Band's total capital investment is approximately \$15 million.
19. The key milestones of WFN's Trout Operation are as follows:
 - (a) Marine sites 0814, 0845, and 0600 in Whycomomagh Bay were among the earliest marine aquaculture leases issued in Nova Scotia.
 - (b) 2011: We'koqma'q acquired sites 0814, 0845, and 0600, and began fish farming. It partnered with another company to operate the sites. Early operations involved We'koqma'q providing infrastructure and labour while the partner company handled day-to-day operations and brought the product to market.
 - (c) 2014: Construction of the processing plant began, intended to service the partner company operating the Farm.
 - (d) Mid-2015: The partnership arrangement ended for the Farm, and We'koqma'q First Nation took over the operation of the Farm.
 - (e) 2015: We'koqma'q First Nation formed WFN, which assumed full ownership and operation of the Farm and processing plant.
 - (f) January 2018: WFN acquired a hatchery, Big Falls Fish Growers in Wolfville, NS, to secure fingerling supply and complete vertical integration of the Trout Operation.
 - (g) 2019: WFN began operating experimental site 5010, which overlaps the requested commercial site 1430.
 - (h) 2020: A fillet line was implemented at the processing plant.
 - (i) 2021: WFN began operating experimental site 5013, which overlaps the requested commercial site 1431.

- (j) March 2021: The processing plant completed its BAP (Best Aquaculture Practices) Certification Audit.
 - (k) 2022–2024: Automated feed barges were purchased in 2022 and became fully operational in 2024.
20. Recent photographs of the Farm are attached as **Exhibit D**.
 21. WFN acquired Big Falls Fish Growers in Wolfville, NS, to control juvenile production for its Trout Operations. WFN has implemented significant upgrades to the hatchery, including but not limited to: bulk oxygen storage; two boiler units for improved hatchery water temperature control; a tractor for farm operations; and is in its second phase of significant water treatment and distribution upgrades for conversion to a water re-use system.
 22. The primary focus of these upgrades is to enable the production of larger fish for distribution to the marine sites and thereby reduce the time required in the net pens.
 23. Since the original Development Plans were submitted in 2019, the processing plant has undergone a 2000 sq ft expansion; the roof to the pre-existing section of the building has been replaced; external storage facilities, including cold storage have been added; and a state-of-the-art Baader 581 fillet machine has been installed and commissioned.
 24. Most recently, the processing facility purchased a vacuum system to add to the pin-boning machine. Additionally, a new raw material weighing system that gives enhanced yield capability was added, along with new heading and gutting machines.
 25. WFN now has the facilities and infrastructure for egg to plate production of high-quality steelhead trout. It has made, and plans to continue to make, significant investments in infrastructure to do so.

Trout Operation Provides Local Employment

26. As a rural First Nation, We'koqma'q has limited local employment opportunities. The Trout Operation has significantly impacted the community by creating stable jobs for members unable to travel for work. The community population is approximately 1,100 members.

27. Historically, community members were bused to other communities for work. For example, to the crab plants in Cheticamp and Arichat.
28. The Farm directly employes 31 people. These employees include a General Manager of Aquaculture, Farm Manager, Operations Manager, Security team, Compliance and Data Lead, Technical Maintenance team, Harvesting & Logistics team, Feed team, Dive and Underwater Maintenance team, and Operations team.
29. Each of the three marine sites is vital to ensuring the security of employment at the processing plant (28 employees) and the hatchery (7 full-time and 4 seasonal employees).
30. In total, WFN's Trout Operations employs 70 people as follows:

	Employment	Total Employees	First Nation Employees
Processing Plant	The schedule depends on harvest availability. The goal is to operate and provide full time employment 9–10 months per year.	28	23
Farm	Staff work full-time for 10 months each year, with a smaller crew working through winter.	31	28
Hatchery	Staff are employed full-time year-round and seasonally.	7 full-time 4 seasonal	0

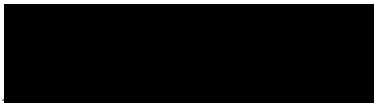
31. Our Trout Operations have provided opportunities for training and hands-on experience in technical fields including wastewater management, machinery maintenance, diving, feed operations, site maintenance, boat operation, and computer software.
32. Photographs of WFN's employees at the Farm and processing plant are attached as **Exhibit E**.

Economic Contributions to Nova Scotia

33. In addition to provide full time employment for We'koqma'q community members, the Trout Operation also supports local companies and contributes to the provincial economy.

- 34. WFN retains local contractors (welders, carpenters, others) and suppliers of general merchandise to support the finfish operations. The scale of these requirements will reflect the scale of the Trout Operation.
- 35. Fish feed is purchased from Skretting in New Brunswick to meet the requirement that the feed will be BAP certified in order to assist WFN's goal of achieving four-star BAP certification. Eggs are purchased from an international supplier since there is no local supply.
- 36. A 2019 economic impact study of the aquaculture industry, presented by Michael Foster at the Sea Farmers Conference, concluded that 1.55 indirect jobs result from every person directly employed at an aquaculture operation. That study suggests that an additional 104 indirect jobs depend on the success of WFN's Application. Combining the 70 jobs that are directly tied to WFN and the estimated indirect jobs (108), this represents a total impact of 178 jobs, mostly in rural Nova Scotia.
- 37. I make this affidavit in support of WFN's Application and for no improper purpose.

VIRTUALLY AFFIRMED before me in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on MS Teams, with Mr. Davis in Sydney, Nova Scotia on February 19, 2026.


A Barrister of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court


Donald Davis

DAVID A. BARRY
A Barrister of the Supreme
Court of Nova Scotia

**WFN Application re AQ#0814x, AQ#1430,
AQ#1431 in Whycomomagh Bay, Inverness
County**

This is Exhibit A referred to in the Affidavit
of Donald Davis, virtually affirmed before me
on February 19, 2026.



A Barrister of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court

DAVID A. BARRY
A Barrister of the Supreme
Court of Nova Scotia

Donald Davis

Email: [REDACTED]

Education:

- 2016-2019** **University of Fredericton**
Executive Masters of Business Administration
- 1986-1990** **Atlantic Provinces Association of Chartered Accountants**
 Enrolled as a Student in Chartered Accountancy where I took courses towards a Chartered Accountant designation. All courses in the Program were successfully completed with exception of Advanced Audit.
- 1983-1985** **Saint Mary's University**
 Bachelor of Commerce (Major: Accounting)
- ### Experience:
- 05/25-Present** **General Manager, Aquaculture**
 Responsible for Aquaculture Operations at Waycobah First Nation.
- 09/22-05/25** **General Manager**
United Paving and Concrete Limited Partnership
 Responsible for the overall operation which includes both the manufacture and installation of concrete and asphalt.
- 01/21-06/22** **Chief Executive Officer- Commercial Operations and Development**
Waycobah First Nation
 Responsible for the Commercial Operations of the Band. This includes all Aquaculture and Commercial Fishing activities. In addition responsible for the Band's Security Company and Gas Bar operations.
- 04/20-01/21** **President, WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership**
Waycobah First Nation
 Reporting to the Chairman of the Board responsible for the operations of the Partnership which includes the Hatchery, Farm and Processing Plant. In addition responsible for the Commercial Fishing Operations of the Band which includes Groudfish, Lobster, Elver, Crab. Shrimp and Redfish Operations.
- 02/16-04/20** **Chief Operating Officer**
We'koqma'q First Nation
 Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer responsible for Commercial Operations of the Band.

- 05/14-02/16** **Director of Corporate Services**
We'koqma'q First Nation
Reporting to the Chief Executive Officer responsible for the Finance, Commercial Fisheries, Information Technology and Reception areas of the Band.
- 04/11- 05/14** **Controller/Food and Beverage Manager**
Ben Eoin Golf Course Limited/Ski Ben Eoin Limited
Reporting to the Board of Directors responsible for the finance function of the organization as well as food and beverage operations. Duties include the preparation of budgets and monthly and year-end financial statements for the Board. The food and beverage operation includes a full service restaurant, bar, banquet services and mobile cart food and liquor service.
- 07/06 – 02/11** **General Manager**
Membertou Trade and Convention Centre
Reporting to the Chief Financial Officer of the Membertou Reserve Band. Responsible for the operation of a 47,000 square foot convention facility. The operation includes full catering and banquet facilities, concert and special events facilities, a 140 seat restaurant that specializes in steak and seafood and a gift shop operation. Duties also included the preparation of budgets and monthly and year-end financial statements.
- 07/03 - 03/06** **Director of Operations**
Cape Breton Casting
Reporting to the President was responsible for operational, financing and developmental activities related to the operation. This included management of finance and material departments. Cape Breton Casting was a manufacturer of castings for the automobile industry.
- 03/01 – 07/03** **Tesma-Precision Finished Components**
Materials Manager
Reporting directly to the General Manager. Responsible for the purchasing, customer service and shipping/receiving functions of the organization. Precision Finished Components is a manufacturer of automobile components with sales of over \$85 million and purchases of over \$50 million.

- 11/00 - 03/01** **Tesma-Precision Finished Components
Finance Manager**
Reported directly to the General Manager. Responsibilities included management of the accounting and material departments. The job entailed the supervision of all accounting functions in the organization including the preparation of monthly and year-end financial statements for Head Office. Responsible for the purchasing of over \$50 million of direct and indirect items.
- 09/07 – 11/00** **NS Economic Development and Tourism
(Secondment from Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation)**
Acted as a broker for the regional office while liaising with representatives of the private sector, educational institutions, other government departments as well as numerous associations to develop projects and conduct a detailed financial analysis as to viability of the initiative.
- 12/95 – 09/97** **Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation
Director – SME's**
Under general direction, promoted ECBC's and ACOA's programs within priority sectors identified in strategic business plan. Reviewed and recommended project evaluations. Coached and provided leadership to officers. Allocated work loads and managed the directorate's activities while at all times delivering a high quality of service. Encouraged the development and promotion of business opportunities with prospective individuals/companies/partners, including municipal, provincial and federal government departments. Liaised with clients and development officers regarding the status of projects and procedures to ensure timely and efficient delivery programs.
- 02/94 – 12/95** **Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation
Account Manager - Investment/Prospecting**
Acted as a broker and facilitator for the regional office while liaising with representatives of the private sector, educational institutions and other government departments. . Analyzed, evaluated and recommended the type and level of assistance under programs administered by the ACOA and ECBC.

Donald Davis

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- 08/90 – 02/94 Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation
Senior Compliance/Payments Officer**
Inspected the applicants' performance during the construction, installation and production period to ensure continued compliance with ACOA program requirements. Reviewed project claim payments completed by junior compliant payment officers. Responsible for the monitoring of large, complex and sensitive nature ACOA projects
- 10/89 – 08/90 Doane Raymond Chartered Accountants
Compliance/Payments Officer – ECBC**
Contracted to ECBC to perform the duties of a Compliance/Payments Officer on a full time basis. Inspected the applicants' performance during the construction, installation and production period to ensure continued compliance with ACOA program requirements.
- 01/86 –10/89 Doane Raymond Chartered Accountants
Student in Chartered Accountancy**
Responsible for servicing clients in all aspects of tax, audit and accounting procedures.

Additional Training:

- **Workplace Hazardous Material Information Systems**
- **QS 9000/ISO 14000**
- **Statistical Process Control**
- **Team Building Skills**

References:

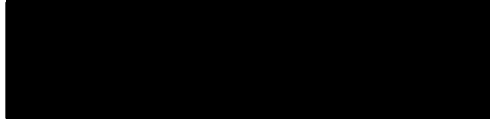
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A Barrister of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court

DAVID A. BARRY
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Anthony Philips



Professional Summary

Experienced aquaculture professional and community leader with over 20 years of operational, governance, and emergency response experience. Proven leadership in farm management, fish health oversight, vessel operations, infrastructure management, and staff supervision. Strong background in Indigenous governance and public service with hands-on operational expertise in marine and heavy equipment environments.

Professional Experience

Farm Manager | Waycobah Fisheries Limited Partnership (2020–Present)

- Provide daily direction and supervision to farm staff.
- Oversee payroll and supply procurement.
- Lead fish health and feed management programs.
- Coordinate harvesting operations.
- Ensure farm infrastructure is maintained to operational standards.
- Oversee required inspections and regulatory compliance.
- Supervise vessel operations and net washing activities.
- Maintain health and safety standards across all operations.

Band Councillor | Waycobah First Nation (2000–2020)

- Provided leadership and strategic direction on Council.
- Guided staff on community and Band initiatives.
- Played a key role in governance, policy development, and decision-making.
- Contributed to long-term community planning and development.

Heavy Equipment Operator | Georgia Pacific (2003–2012)

- Operated excavators, dozers, haul trucks, and other heavy equipment.
- Maintained safe work practices in industrial environments.
- Supported large-scale forestry and industrial operations.

Firefighter / Medical First Responder | Waycobah Fire Department (1996–Present)

- Medical First Responder.
- Jaws of Life operator.
- Ice Rescue technician.
- Respond to emergency incidents and community safety operations.

Core Competencies

- Aquaculture Farm Management
- Fish Health & Feed Management
- Marine & Vessel Operations
- Harvest Coordination
- Infrastructure Oversight
- Occupational Health & Safety
- Indigenous Governance & Leadership
- Heavy Equipment Operation
- Emergency Response & Rescue

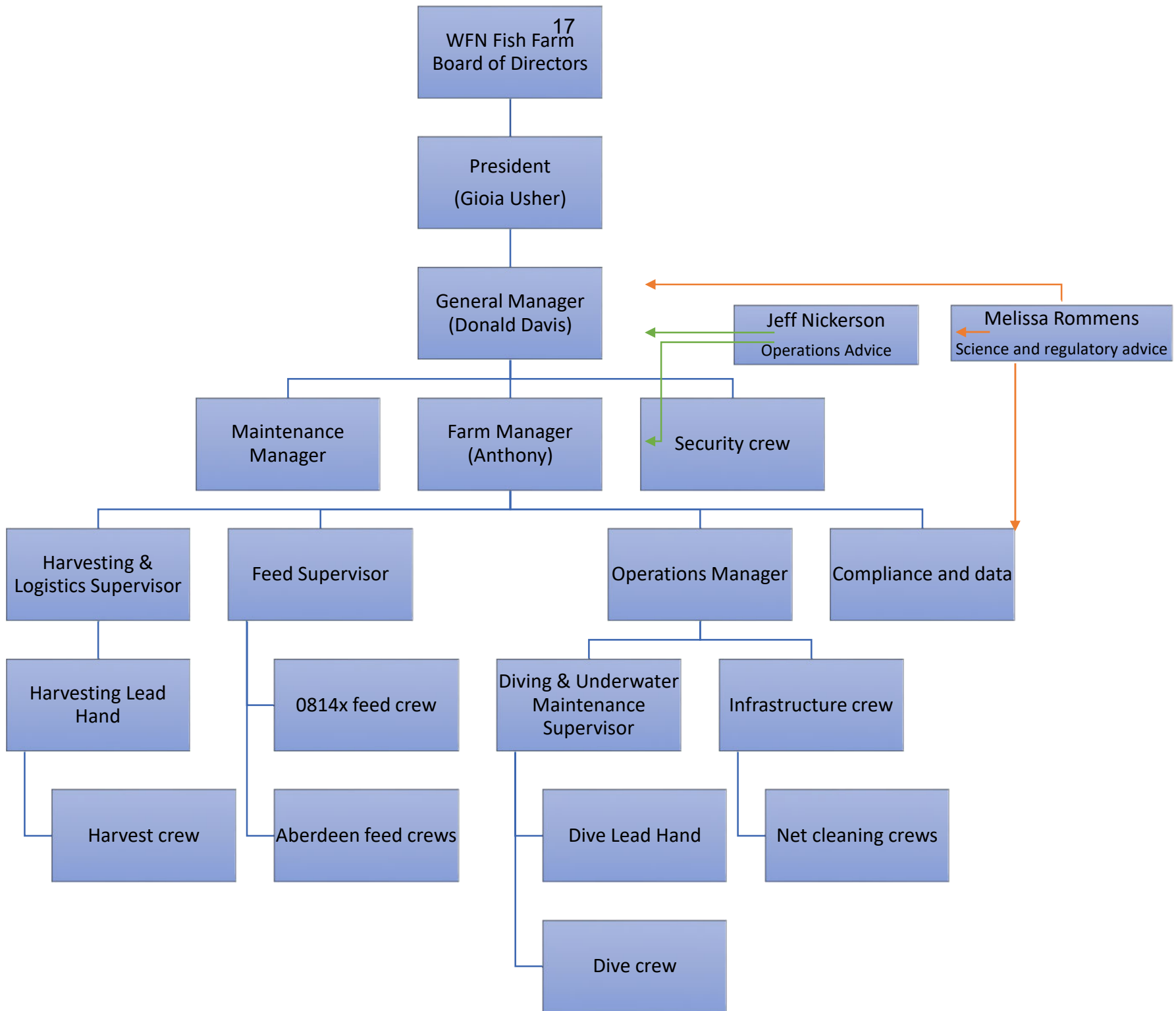
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A Barrister of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court

DAVID A. BARRY
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