



137 Church St., Antigonish, NS, B2G 2E3



Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

P.O. Box 2223

Halifax, Nova Scotia

B3J 3C4

January 3, 2023

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To the members of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board,

I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Claymore Inn and Suites, a hotel, accommodation and conference centre in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. I am also the CEO of the Justamere Café and Bakery. I am also a board member of the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce and the President of the Antigonish Tourism Association.

On behalf of my businesses, I am writing to express my support for Town Point Oysters' lease application for Antigonish Harbour. I do not possess expertise in ecological and environmental issues, but I am satisfied with the research publicly presented by local experts and believe the lease will not negatively impact marine life in the harbour.

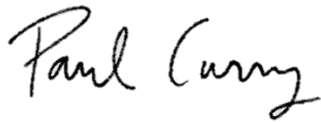
As a local businessperson, I would like to focus on the contribution to community and provincial economic development. I applaud this opportunity to develop aquaculture in the Antigonish region. This is an industry that was specifically highlighted in One Nova Scotia's "Now or Never" report from 2014. More importantly, that report highlighted the

need for an attitude shift towards responsible entrepreneurialism and away from status quo thinking. The current proposal from Town Point Oysters does just this. Nova Scotia's aquaculture industry lags behind our neighbouring Maritime provinces. This proposal is a first step towards rectifying that disparity.

If approved, the proposed lease will bring jobs and economic growth to our community. This means more spending at community restaurants and retail outlets, and a stronger tax base for municipal services. If the lease serves as a demonstration site for new oyster cage technology, the region could also see increased marine tourism, especially in terms of aquaculture research, science and business conferences.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter of support. I look forward to hearing a positive outcome for our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Curry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Curry, CEO

██████████@claymoreinn.com

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Att: Mr Stacy Bruce, ABB clerk

Ref: Town Point Oysters, AQ #1442, AQ #1443 and AQ #1444

- a) the optimum use of marine resources
- b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development

I am writing to lend my support for the proposed oyster farm at Town Point, Antigonish County. I grew up in the area and currently have a property on the ocean nearby as well. The harbour area under discussion is blessed with having a natural occurring ecosystem conducive to such an endeavour! The sustainable nature of the business must also be emphasized as well as the positive economic impact on Antigonish and surrounding area. It's my understanding that less than 2 % of water area would be utilized. I'm very surprised that another party hasn't pursued this up to this point in time. Let me also state, for the record, that Ernie Porter has fastidiously maintained an open door policy to any and all from the beginning regarding informing/educating any who were willing to listen to what he was proposing. It will be a great and unnecessary oversight if the opportunity for Antigonish that Mr Porter is offering is stymied! Thank you for your time!

Paul MacLean

[REDACTED]

Bedford, NS

[REDACTED]

From: [Susan Vincent](mailto:Susan.Vincent@Antigonishcounty.ca)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](mailto:Aquaculture.Review.Board@Antigonishcounty.ca)
Cc: Mary.MacLellan@Antigonishcounty.ca; Donnie.MacDonald@Antigonishcounty.ca;
Hughie.Stewart@Antigonishcounty.ca; Shawn.Brophy@Antigonishcounty.ca; Remi.Deveau@Antigonishcounty.ca;
Owen.McCarron@Antigonishcounty.ca; John.Dunbar@Antigonishcounty.ca; Gary.Mattie@Antigonishcounty.ca;
Harris.McNamara@Antigonishcounty.ca; Bill.MacFarlane@Antigonishcounty.ca
Subject: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444
Date: February 8, 2023 8:12:26 AM

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

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[REDACTED]
Harbour Centre, NS
[REDACTED]

8 February 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board.

I am writing with respect to the oyster farm for Antigonish Harbour being proposed by Town Point Oysters. I live on Town Point and my property is close to Mr. Porter's and to the proposed oyster-growing facility. He informed me at an early stage about his plans and has proved to be transparent about its aims, responsive in addressing concerns, and eager to answer any questions I have received extensive information from him in person, and more is available on a public website. I am writing to express my support for this project and envision two major benefits: 1) this is a productive enterprise that will contribute to the economy of Antigonish and provide good jobs; 2) oysters will improve the water quality in the harbour.

With respect to the first point relating to the economic impact, the situation relates to a current topic of interest of mine in my research (relating to Section 3, factor b of the Aquaculture License and Lease Regulations). I am an academic, with my research location outside of Canada, but have been studying issues related to the economy of rural areas in the context of what is called "post-production" – that is, the transition away from direct production from farming, fishing, mining or similar activities. Primary production activities are being pursued by fewer people and have often vanished or almost vanished in different regions. This frequently means that youth and adults have to migrate elsewhere to pursue a livelihood, unless some alternative is found. Tourism and amenity migration (that is, either retirees or second home owners who seek a pleasant area) are often turned to in places such as Nova Scotia that offer attractive natural surroundings. That creates jobs in the tourism and service

sector, but these often do not provide an adequate living for all those from this area. Hence, there has been significant out-migration of working age adults across a spectrum of job categories, from primary industry to tradespeople to those with professional education.

The proposed project cannot address all of these, but does constitute one countercurrent that can keep some of those people in this area. The possible future BOBR factory would bolster the local economy even more. The spin-off effects on other aspects of the economy and consequent ability to maintain local residential and transportation infrastructure are a significant contribution. Far from being in conflict with tourism and amenity migration, the evidence from many places from PEI to France shows that oysters constitute an additional attraction.

With respect to the second point, I am also in support of the project on environmental grounds (relating to Section 3, factor a of the Aquaculture License and Lease Regulations). I have accessed published academic reports and consulted with colleagues with expertise in this area at St. Francis Xavier University. The evidence shows that oysters provide more benefits than potential dangers. Antigonish Harbour has been closed to shellfish collection for years because of polluted water due to run-off from septic systems and farming. Oysters filter water and have been deployed, for example in New York, to clean the water. In contrast to other proposed development I have heard suggested for this area over the years, such as natural gas exploration or fin fish aquaculture, oysters offer a highly attractive alternative.

I am an enthusiastic kayaker and most often, I kayak from home on the harbour (relating to Section 3, factor e of the Aquaculture License and Lease Regulations). I have paddled among oyster cages in various places (e.g., Shediac Bay, PEI) and do not find them troublesome. The type of cage being used in the Town Point operation, the BOBRs, are also in Merigomish Harbour where I have paddled. They are low profile, only visible at close range, and easy to navigate. I do not anticipate that it will impact my kayaking here.

Antigonish needs more viable economic opportunities for working age adults. The oyster operation will help support a thriving community that is dependent on too few employers with limited job options.

Thank you for your attention. I wish you the best in your deliberations.

Sincerely,

Susan Vincent

Susan Vincent
Department of Anthropology
St. Francis Xavier University
PO Box 5000
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2W5

From: [Susan Ross](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#); Sean.Fraser@parl.gc.ca; [Premier](#); [REDACTED]@gmail.com; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; owen.mccarron@antigonishcounty.ca; mary.macieilan@antigonishcounty.ca; donnie.macdonald@antigonishcounty.ca; hughie.stewart@antigonishcounty.ca; shawn.brophy@antigonishcounty.ca; Remi.deveau@antigonishcounty.ca; gary.mattie@antigonishcounty.ca; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca; bill.macfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca
Subject: Proposed oyster farm AQ 1442, 1443, 1444
Date: February 10, 2023 10:48:10 AM

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As some of you are already aware, I am opposed to the oyster farm proposed by Mr. Ernie Porter and Town Point Oysters. Unfortunately, since the announcement of the ARB hearing, we are all part of, and probably cannot now avoid, escalating controversy on the subject of the oyster farm.

Please note, my opposition is not:

1. a NIMBY issue, my property is on Pomquet Cove, kilometres from the proposed lease sites and I only boat infrequently in the outer harbour;
2. an anti business issue, being anti business would, in my view, be ridiculous however I would note that even the most pro business advocate would surely not claim that any business, proposed by any business man in any location is necessarily desirable just because it is a business;
3. a general opposition to oyster farming, which I agree can potentially bring net benefits, particularly i) where there are well understood environmental/ecosystem issues with water quality that oysters may help address, ii) where there are few good alternative economic opportunities for resident populations and iii) where there is strong support of local communities -- I would argue none of these conditions apply in the case of Antigonish to the degree needed to support an enormous (by NS standards) oyster farm in the outer harbour.

My opposition is a result of dismay with the application quality with its unsupported (and in some cases demonstrably incorrect) claims as well as its dismissal, as unimportant, of the interests of other users of the harbour. As examples, contrary to various application statements:

1. There certainly is potential for negative environmental effects -- the scientific consensus seems to be that there is potential for both negative and positive effects, and that effects (including any net effect) are site and operation specific. Given the lack of data specific to Antigonish harbour and its ecosystem functioning nobody can predict what the net environmental effect here will be. To say the environmental effects on the harbour will be "positive or at worst benign" is neither supported in the application nor by any science I am aware of.
2. The community consultation, said to have resulted in high levels of community support, was conducted very poorly relative to best, even good, consultation practice. I would also argue the description of consultations in the application misrepresents results (non respondents to Mr. Porter's contacts are presumed not to have an issue, 'no concerns' is interpreted to mean support as opposed to neutral, comment forms were mostly done before any public project description was provided, very prejudicial language is used to describe activities of FOAH, etc.). Meetings were first held privately, one on one, and there is, admittedly anecdotal, evidence that different things were said to different people. It was not until the first public

meeting at St. FX that the full project description was presented orally to the public, which was essentially when opposition started to gain some momentum as it became clear to the community for perhaps the first time how large the project was intended to be. The Lakevale meeting was held at very short notice (advertised in the Casket two days in advance) in a location up to 45 minutes by car from northern South Side Harbour residents most heavily affected by the project and until a revolt on the part of attendees, Mr. Porter refused to answer questions publicly. He subsequently reported in the application that most of the questions came from FOAH members however video records show that this is incorrect -- perhaps it would be more accurate to say that most questions indicated scepticism.

3. Employment and business benefits are exaggerated and in part reflect expectations that Mr. Porter will be permitted to build a depuration plant, market his technology, sell services etc., potentially industrializing Town Point. The application claims a fourth year employment level of 11 full and seasonal staff, but this is not staff for the oyster farm alone, but for the oyster farm plus associated businesses. The application notes tax benefits to the county -- perhaps the county is best placed to judge the net effect relative to potential residential properties on the 20 or so undeveloped properties around the outer harbour? I am also wondering about a net tax effect more broadly, noting that Town Point has also been granted (note, not leant) by the Government of Canada \$100,000 to build the land based nursery.

4. The health and safety of commercial and recreational boaters is not addressed (Porter has said he will have no liability insurance in this regard).

5. The application does not consider potential effects on existing and planned other economic uses of the harbour, basically communicating there are none, either through not mentioning them or dismissing them as minor. There certainly are businesses and people who depend at least in part on the harbour as it is, including tourist operators, property developers, residential construction workers, "recreational" fisherman who feed families with catches, property owners who periodically rent (including Mr. Porter himself), etc. The application is apparently unaware of academic literature and local real estate people that/who refer to reduction of property values in face of shellfish farms and associated infrastructure in rural but populated non industrial settings ("we see no indication this has occurred associated with previous lease approvals in other regions"). It is not at all clear how competing economic uses would eventually net out, but to ignore/dismiss the issue is not transparent.

6. I could go on (the net effect on climate change will be negative according to Mr. Porter when queried, although he has a "desire to work toward carbon neutrality", there is nothing on equipment resiliency relative to extreme wind speeds which are only expected to get more extreme in the future, the Community Liaison Committee is remarkably non representative of project stakeholders, there is cherry picking of quotes from/misrepresentation of academic literature and scientists, etc.)

I am prepared to support the above (anecdotal information aside) should you have any questions.

The bottom line is simply that i) the withdrawal of a valued public resource for a private business for a project with significant potential for negative environmental, social and economic impacts is patently unfair (should Mr. Porter be able to support his claims of net positive impact I might change my mind); ii) understandable spin notwithstanding, community trust of/confidence in an undertaking such as the proposed oyster farm depends on community engagement that is transparent, timely and supported by evidence, which I believe have been lacking throughout this process.

If you got this far, thank you for reading.

Regards,

Susan Ross

[REDACTED]
Antigonish County NS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@gmail.com

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Susan Ross

Email: [REDACTED]@gmail.com

Cell: [REDACTED]

Grand Pass Oysters Ltd.

NSARB-2022-WRT-007

February 10, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To Whom It May Concern:

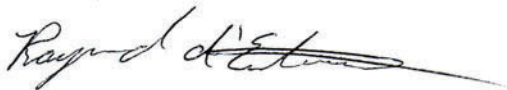
As per instructions included in the Notice of Public Hearing, I wish to submit the following statement to be considered by the board.

- A) Full Name; Raymond Louis d'Entremont
- B) Civic Address; [REDACTED] Nova Scotia [REDACTED]
- C) Application numbers- AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Factor A) Town Point Oysters wants to use 2% of the harbour to create a sustainable local food source. These sites would provide employment and support a great number of businesses in the region. Should the fisheries in the region suffer unfavorable times, this industry could provide much needed employment for these displaced workers. It is an environmentally friendly venture, and will help feed and expanding global population, and play a role in healing marine ecosystems in a sustainable way. Oysters filter their environment, allowing for more light to penetrate to the bottom. This allows for better environment for marine habitat.

Factor B) Aquaculture provides employment in area such as: processing plants, offices, labs, hatcheries, system/cage building, maintenance, supply and service areas. The growth of aquaculture in the region will promote the region as a place to do business, and a place to visit. With Town Point Oysters Inc. plans of creating new jobs plus a few million dollars of addition GDP. Also, with the BOBR technology aspect Town Point Oysters Inc. would further add jobs and GDP within Antigonish if the farm is approved.

Sincerely,



Raymond d'Entremont



From: [Christopher Murphy](#)
To: [Christopher Murphy](#)
Subject: Antigonish Harbor TPCI oyster farm proposal
Date: February 12, 2023 5:23:41 PM

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To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing as former residents of Antigonish and on-going summer residents of Mahoney's Beach to oppose the commercial oyster farm proposed by TPCI in the protected and environmentally fragile entrance to the ecologically important Antigonish Harbour. Our property has been in our family for over one hundred years, and we value and respect the increasingly fragile and threatened coastal environment that we share with abundant and diverse wildlife, swimmers and boaters and both recreational and professional fishers. Until now they have coexisted in harmony in this relatively small body of water at the mouth of the harbour, maintaining a delicate balance between human and natural usage.

The proposed location of a large commercial oyster fishery in the midst of this small delicate eco-system will have a profound and negative impact on both the natural environment and the recreational freedom enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. This is an already protected public space of significant environmental and recreational value and to allow a privately owned commercial oyster farm to operate in its midst goes directly against both existing environmental policy and public interest. There are many suitable locations for such an operation, but this is clearly not one. The harbour already has government mandated restrictions against things which would be far less damaging and intrusive than a commercial oyster farm.

We would add that climate change and its recent impact on the integrity of Mahoney's Beach needs to be seriously factored into any decisions regarding this proposal. The beach that protects the harbor is experiencing dramatic physical erosion and threatens the area proposed by the oyster farm. Minimally this would require a further environmental assessment as to the future impact of such changes on the destructive potential of an oyster farm in an unstable and changing natural environment.

For these reasons we are opposed to the licensing of this particular proposal for this particular location. Protecting the tranquil beauty and environmental integrity of our natural harbour environment depends on your decision.

Thank you,

JoAnn MacKinnon and Chris Murphy

[REDACTED], Harbour Center

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

The ARB letter I drafted, shows my opinion on how it relates to and applies to the 8 factors ARB considers for an application. Each respective statement in my letter is categorized to show relation to the below factors.

- a) the optimum use of marine resources,
- b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development,
- c) fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation
- d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation
- e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation
- f) the public right of navigation
- g) the sustainability of wild salmon
- h) the number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation

Antigonish Harbour is a unique estuary in Nova Scotia. This estuary supports a wide range of biodiversity for our oceans and holds a vast amount of marine resources. Surrounded by farmland this estuary has a variety of threats of eutrophication. With natural shellfish populations and eelgrass in decline (2021) *Managing Aquaculture and Eelgrass Interactions in Nova Scotia. Centre for Marine Applied Research (CMAR)*, signs of eutrophication are becoming more evident in the harbor. (factor d)

I met with Town Point in May 2022. They gave a tour of the Land based nursery and walked us around the site to explain the proposed development. Ernie and his sons are genuine people, they are innovative and intelligent. It was evident that they went above and beyond to make a positive impact on the area.

Shellfish aquaculture is one of the most sustainable food production methods. Positive impacts such as nutrient filtration, economic prosperity, job creation, and natural food sources make shellfish aquaculture sustainable and a positive use of marine resources. PEI and New Brunswick have capitalized on this and built sustainable industries, creating positive environment and economic impacts for the communities. Nova Scotia lags in production accounting for less than 4% of total shellfish production in Atlantic Canada (*Fisheries and Oceans Canada (2020)*). This farm will create local jobs, and GDP growth for Antigonish. (factor a)

Looking at potential areas for shellfish farming in Nova Scotia, Antigonish harbor is one of the best suited locations. Town Point is uniquely positioned to manage this site. They have considered the locations to be less impactful to the local boating routes and local water use (factor e, f). Being a natural entrepreneur and an innovator, Ernie connected with local oyster farmers, and through their collaboration created the company DockPort. Through this development, new methods and technologies have been created that have the potential to improve efficiencies and operations of shellfish farming for not only Town Point's proposed farm, but offering it to other farming operations.. (factor b)

I believe that Town Point, through their shellfish farm, has the potential to make a positive impact on the local economy, the ecosystem and the entire aquaculture industry. Increasing the oyster biomass in the harbor with a shellfish farm will help counteract the effects of eutrophication and improve the biodiversity and ecosystem of it. Eelgrass ecosystems are critical nursery environments for our oceans that need to be protected. With the threats of eutrophication, I believe that the filtering effect of the oysters will improve the nutrient levels and help protect eelgrass from invasive algae growth smothering it out. (factor a,d)

The application process and timeline for approval of low impact shellfish aquaculture activities, in my opinion, is excessive. Throughout my interactions with Ernie, I have always felt that he gives an honest and open approach to his business. I would like to see the same growth here in NS, that other provinces have experienced in low impact Aquaculture. I provide my support for Ernie, his sons and the Town Point team.

Sincerely,

Matt Sawler
[REDACTED] Dartmouth
Nova Scotia [REDACTED]

Sustainable Sea Products Limited

NSARB-2022-WRT-011

From: [Sian Turner](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Industrial Oyster Farm in Antigonish Harbour-TPCI
Date: February 15, 2023 10:47:26 AM

** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE **

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Dear board members,

This is in regards to upcoming hearings on the application presented by Town Point Consulting Inc.

We have been residents, farmers, business operators and woodlot owner/managers along the shores of Antigonish Harbour for over 25 years. We have witnessed various changes over during this time as Route 337 developed, expanded and made the water frontage towards Cape George a very desirable place to live and work and recreate. The traffic volume has increased and so has tourism. Big time.

One of the primary reasons this is so is the pristine nature of the drive from Antigonish to Cape George, lovely spread out communities, cottages along the shorelines, woodlots and wilderness in the hills surrounding. Dairy farms scattered along the good soils of the intervale. Fishing communities and their picturesque warfs in seasonal rotations. Traditional fishing and hunting is scattered throughout the whole multi river systems that empty into Antigonish Harbour.

The other thing we have witnessed in just 25 years is the drastic change in climate chaos and sea level rise. The cuts along the barrier beach at Mahoneys, the rock pile that is now left of the rest of that barrier beach, swept over now by countless storm surges and hurricane winds. We have to retreat from our shorelines or face a very expensive devastating future. The damage from Fiona to warves and docks and infrastructure is an insurance nightmare. This is not the place for any kind of fish farming, shellfish or other, the environment is too fragile, temporary even. Captains Island will one day be the frontage to St. George's Bay.

We have land along the harbour and also along a wild harvested oyster lease that has been in operation for 15 or so years. You would hardly know it was there save for a diving man and his boat occasionally harvesting or moving the seed around. It is a very non invasive method that makes the most of the ideal conditions in some parts of the harbour for oyster propagation and harvest. They are then cleaned in open Atlantic waters where there is a flow and low risk of red tide toxins. There are enough oysters taken from these wild leases to supply a good part of the provincial consumption I would think.

I am totally and vehemently opposed to the proposed Industrial scale, invasive oyster farm that has been well under way in the past few years from illegal non permitted activity on public lands to assuming approvals with seed facilities and future processing plans. It will fundamentally change the harbour and the benefits are really hard to see beyond lining a small family's pockets and serving an elite consumer. All on the back of the common lands. I say NO to this venture, NO to all the gear, NO to the ways TPCI has conducted business and misled the public.

I want you to hear my voice, I do not think open pen fish/shellfish farms of this sort are the future of the fishing industry. There are so many uncontrollable problems that we see happening daily in the destruction of our natural habitats. Closed systems could fill the protein needs of a growing province without spoiling our nest as we are. We cannot keep taking and taking and taking, please do all you can to stop this from going any further.

We are elders now but speak for the younger amongst us. This is not good for the community or the environment and the company involved is not good for the society of the harbour. They have a very poor track record in my estimation so if something goes wrong I have no trust this company will take the community interest's or concerns seriously. Their motivations are self oriented and once established will be sold to the highest bidder who will no doubt want to expand. Do not let this cat out of the bag please!

Sincerely,

Sian Gwynne Turner and Richard Turner

[REDACTED]
Harbour Centre, NS, [REDACTED]

“Dod yn ol at fy nghoed”

Welsh for “to return to my trees” (to return to a state of balance)

Acknowledging that I live in Mi'kma'ki the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

Mitchell MacInnis

Little Judique Oysters

[REDACTED]

Port Hood NS [REDACTED]

February 12th 2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing a letter of support for Town Points proposal for lease sites AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444. I've had the privilege to be invited to visit Town Points site area on multiple occasions. I got to know Ernie and Jane Porter over this time, they are both a wealth of knowledge in the aquaculture field and submersed themselves in the industry over the past number of years, in which they have gained a great deal of insight in aquaculture especially oyster farming. Having these committed individuals involved in the industry will not only help grow oyster farming in Nova Scotia, but they will be a great asset to oyster farmers in our region.

From my point of view Antigonish harbour is an ideal location for oyster farming. With an active oyster lease in the area, it proves that the great flow, salinity and size of the harbour goes to show that this area is more than capable of supporting the proposed lease sites, with very little impact on the grand scale of things. With only taking up a small percentage of the harbour the proposed number of oysters to be grown will impact the health of this estuary in a very positive way. With Town Points knowledge of farming and the introduction of their BOBR system, I am confident that these lease sites will be one of the safest and most efficient farms in Nova Scotia.

With very limited industry in the area, I believe Antigonish would benefit greatly from Town Points oyster farm economically. Inputting potentially a few million dollars a year through their farm and the production of the BOBR system will create good paying jobs and supply a top quality product, which is a priority to Town Point, will only improve the local economy.

Thank you for your time.

Mitchell MacInnis

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@hotmail.com

From: [Sheilagh Hudon](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: opposition to Antigonish Harbour oyster farm proposal
Date: February 16, 2023 12:25:42 PM
Attachments: [ARB draft 2.docx](#)

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To: The Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

Re: TPCI Applications 1442, 1443, 1444

Dear Members of the NS Aquaculture Review Board,

We are writing to oppose the applications (1442, 1443, 1444) by Town Point Consulting (TPC) for a license to farm oysters in Antigonish Harbour. Our residence is immediately [REDACTED] of the Porters' residential property and two of the proposed aquaculture sites (1442 and 1443). Our extended family has lived in Antigonish and Antigonish County for over 200 years, with homes currently in town, Jimtown, Mahoney's Beach, Terra Tory Drive, Southside Harbour and St. Andrew's. We have owned our home in Southside Harbour since 1999. We are active users of the harbour and believe that there are a number of problems with the application.

The proposed sites are environmentally sensitive and the beaches, Mahoney's and Dunn's, that protect the harbour are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The shallow water depth and the presence of eel grass, especially at the #1443 site, make the locations questionable for intense oyster farming. Also, the scale of the proposed operation may have a serious adverse effect on the migration of aquatic species, including salmon.

The locations of the proposed sites are in the busiest part of the harbour. Not only will the sites affect the natural beauty of the harbour but they will encroach on navigable waterways and will impede use of the area by numerous power boaters, sailors, kayakers, canoeists, fishermen, etc.. These activities are an important part of how we have used the harbour for decades. A commercial oyster operation as proposed would be a gross misappropriation of this resource for the benefit of one family.

The proposed sites are very close to the mouth of the harbour and subject to storm damage as evidenced by the recent Hurricane Fiona in September 2022. During the storm, our property, on the downwind side east of the sites, suffered tree and property damage; we lost our dock and had a beach covered with waste from the harbour. We hesitate to think of the potential damage if thousands of oyster cages had been subject to the storm.

From our house we look directly across the harbour at the Porters' property on historic Town Point, which has always been a residential area. If TPC operates its oyster farm from their property, which seems likely since they currently operate their spat hatchery from their property, Town Point will be industrialized. The road servicing Town Point is approximately 2.7 kilometers long, all of which is gravel and much of which is one lane wide. This industrialization would affect the residents on Town Point and others along the road servicing

Town Point. Other residents with locations similar to our property will also be affected. The scale of TPC's operation will create noise and disruptions on the water and traffic, noise and commercial disruptions on the Porter property. This type of industrialization is foreign to the harbour and frankly unacceptable to many residents along the harbour shore.

Harvesting oysters from Antigonish Harbour is a good idea. We support the existing wild oyster fishery which has unobtrusively and sustainably fished wild oysters for many years. We are opposed to the TPC proposal for many reasons: environmental, limitations to our use of the harbour, the potential jeopardy from storms, the industrialization of Town Point, destroying the beauty and function of our harbour, and the misappropriation of a common resource for the benefit of one family. We request that you, without reservation, decline the TPC application.

Yours truly,

Sheilagh MacKinnon Hudon and William Hudon

[REDACTED]

Southside Harbour, NS [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-015

From: [Bill Shaw](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk. Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ1443 and, AQ#144
Date: February 22, 2023 10:16:42 PM

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

Dear Stacy Bruce,

I am writing in support of the proposal by Town Point Oysters to grow oysters in Antigonish Harbour.

As a retired Master of Science (Biology, Acadia 1977) I would like to go on record as supporting the Porter Family's application to establish an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour.

I have been familiar with Antigonish Harbour for many years, kayaked its waters, walked its shores, and conferred with biologists at St. Francis Xavier concerning its ecosystems. I am also familiar with the viewpoints of the Friends of Antigonish Harbour who oppose the establishment of an oyster farm within the harbour. After much cogitation, it appears to me that the Friends of Antigonish Harbour have no valid concerns opposing an oyster farm beyond aesthetics. They simply want to preserve a pristine, wholly untouched, Antigonish Harbour. Although a laudable prospect, the Friends of Antigonish Harbour are at least a century too late to prevent the commercial landing of fish just inside the Dunn's Beach Area.

After reviewing the proposed lease sites, I believe there will be nothing visible other than small buoys marking the location of polyester oyster growing containers.

I am submitting my support for the approval of:

AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

a) The optimum use of marine resources, will be enhanced by an oyster aquaculture operation in Antigonish Harbour because as filter feeders there is evidence to show that oysters improve water quality. One adult oyster can filter as much as 50 gallons of water per day. Excess sediments and nitrogen cause problems in the water column. Oysters filter them out and sequester them. Oysters have been beneficial to marine environments for millions of years. Please let that continue.

THE OYSTER IS A SENTINEL OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH IT FEEDS.

What better way to monitor the health of Antigonish Harbour on a continuum?

Sincerely,
Bill Shaw

[REDACTED]

Wolfville, NS

[REDACTED]

Feb 23, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce,

I am writing to confirm my support of the referenced oyster aquaculture marine lease applications. I have lived in Antigonish since 1967 and attended StFx prior. Presently my house overlooks the upper reaches of Antigonish Harbour, and we have a summer home on the shore just outside the harbour.

I have been heavily involved in the Antigonish business community for decades having established, owned, and managed many businesses spanning the hospitality, financial services, retail, and forestry sectors. Through these experiences I understand the value of small business and how it provides essential positive impacts on rural communities. I also agree with Dr. Ivany who has strongly encouraged Nova Scotians to create more opportunity for young people in coastal and rural communities. Town Point's proposed oyster farm is exactly what Dr. Ivany has urged us to embrace.

As an avid angler I have fished and hunted the shores of Antigonish Harbour for over five decades. I am also a longtime board member of the local rivers association – the Antigonish Rivers Association. Our association supports all efforts to improve habitat and water conditions for salmon and trout that traverse Antigonish Harbour to access the spawning beds in the three tributaries. We know Antigonish Harbour struggles with excess nutrient inputs which degrade the healthy function of the estuary. We also know the addition of millions more filter feeding oysters will mitigate some of the negative effects of the excess nutrients and thereby improve habitat for all associated marine species including salmon and trout.

I met the Porters through the public engagement process related to their aquaculture application. Their interest in creating a new business in Antigonish resonated with me and when the opportunity to serve on the Antigonish Oyster Community Liaison Committee arose I applied and was accepted as a committee member. This led to many further interactions and a much greater knowledge of the proposed operation and its potential benefits.

From my experience in the restaurant business, I know that patrons favor local specialties, especially oysters. I believe, with the approval of this oyster farm, local restaurateurs working in tandem with Town Point Oysters could create a significant tourist attraction focused on local seafood, featuring these oysters. PEI did this with Malpec Oysters, we can do it with the Town Point Oysters.

I am convinced the associated economic development is significant and will make a meaningful positive impact on our local economy. Adding ten new jobs and a few million dollars to the GDP of Antigonish County is itself important. However, Mr. Porter's involvement in DockPort Ltd provides another opportunity. DockPort has developed a revolutionary new growth system for oyster aquaculture that outperforms existing systems by a wide margin which would be marketed worldwide from Antigonish if this farm is approved. The DockPort business has the potential to eclipse the financial performance of the farm adding even more economic development in an area that needs more business. DockPort customers would come to Antigonish to see the BOBR growth system in action and to understand if it would work on their farm. This activity would generate direct spinoff business for the local hotels, restaurants and shops. Add to this, DockPort staff supporting sales & marketing, filling orders, providing technical assistance, etc. and it is easy to see this could be very beneficial.

Antigonish needs more employment, particularly for young people. One need only walk down Main Street to understand most non-student residents are of retirement age. Our youth have moved on, we need them to stay and they will only remain here if there are jobs for them. Your decision is an easy call and as Dr. Ivany said, "It's now or never"!

So, please approve the Town Point applications as submitted and let's get the ball rolling.

Respectfully,
Jim Lerikos



Letter of Support for Town Point Oysters (TPO) Aquaculture Proposals AQ #1442, AQ#1443, and AQ #1444**Factor addressed: (a) the optimum use of marine resources**

I am writing this letter to express my support for the TPO aquaculture proposals AQ #1442, AQ #1443 and AQ #1444. I believe that approval of these proposals would significantly contribute to the optimum use of the marine resource of Antigonish Harbour, as detailed below.

I am a food microbiologist and a retired Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) executive. I have over 30 years' experience in regulatory aspects of food safety, with an emphasis on shellfish safety. As Executive Director, CFIA Atlantic Science Branch, I was responsible for food safety laboratories in Dartmouth, St. John's and Moncton. These labs had national mandates for microbiological, chemical and toxin testing of shellfish. Additionally, I have experience in the set-up and evaluation of depuration facilities to address safety concerns in shellfish harvested from marginally contaminated waters. I also contributed to the development of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSP).

During the summer of 2019, I was approached by Ernie and Jane Porter as they began to consider an oyster aquaculture operation in Antigonish Harbour. Exercising due diligence, they sought information about many aspects of oyster aquaculture, including water quality and classification, depuration and relaying requirements and site considerations (point vs non-point sources of contamination, etc.). I visited the Town Point site and Antigonish Harbour in July 2019. Following a thorough tour of the harbour and potential lease sites, and the land location of the proposed operation, I also looked into publicly available information on the harbour.

Based on the physical observations gathered on the tour, as well as Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) classification of the growing waters, the absence of heavy industry in the area, the precedent set by current licensing of oyster harvesters and the regulatory requirements of the CSSP, I concluded that the proposed operation could successfully produce safe aquacultured oysters. Furthermore, I believe that this operation would contribute significantly to the optimum use of marine resources, Antigonish Harbour and oysters within it, which are currently underutilized from this aspect.

I believe this conclusion is consistent with the CFIA statements in the NSDFA Report on the Outcome of Consultations, wherein the CFIA indicates "no concerns regarding the proposed development", with a note that all CSSP requirements must be met to ensure a safe product.

During my conversations with the Porters, I was impressed with the perceptiveness of their questions pertaining to shellfish safety, regulations and aquaculture operations. I believe that their complementary knowledge of engineering and medicine/dentistry positions them well to understand and address the challenges of an oyster aquaculture operation.

I strongly support the TPO proposal for 3 leases in Antigonish Harbour. This operation would not only address the Aquaculture Review Board factor of optimizing use of marine resources, it would also meet the recommendation of the 2014 Ivany Report, that being the engagement of valuable natural resources for the benefit of rural Nova Scotia communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Shaw

[REDACTED]

Wolfville, Nova Scotia [REDACTED]

NSARB -2022 - WRT-018

RECEIVED

FEB 22 2023

NS Aquaculture
Review Board**Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk****Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ1443 and AQ 1444****THE PROPOSED OYSTER FARM DEVELOPMENT IN ANTIGONISH HARBOUR****Date: February 11, 2023**

My partner Hugh MacKay and I own a home with 1,100 feet of waterfront on the Antigonish Harbour where I have resided for more than twenty-five years. Our home is located at the end of Terra Tory Drive, just one road before Seabright Road towards the town.

The proposed oyster farm project had been brewing in our community for several years before I became involved in 2021. I was a latecomer to this process and engaged peripherally with the Friends of the Antigonish Harbour (FOAH) at the outset. Believing that due process had not been properly followed, I wrote a letter and sent it to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, MP Sean Fraser, and to the Antigonish MLA and others in the political realm. I also posted my letter on my Facebook page asking readers to respond as they saw fit.

The results of my initiative unfolded in a way that once again reminded me how important it is to do the research before arriving at any conclusions.

The FOAH have admirably and eloquently taken on the cause to protest the oyster farm. I agreed with many of the points they raised, so much so that I prepared three pages of questions and went to visit the Porters at their home (and site) of their business - Town Point Consulting and the proposed oyster farm for the first time in February of 2021.

My partner Hugh MacKay and I were welcomed by the Porters who gave very generously of their time and patience with our layman questions. We learned that the project has been successful in its application processes to date, and the proper channels have been taken at every turn. We toured the facility on land and viewed the blueprints and diagrams and various and sundry paperwork that supported the project. Most reassuring to me, was the design of the harbour portion of the farm that features rotating cylindrical bins or growth units that are called BOBR (Benefits of Being Round) that barely show from the surface of the water. Ernie Porter, a retired engineer from Halifax has been working with [REDACTED], a veteran oyster farmer, on the design of a new system that has the potential to be an industry unto itself and can dramatically improve conventional oyster farm design and practices that presently can be construed as impractical, labour intensive and unsightly. In the future, BOBR units will be manufactured in Nova Scotia and marketed worldwide.

Following our visit, I asked Ernie for a more detailed description of the BOBR growth system. He wrote;

“We chose a cylindrical form mainly because it would be an easily mechanized and designed economical growth unit we call BOBR (Benefit Of Being Round). It is deployed on two static lines instead of one, which significantly reduces risk of storm loss. The units are suspended by placing one or more of our BOBR floats within the unit. BOBR is more dynamic in response to wave action causing motion that both helps with optimal shell shape and in reducing shading impact on sea plants below. This enables both buoyancy adjustment and very low profile – 2-3” vs 9-16”. With our BOBR system, all husbandry tasks may be conducted on the lease sites eliminating repeated shore trips for tumbling and sorting. Our machine is essentially a floating work platform that we call *Oyster-Matic*. It simply slips under the two static lines and drives slowly along the lines forcing BOBR units to successively rise up a ramp, cross a worktable that runs the length of the vessel, and drop down another ramp back into the water. In a single pass of *Oyster-Matic*, oysters in BOBR units can be tumbled, de-fouled, sorted, or harvested depending on the current task required. This vessel also very easily performs the sinking and refloating operations necessary to avoid winter ice and intense storms. During overwintering, the BOBR lines are weighted and sunk but the growth unit remains buoyant so the area occupied on the seafloor is much reduced and less impactful.

B. As someone who has made her career promoting entrepreneurship and economic development, it was not lost on me that this oyster farm is also a demonstration project that has the potential to become an industry unto itself with far-reaching and positive consequences. In Ernie Porter’s words he explains;

“With this system, the farmer won’t be providing all the physical effort, instead he is operating a machine that is doing most of the work. By using heated seawater for de-fouling instead of the usual air-drying process, this system reduces the task to one minute per unit from the two days currently required in conventional oyster farming practices. Thereby, farm productivity is increased by about 15% while enabling greater frequency of de-fouling for more optimal growth conditions. Tumbling is very quick, efficient, and far less labour intensive, again increasing productivity while enabling more optimal frequency which leads to a higher quality product.

Our preliminary and conservative productivity comparison of the BOBR system to the systems in common use in Atlantic Canada (and beyond) is that each farmer who converts to BOBR, given the same footprint, and with the same labour, will nearly double productivity. BOBR will produce a consistently higher quality product with less effort and less fuel consumption. The environmental benefits from reduced shore trips alone will be significant. Then there are the other benefits of less gear loss, lower visual profile, reduced bird roosting, broader employment recruitment cohort, etc.”

D. It's also important to mention that oysters feed on plankton which is naturally overabundant in the harbour. No added feed is necessary – as in salmon farms. Oysters can actually help purify the water.

The nursery portion of the oyster farm sits in front of the Porter home in Seabright. It consists of a double layer of 11 concrete cylinders – for a total of 22, that are no more than 3'-6" feet in height. Porter told us;

“My chosen path, after much due diligence is to leverage the natural ecological benefits of filter-feeding oysters by providing this industry with growth systems that minimize labour and carbon inputs while improving productivity and product quality.

We plan our farm to be both a model of sustainability and a demonstration site for the BOBR growth system that may become an integral component of an industry headed in a very positive direction.

Our land-based nursery was constructed last summer and ran on a trial basis throughout the fall. It is now ready for a production run this season. The nursery relies on two electric water pumps to flow water through the silos containing oyster seed. It is a flow-through system with no feed or treatments added. The oyster seed filter suspended solids from the water and that water flows safely back into the harbour. We plan to build sufficient solar capacity to enable this facility to run without carbon inputs. At this point, all the carbon sequestered in the growing shells will be a net benefit and in a small way push back on global warming.”

Further to this, the Porters have landscaped the area with a long hedge of rose bushes to help block the view from the harbour.

This is consistent with the home they built employing fundamental sustainability principles. Their home gains energy efficiency with a ground source geothermal heating system, fluid to fluid heat pumps, and in-floor radiant heating. Porter told us that he is one of a growing majority who believe in climate change and the dire consequences that follow. He explained that his challenge, broadly speaking, is to try to do something about it.

I have actively encouraged everyone who has concerns about this project, to visit the Town Point facility before taking a stance either for or against the farm. I was impressed the Porters also chose to establish a *Community Liaison Committee* with the aim of demonstrating transparency in the process and establishing positive community relations. It is a forum for the community to access relevant scientific facts about the operation and to provide feedback to the company – Town Point Consulting. The CLC publicly posts responses to community feedback and concerns on their website. The formation of the CLC follows the provincial guidelines for the formation and operation of a CLC. This is a solid place for citizens to voice legitimate concerns. Hugh and I have since attended some of the public forums and found them to be professional and inclusive.

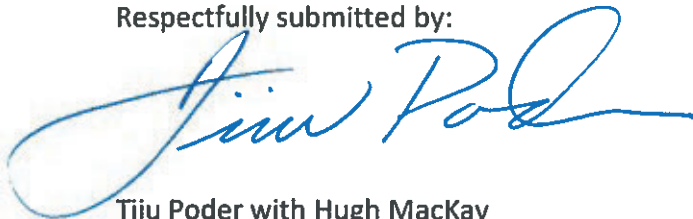
A. In the big picture, oysters are food that people consume. Antigonish Harbour has an abundance of oysters. But they can't be readily consumed because the harbour is too toxic in its natural state due to years of run-offs. TPC employs a system that naturally detoxifies the oysters and in so doing also helps to cleanse the water. We see this is a great benefit to us personally as in the past, I have experienced negative health effects from swimming in the harbour.

D. E. F. Natural resources are the mainstay of our economy in Nova Scotia. Relative to the size of the harbour, the oyster farm will occupy less than 2% of its area leaving 98% of the harbour unencumbered. It's important to mention that Antigonish harbour is very shallow in parts which poses a danger to some boaters who aren't experienced with the waters. I have seen numerous motor boats and sail boats run aground over the years that I have lived here. As a result, boating on the harbour is somewhat limited to kayaks and canoes. We enjoy kayaking and canoeing on the harbour and are certain that the oyster farm will not pose any problems to our navigation of the waters. The BOBR growth units are spaced such that one can kayak through them if they choose to do so. I do not doubt that we will continue to enjoy the beauty and function of our harbour.

There is also an unspoken concern among some of the residents that their property values will be negatively affected by the oyster farm. I do not agree with this presumption as the visual impact will be limited to a relatively small and otherwise shallow area that is not close to the waterfront areas of home owners other than the Porters themselves.

In conclusion, I believe we are a community that welcomes opposing views constructively and with kindness all the while keeping our eye on future prospects that will enrich our province and lead us forward. Innovation is at the forefront of positive economic development for Nova Scotia but not at any cost. When we can be assured that environmental impacts are mitigated with excellent technology then that is the way to go.

Respectfully submitted by:



Tiiu Poder with Hugh MacKay

[Redacted]

Antigonish, NS [Redacted]

[Redacted]@ [Redacted]

[Redacted]

February 13th, 2023

A. Palmetter
 [REDACTED]

Halifax, NS
 [REDACTED]

NS Aquaculture
 Review Board
 FEB 17 2023
 RECEIVED
 WRT-019

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
 6th Floor, World Trade & Convention Centre
 1800 Argyle Street, P.O. Box 2223
 Halifax, NS
 B3J 3C4

RE: Antigonish Harbour Oyster Farm

I am writing to express support for the application by Town Point Oysters for an oyster farming enterprise in Antigonish Harbour.

I am familiar with the topics which are the purview of the Aquaculture Review Board, and I will address each of them in this letter, but before doing so, I believe an overarching issue deserves a few words.

Antigonish Harbour is a special place; it is clean and serene. It has been unsullied by human activity, including the small scale oyster harvesting by divers. It is a very large body of water, even by Nova Scotian standards, and from an economic activity perspective it is next to barren. While it is important that we protect our coastal areas we need to not do so with policies which prevent, or severely restrict economic activity. In this significant Harbour, we have severely restricted economic activity, to the point where it is effectively absent. Town Point Oysters has presented a proposal which addresses this in a thoughtful and environmentally sensitive manner and in my view, they deserve your support.

With that preamble, I will attempt to succinctly address each of the eight factors that are subject to your review:

1. Optimum use of Marine Resources

The primary use of the marine resources in Antigonish Harbour is recreational, and seasonal, with a focus on the summer season. It has not benefited from any other use, particularly any with an economic purpose.

2. Contribution to the Community and Provincial Economic Development

The large Harbour is capable of providing economic support to the Province and Community in addition to its recreational value and I am unaware of any other applicant who proposes to provide this contribution in a manner that complies with the Provincial and Federal Regulatory regime.

3. Fishery Activity in the Public Waters Surrounding the Proposed Aquaculture operation

There is modest activity including small scale harvesting of oysters in the Harbour, and boats which fish outside the Harbour that tie up in it's shelter, but there is no fishery activity that will be negatively effected by the proposed oyster farm.

4. Oceanographic and Biophysical Characteristics of the Public Waters Surrounding the Proposed Aquaculture Operation

The character of the public waters will not be chemically or biophysically harmed by oyster farming. Harm may result from damaged or broken fishing gear resulting from storm action, and it should be a condition of a license that should this occur, it be corrected at the earliest opportunity by the license holder.

5. Other users of Public Waters Surrounding the Proposed Aquaculture Operation

A group of local residents dislike the idea of any activity interfering with their recreational enjoyment of this area. They also don't like the potential encroachment on their views of the Harbour. Not liking the proposal is not grounds for ARB rejection. The proposed oyster farm will occupy a very small portion of a very large Harbour, and can exist without negatively impacting the public's, and especially the immediate neighbours, quiet enjoyment of these waters.

6. The Public Right of Navigation

The siting of the proposed oyster farm has gone through a lengthy public process which has concluded with a location that has minimal to no impact on the right of navigation.

7. The Sustainability of Wild Salmon

The proposed oyster farm will have no impact on the sustainability of wild salmon.

8. The Number and Productivity of other Aquaculture Sites in the Public Waters Surrounding the Proposed Aquaculture Operation

The addition of the proposed farm to Antigonish Harbour will not negatively effect any other aquaculture site in this Harbour.

As I wrote in my opening sentence, I support Town Point.

If the interests of the group of local residents who see this project as an unfair restriction on their use and enjoyment of Antigonish Harbour deserves to take precedence over a very benign economic enterprise then Town Point's application should be rejected. This is the only factor of the eight subject to your review which presents any reason to reject the application. No other factor provides a reason to reject.

I do not believe this is a sufficient reason. I believe that a level of economic activity can co-exist while providing reasonable public access and enjoyment to a public waterway.

I trust you will agree with me, and will approve Town Point's application.



Aubrey Palmeter

RECEIVED
NSARB-2022-WRT-020
FEB 17 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax
NS B3J 3C4

NS Aquaculture
Review Board

22nd January 2023

WRT-020

To whom it may concern,

In his seminal article, "Shellfish Farming", Martin Llewellyn, Professor of Molecular Ecology at the University of Glasgow (UK), treats the broad issue of the destructive, wasteful and unsustainable practice involved in catching shellfish. His argument is clear: shellfish should be FARMED. The history of shellfish farming in Europe is a long and interesting one, and he points out that oysters, which are filter feeders, do not pollute but actually clean waters. Significantly, the North Sea, now silty and turbid, was "once clear and bright" perhaps because its bed was at one time paved with oysters. In his view, shellfish aquaculture, specifically oyster farming, is not only ecologically sound, it goes far to clean the marine habitat, rendering that habitat a richer, nourishing environment for a broad variety of marine life.

We have been to Mr Porter's property and have spoken at length with him about what he proposes to achieve. He has explained the detail of the engineering technology, and has shown us the oyster nurseries and their operation. As a result of his careful exposition and openness, we can see absolutely no reasonably based objection to his proposed oyster farm. Indeed, it would appear to be economically beneficial for the broader community of Antigonish and for the province of Nova Scotia.

The siting of Mr Porter's oyster farm has a small footprint and would cause little inconvenience to the boating public in their necessarily small craft in the shallow waters of Antigonish Harbour.

For further discussion on the regenerative efficacy of oyster farming, see Martin Llewellyn "Shellfish Farming" in "The Marine Quarterly" 47 (autumn 2022), pp. 93-97.

Yours sincerely

Martin Llewellyn
Penny J. Cole

Captain Martin LM Smith
Doctor Penny J Cole

██████████, ██████████
Annapolis Royal, NS ██████████

email: ██████████@yahoo.com

RECEIVED

NSARB-2022-WRT-021

FEB 22 2023

NS Aquaculture
Review Board

████████████████████
Halifax, Nova Scotia, ██████████
3 February 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

WRT-021

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Dear Board Members:

I am writing to express my strong support for the approval of the lease application submitted by Town Point Oysters (TPO) to establish an oyster aquaculture farm in Antigonish Harbour. Although my wife and I live in Halifax, we have deep connections to the area and continue to spend a great deal of time on Antigonish Harbour. We are well acquainted with the area, its environment and, most relevant to this application, the various points of view regarding aquaculture in the harbour.

The harbour already is already home to some aquaculture activities, including oyster harvesters and fishers in the harbour and proximate lobster fisheries in Lobster Fishing Area 26A. All these entities have a profound interest in preserving the environmental quality of Antigonish Harbour and its environs. Other area residents too are sincerely invested in preserving and enhancing the well-being of the harbour.

I have personally participated in two community consultation sessions (there have been others as well) hosted by TPO and am well familiar with its website, as well of that of the principal opponent to the application, the Friends of Antigonish Harbour (FOAH). It is apparent that TPO has invested considerable time and effort in investigating the science of oyster aquaculture and its environmental efficacy. Its efforts have included outreach to respected experts and scientists to validate its conclusions that oyster aquaculture in Antigonish Harbour is not only environmentally sustainable, but also a substantial net benefit. Indeed, TPO has freely shared these findings at community consultation sessions and on its website <http://www.townpointoysters.com>. Furthermore, TPO has taken the feedback provided from all its community consultation sessions and various subject-matter experts to address any issues raised and further refine its application. To further expand this transparent and on-going communication process TPO also established an arms-length Community Liaison Committee (CLC).

Alternatively, the FOAH has resorted to the use of rhetoric that is alarmist in tone and without citing specific sources to challenge the TPO application. Indeed, what are offered on the FOAH website as conclusions are most often inferences from uncited sources and without context. In a video link embedded on the FOAH website, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcSrf1C7smA&t=58s>, entitled "Where the Waters Meet", spokespersons assert that TPO is not committed to communicating with the community and is not transparent. A documented record of TPO's community consultations, individual outreach efforts, creation of the CLC, and detailed replies to concerns on both the TPO and CLC websites clearly refute these FOAH assertions (respectively, <https://www.townpointoysters.com/responses> and <https://www.antigonishoysterclc.com/responses>).

I know the TPO proponents personally and can attest that they are sincerely community-minded, highly invested in affirmative environmental stewardship, and dedicated to making a positive and enduring commitment to the Antigonish area. Insinuations that they are indifferent to health of Antigonish Harbour, the lands surrounding it, or the welfare of fellow residents are utterly without foundation and, to me, offensive. They too live on the shores of Antigonish Harbour and would never undertake any project that would imperil it. I have a well-founded and unwavering faith in the integrity of TPO's principals.

If you would like additional comments, please feel free to call upon me.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Geoff Atkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Geoff Atkinson

Kell's Enterprises Ltd.
[REDACTED]
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
[REDACTED]

RECEIVED
FEB 6 2023
**NS Aquaculture
Review Board**

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Att: Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ # 1442, AQ# 1443, AQ# 1444

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Robb Kell and I am writing this letter because I feel quite strongly that Town Point Oysters (TPO) is a great addition to the business community of Antigonish and surrounding area. I began my relationship with town point consulting and Ernie Porter in 2014 when he approached me about a project in Malignant Cove, N.S. My company, Kell's Enterprises Ltd., has been working for Town Point ever since. We have done excavation and piping work for TPC since this time on a regular basis. We have also worked for TPO since May of 2020. So in my opinion TPO has already contributed to the economic benefit of the community. When TPO was building their nursery I had two extra laborers on staff working for TPO.

On a personal level, I own a small pleasure boat that my family and I use to explore St. Georges Bay and Antigonish Harbor. It is my opinion that the oyster cages will not affect my enjoyment of the harbor in any way, either in my navigation of the harbor or my visual enjoyment of the beauty of the harbor and surrounding area.

In closing, it has been a very positive personal and professional relationship with Ernie Porter and his family. I hope that they are successful in their oyster farm and enjoy a long and happy relationship with the people and businesses of Antigonish and surrounding area.

Sincerely

Robb Kell, Owner
Kell's Enterprises Ltd.

NSARB-2022-WRT-024

From: [Mel Doiron](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Re: AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 (Town Point Oyster Farm)
Date: March 7, 2023 7:50:34 PM

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My address is

[REDACTED]
Pictou NS [REDACTED]

On Tue, Mar 7, 2023, 7:44 p.m. Mel Doiron <[REDACTED]@gmail.com> wrote:

I have had the opportunity to review the Town Point Oyster Farm permit information, the concerns raised in regards to the operation and the responses given to address these concerns.

I was given a tour of the facility and was given information on the operation indepth.

- I am an avid kayaker, have lived on the southside of the harbour for a summer, used the harbour on small craft and have experienced and observed the boat traffic in the area. I can not foresee any impact to public navigation by these leases.

-The farm will contribute to community economic development by creating new jobs and revenue to the community.

- This farm will create a sustainable local food source, which is needed, as highly demonstrated in the last few years by the shipping issues caused by the pandemic. Promoting local agriculture is part of the Nova Scotia government initiatives. This farm factors in as one of those local food sources that should be promoted.

-The farm will improve water quality given that oysters naturally filter water. There is no detrimental effluent created.

-The proprietors are innovative, hard working people that will run the farm efficiently with the least impact to the community, the harbour and the environment.

I can be reached at 902-[REDACTED] or at [REDACTED]@gmail.com, if you have any questions or concerns.

NSARB-2022-WRT-025

From: [joanne.gillis](mailto:joanne.gillis@antigonishns.com)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Re: AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 Town Point Oyster Farm
Date: March 7, 2023 8:42:23 PM

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After visiting with Ernie Porter and family, discussing and reviewing information on the Town Point Oyster Farm, these were my conclusions as follows:

1. No environmental impact.
2. Economically feasible.
3. Little impact on navigational waters.
4. Technological advances.
5. All Permits, Provincial / Federal environmental studies done.
6. Job opportunities for the community.
7. Visual appealing.
8. New design Oyster cages.
9. Open to public for viewing/Transparency
10. Enjoyed the tour of the farm/family home, amazing people and great entrepreneurs!

Best Regards

Joanne Gillis

[REDACTED]
Antigonish, NS

[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPad

Alycia MacDonald

** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE **

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To whom it may concern,

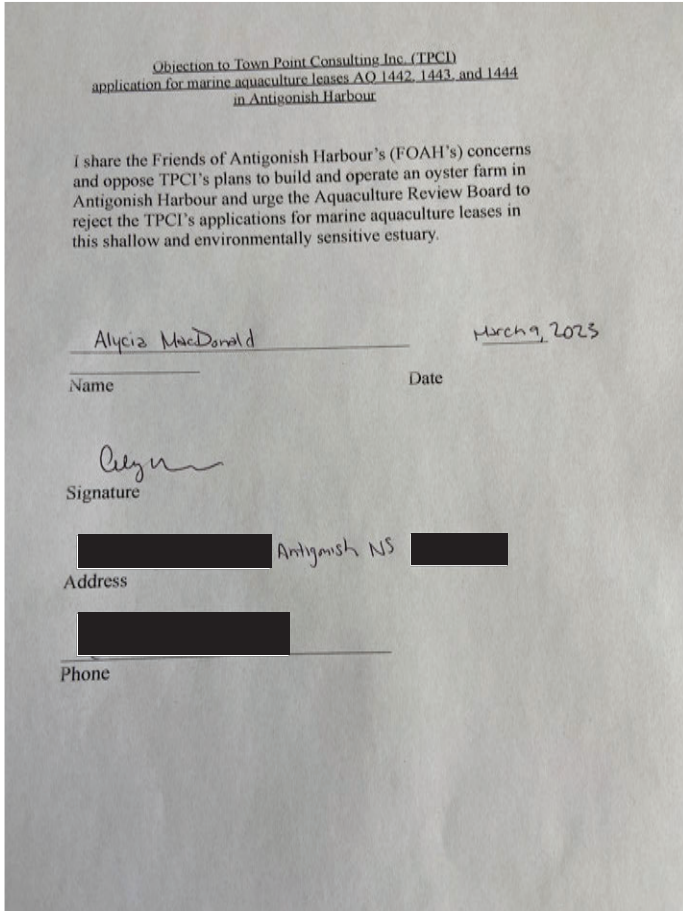
I strongly object to TPCI's application for marine aquaculture leases in Antigonish Harbour

TPCI submitted a list of full time and seasonal residents in the area and their feelings towards their application (I am seasonal) I am not feeling "more positive" about it, and Mr Porter did not even spell my name correctly in the list (he spelled it Alyshia) I strongly oppose and urge the Aquaculture review board to reject the applications

Thank you,

Alycia MacDonald
Seasonal resident of Seabright Road

Sent from my iPhone



Objection to Town Point Consulting Inc. (TPCI)
application for marine aquaculture leases AQ 1442, 1443, and 1444
in Antigonish Harbour

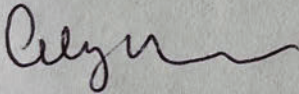
I share the Friends of Antigonish Harbour's (FOAH's) concerns and oppose TPCI's plans to build and operate an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour and urge the Aquaculture Review Board to reject the TPCI's applications for marine aquaculture leases in this shallow and environmentally sensitive estuary.

Alycia MacDonald

March 9, 2023

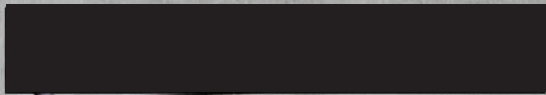
Name

Date



Signature

 Antigonish NS 
Address


Phone

NSARB-2022-WRT-027

From: [Graham Oakley](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point Consulting Inc AQ#1442 AQ#1443 AQ#1444
Date: March 9, 2023 10:50:41 AM
Attachments: [Town Point Consulting Inc ARB Letter of Support March 2023.pdf](#)

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Dear My Bruce

Please see attached Letter of Support for the above noted ARB application and associated file references.

If you could respond to this email indicating receipt of the letter, that would be most appreciated.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Regards

Graham



Graham Oakley | V.P. New Construction

1 d'Entremont Road
Meteghan River, NS BOW 2L0

Office: 902.645.2327 Fax: 902.645.2174

Cell: 902.778.1789

Email: graham@aft.ns.ca

Web: www.aftheriaultboatyard.com



Please fill out our survey below

[Customer Satisfaction Survey](#)



1 d'Entremont Rd, Meteghan River, Nova Scotia, B0W 2L0 CANADA
Phone: (902) 645-2327 Fax: (902) 645-2174 Web: www.aftheriaultboatyard.com

March 6, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Attn: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Re: **Town Point Consulting Inc, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444**

To Whom it may concern

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our Letter of Support for the above noted Town Point Consulting Inc. and their application to the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board. Our support applies directly to Factor 'B' – ***The contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development.***

A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd (AFT) is a family-owned shipyard located in Meteghan River, Digby Co, NS and has been in continuous operation since 1938. The shipyard began building wooden fishing vessels for the local fleet and today operates a modern shipyard building and refitting vessels in steel, aluminum, composites and advanced composites. Being located in rural Nova Scotia, AFT has a long and proud history up supporting the marine industry in Nova Scotia, with thousands of vessels built and refitted over the past 85 years. Today, AFT employs over 200 full time skilled trades people, engineers, Naval Architects and support staff and is considered a major employer in South West Nova Scotia and a strong supporter of companies and individuals who also operate in rural NS communities. The Theriault family, now 4th generation, have always believed that a strong NS economy necessitates a strong and diversified rural based marine industry and this same fundamental theme is reflected in Town Point Consulting Inc. core beliefs.

In early 2021, AFT was approached by Town Point Consulting Inc. (TPCI) to develop and refine a vessel design for processing and harvesting oysters that would be specifically suited to operate using their BOBR technology. As the BOBR technology is unique in design and operation, so to must the vessel that utilizes this oyster farming technique. As well, it was a critical requirement that the vessel be very energy efficient and present the lowest possible environmental impact as well as be ergonomic for the crew and safe to operate. As the BOBR technology is designed to be exported to other similar oyster farm operators, the vessel design had to be functional for all users of the BOBR technology. The development of the vessel has proceeded over the past 2 years, including several site visits, conference calls and emails and today the design has reached a point of refinement where production can proceed.

The development by TPCI to successfully implement and expand the BOBR technology and market the farming process and associated vessels to other potential clients will have a direct impact on AFT and our rural community by creating long term sustainable employment for trades such as welders, electricians, mechanics as well as spin off benefits for material and equipment suppliers and trucking/ shipping companies.

In summary, A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd shares a common belief with Town Point Consulting Inc. that creating long term sustainable economic activity in rural Nova Scotia is vital to the economic health of not only their local communities but also the broader economic health of the Province of Nova Scotia. A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd fully supports the economic goals and ambitions of Town Point Consulting Inc. to develop and implement their BOBR technology and we look forward to a long term partnership with them in the future.

Should you require any further information or clarification in regards to this Letter of Support for Town Point Consulting Inc, please feel free to contact me at any time regarding this matter.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graham Oakley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G' and 'O'.

Graham Oakley
VP New Construction
A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd

NSARB-2022-WRT-028

From: [darrel.beaton](mailto:darrel.beaton@gmail.com)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: TPCI's Oyster Lease Application
Date: March 11, 2023 1:50:38 PM

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My name is Darrel Beaton of [REDACTED] South Side Harbour Rd in Antigonish County and I am one of the 5 commercial fishermen who oppose the oyster lease application of Town Point Consulting. I have been living along the coast of Antigonish Harbour my whole life (61 yrs) and have been making my living here from fishing for almost as long. I understand that my name has been used as being in support of this project so I'd like to go on record stating that this is not the case, in fact it is the exact opposite.

In my one and only conversation with Mr. Porter about the oyster lease I told him I'd have no opposition as long as it does not impede the navigation route I have to travel daily in and out of Antigonish Harbour. He assured me that there would be no impediment but that is untrue. In particular, aquaculture site 1444 is a direct impediment to my navigational route. I dock my 45 ft fishing boat at Beaton's Wharf located just before Dunn's Beach in South Side Harbour and the route I must take is impeded by the lower portion of site 1444. Something else I must consider, because it seems that TPCI isn't wanting to bring it to your attention, are the low tides of the Harbour which means I will be navigating in the exact area where prospective site 1444 is to be located during these low tides. And let's not forget the fog which occurs quite frequently in the spring of the year when I do lobster fishing. Not if...but when... my boat and propeller get entangled in the oyster netting or hardware, it will cause extensive damage to both and hinder my fishing livelihood. Who would then be liable for said cost of those damages? We also need to look at the environmental factors concerning Antigonish Harbour especially since Hurricane Fiona in September of 2022. It devastated portions of the harbour and shoreline and ultimately readjusted the navigation route I must take, but this happens every year after storms, not just during hurricanes.

The location of sites 1442 and 1443 are located in a very busy area of Antigonish Harbour although TPCI would like you to believe otherwise. There are canoeists, kayakers, sailboaters, jet-skiers, water skiers, paddle boarders, recreational fishers and outboard boaters using this area of Antigonish Harbour on a daily basis all summer long. I have a property along the harbour so this is not an exaggeration. These site areas are also shallow and more so during low tides. What happens when oyster netting or hardware becomes dislodged from its location? It'll be floating in the harbour and at risk to boaters and commercial fishers.

This is a highly valued and multi-used Harbour for the community at large and I am wary of the shift that will happen if a tightly held private corporation was allowed to overrun large portions of it.

I hope you will take these factors into consideration and apply them to your thinking when making your choice whether to allow an oyster business to occupy a major portion of our harbour.

Darrel Beaton

From: [Jay Ross](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED] scameron@townofantigonish.ca; wormier@townofantigonish.ca; [REDACTED] dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; drobot@townofantigonish.ca; [REDACTED] mary.maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; donnie.f.macdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; sdrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@gmail.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@gmail.com); [Premier](#)
Subject: Town Point Consulting application (AQ#1442, AQ#1443, and AQ#1444)
Date: March 12, 2023 4:32:34 PM

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Dear NSARB,

re: Town Point Consulting application numbers 1442, 1443, and 1444

As a resident of Antigonish Landing and frequent recreational user of Antigonish Harbour (kayaking, swimming, walking) I oppose Town Point Consulting's proposed oyster farm as it would harm enjoyment of the natural beauty of the harbour by the public. The proposed location is adjacent to Mahoneys Beach, Dunns Beach, and the navigable channel opening to St. Georges Bay, where recreational use by local residents and visitors is concentrated.

The farm's proximity and industrial scale (23,000 floating oyster baskets distributed over 90.5 acres) would dominate the otherwise pristine outer harbour. The applicant claims that "local residents who have considered the impact of the farm *from a disinterested point of view*" (my emphasis) think this scale is appropriate (your Exhibit 05, p14). The caveat is telling. Count me among those who *are* interested -- in preserving this immensely valuable natural asset for the benefit of all users.

Sincerely,

Jay Ross

[REDACTED]
Antigonish Landing NS
[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-030

From: [Mark Sears](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Townpoint mussel farm -porters Antigonish
Date: March 16, 2023 7:40:54 PM

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To whom it may concern

I am from Antigonish and have attended several informative sessions with respect to the proposed project at the seabright area in the harbour.

I feel this is a great project for our area . It will create jobs and will utilize a resource right here in our backyard. The owners are reputable people with a strong background as business people to ensure a well run business.

I have a cottage about 15 minutes past the proposed location and drive the harbour area and was surprised to here a few, and I mean very few people, complaining at the meeting about interference with the boat in the area. I can say first hand that I look that way daily on my drives as it is hard not to and there is virtually no boat traffic in the area. Even if there was there is so much more water outside the harvest site that I am surprised anyone could raise it as an issue.

I look at lobster traps buoys but the tons just on front of my cottage at Cape George ...hundreds, and it is just part of water to expect in waters where harvesting happens and makes sense . If I want to kayak I simply go to the open area.

In conclusion, I support the project. Jobs are good, it is good for the harbour water quality and it is what we as Canadians should be focused on developing our resources in a rather non intrusive way here in Antigonish.

Mark Sears
Antigonish NS
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

March 17, 2023.

Letter of Support for the TPCI Oyster Farm in Antigonish Harbour.

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc. Applications AQ#1442, AQ#1443 & AQ#1444

My name is Caleb Porter, (from a different line of Porter's than Mr. Ernie Porter of TPCI), and I am a dentist practicing in Antigonish, and St. Peters. I am also fortunate enough to live with my son on the property I own on Antigonish Harbour at [REDACTED]. I have been a resident here and enjoying the harbour since 2010.

I have grown up as a person who enjoys the outdoors. At a young age, my father introduced me to fishing, hunting, wilderness camping, and all the wonderful experiences that go along with these activities. I have made the same introductions to my son who is now 11 years old. We use the harbour all year round, and have spent countless hours fishing, boating, canoeing, swimming, camping, hunting, snowmobiling, ice fishing, hiking, and just exploring. I would venture to say that I spend more time on the harbour than most of my neighbours and as such I feel I have learned much about it; not just the neat geographical features, but some of its subtleties.

I am not a marine scientist, but I do consider myself to be environmentally conscious and someone who loves the outdoors. I recognize that Antigonish Harbour is a special place, with an abundance, and variety of life. I realize that such a diversity of life means there have must be complex and possibly fragile interactions or relationships between all species of plants and animals living in and around the harbour. I also understand that to ensure the harbour remains a healthy ecosystem that the balance of these complex relationships must remain intact. {Factor 3. (a), (d), (c), (f)}

I do not want to see the health of our harbour suffer as a result of change; I care. So, naturally I was concerned when I first heard of the TPO's plan to farm oysters in our harbour. While I am aware that oysters are found in the harbour naturally and understand that oysters are filter feeders and act to clean their environment, I wondered what an oyster farm might do to upset the balance of the biodiversity that exists in the harbour.

I think aquaculture has developed a bad name over the past few years, and I suppose for good reason after seeing some of the fallout of open pen fish farms. However, I feel the reality is that if we are going to look after each other long term, we really do need to expand beyond wild stocks. I believe there needs to be a balance between industry and protection of our resources; you can't have just one or the other. What we need are new, safer, and better ways to do things. {Factor 3.(b), (d)}

I was first introduced to Mr. Porter of TPCI in 2021, and I have met with him on multiple occasion since. I have visited his site and I have seen his facility. Mr. Porter is doing things differently and in a more positive and productive way! {Factor 3. (a), (b)} He has designed a change in the way oyster aquaculture is done. I believe that Mr. Porter is probably more environmentally in tune than many of us who live on the harbour, and it is evident in his design. He is not building "just another oyster farm to make money," he is trying to change the game to make it safer for our environment. He has invested significant personal time and financial resources in his project, because he believes in what he is doing.

I think Mr. Porter is looking at a much larger picture that extends well beyond his little farm on Antigonish Harbour. I think he is looking to improve oyster aquaculture in general and make it safer for the environment wherever oyster farms can be found. {Factor 3. (b), (d)}

Mr. Porter's operation in no way hinders the public's right to navigation. The waters of the leases are too shallow already for motorboats and sailing, and kayaking is still possible through the lease areas. {Factor 3. (f)}

I feel Nova Scotia stands a lot to gain if Mr. Porter can make his goals a reality. I can envision jobs, manufacturing facilities, increased tax revenues, and the reputation of being on the forefront of responsible oyster aquaculture. {Factor 3. (a), (b), (f)} Wouldn't all that look good for our province? Mr. Porter is driven, and I have no doubt he will succeed. Nova Scotia should not let this opportunity go elsewhere. Nova Scotia should support Mr. Porter and TPCI.

I support Mr. Porter and TPCI.

Caleb T Porter

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 10:12 am, Mar 20, 2023

From: [Bill Gunn](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point Oysters' application to establish an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, and AQ#1444 (Amended)
Date: March 18, 2023 11:06:02 PM

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Dear Members of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for Town Point Oysters' application to establish an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour, with application numbers AQ#1442, AQ#1443, and AQ#1444. Specifically, I wish to address the second (factor b) of your eight criteria under review: "the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development".

Both as a resident of the county and as a development economist with some thirty years experience nationally and internationally, I believe this project has the potential to significantly contribute to the economic development of our community and the province as a whole.

One of the key benefits of this project is the diversification it would bring to our local production base. By expanding into oyster farming, we can create new jobs and businesses that will complement existing industries and increase our economic resilience. Additionally, the project could help to increase food security for the province by providing a reliable and sustainable source of locally grown seafood. This would be fully in line with the recommendations of the Ivany Report of 2014, which emphasized the importance of diversifying our economy and strengthening our food systems.

I have been following the development of the project closely for several years, and I am impressed by the attention that Town Point Oysters has given to economic and environmental sustainability. They have adapted their project design and equipment to minimize the impact on the Antigonish Harbour ecosystem, and have even developed new, more efficient and less visually intrusive technology that has the potential to benefit other oyster farming operations. Their commitment to sustainability, as well as their efforts to consult with neighbours, the wider community, and the local First Nation (Paqtnkek), demonstrate that they are dedicated to doing this right.

As a retired development economist, I have seen firsthand the positive impact that well-designed projects can have on communities. It is clear that Town Point Oysters' project has been thoughtfully conceived and carefully planned, and I urge the Aquaculture Review Board to approve their applications.

Thank you for considering my support for this important project.

Sincerely,

William Gunn [REDACTED] Afton Station, Nova Scotia, [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-033

From: [Lou Bilek](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Re oyster lease applications
Date: March 20, 2023 9:01:02 AM

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To: Aquaculture Review Board
From: Lou Bilek, [REDACTED] Harbour Centre, [REDACTED]
Re: Applications: AQ#1442;AQ#1443;AQ#1444

I am not able to apply for intervenor status, as I cannot attend ARB scheduled hearing in April. Please accept the letter below as a true statement of a concerned Harbour resident addressing Factors b. and e. of the ARB document.

I have been a resident of Seabright Rd. Since 1973. My family has been using the beautiful and pristine environment of Antigonish harbour for almost fifty years. On calm days, I canoe from my property to Mahoney's Beach Harbour Chanel where I fish for stripe bass, swim of the protected beach and at times camp overnight. Swimming off the harbour beaches is safe and it is enjoyed mostly by the youngest generation of my family.

During the winter months the frozen harbour is an ideal place for cross country skiing or snowshoeing.

Now, as a senior, I find the Seabright Road to be one of the safe places for walks and exercise. The road is used by permanent residents of Town Point for daily transport, and it is the only public access to the main body of the harbour. Industrialization of the area would have negative effect on health-related recreational activities for many seniors who drive from surrounding areas and from the town of Antigonish for their daily walk.

Over the years, I have seen the Antigonish Harbour environment evolve from abandoned farms and working farms to a residential and recreational area. Now, Antigonish harbour has probably the highest residential density of any harbour in Northumberland Strait. The tranquility and the beauty of the harbour attracted likeminded residents. At times, we have experienced development activities that could jeopardize sustainable residential development of the area.

On two occasions, the residents (neighbours) mobilized Antigonish town and County community to protect their commons. First Nations successfully opposed over development of the Boat Club and enlargement of Seabright Road. I was a founding member and a director of Antigonish Harbour Watershed Association, now I am a member of the Friends of Antigonish Harbour. Both of these citizen groups are trying

hard to protect the harbour's ecologically sensitive environment.

My experience with the TPCI application for oyster leases in the Antigonish harbour has been frustrating. At first, I was open minded towards the project, since at one time, I considered to have a small, one could say, a hobby oyster farm in-front of my Seabright property.

One day, Mr. Porter called me to discuss his oyster lease proposal. I visited his property, had a friendly chat, asked a few questions, and suddenly I was asked to fill out a form. I reluctantly made a few neutral comments, signed it and left for home. I felt USED! I asked Mr. Porter to return the form to me, which he did, saying that he did not make a copy of the document. Yet, my name figures on his application as a person who opposes the dust on the road. This experience made me to pay closer attention to the process. The TPCI application is marked by statements of convenience, and inaccurate and selective presentation of scientific data. TPCI lobbying in town and county falsely claims environmental and commercial benefits to the community. Revealed correspondence between TPCI and Dr. Garbary from StFX, documents collusion that was directly beneficial to TPCI at public meetings and belittled arguments of citizen's group. Scientific information was used selectively, benefits exaggerated, and precautionary principle ignored altogether.

Allow me to quote a statement made in parliament from over fifty years ago:

“It is inevitable in a country as vast as Canada, with interests as manifold as ours, that all Canadians will not always agree on assessments, on responses, or on priorities.

Nevertheless, those assessments, those responses, and those priorities will, I pledge, always be consistent in the long run with certain principles:

We will not barter a clean and wholesome environment for industrial or commercial growth, and call it progress;.....” (honorable, P. E. Trudeau, 1967)

During the last couple of years, three new physicians purchased property at the harbour. Young Antigonishers are moving “back home” and they are looking for attractive place to live and work. Pristine environment, quality of life and recreational opportunities are important factors for recruiting new residents. Antigonish harbour needs sustainable development, zoning review and continuous environmental protection. There is no public need for industrial development in the middle of residential and recreational area. I do oppose the industrialization of the most beautiful part of Antigonish county - Antigonish harbour, the original historic settlement site in Antigonish county.

Lou Bilek, concerned citizen

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From: [linda.murphy-bilek](mailto:linda.murphy-bilek@nsar.gov.ns.ca)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](mailto:nsar@nsar.gov.ns.ca)
Subject: Fwd: Oysters and Antigonish Harbour in regards to TPCI's application.
Date: March 20, 2023 9:19:29 AM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter as an individual who has lived in very close proximity to Antigonish Harbour for close to 65 years, summer's and falls at Mahoney's Beach and now I have been a full time resident of Seabright for 33 years.

Yes, I am a member of FOAH, but I write this just as a concerned resident.

I have seen the Harbour's ever changing coastline, the erosion infringe on our family property at Mahoney's beach due to storm surges, it is is shocking.

My memories go also to environmental issues during summers at Mahoney's, it was very common to read the posted warning signs signs, "Do Not Eat The Shellfish ", dangerous to eat due to Red Tide., which is on the rise due to global warming temperatures.

The proposal of having an industry in a residential area are so wrong and obviously outdated with numerous situations around our province and really, all around the world, should one care to observe further afield than our back yard.

I understand that in some provinces and places in the world an interested party has to apply for a lease to cultivate oysters in waters that have been already "chosen for their suitability ". In other words not because "I don't want to drive to work" as was said to my husband and myself, by Mr.Porter.

I was one of the initial members of the Voices committee in Antigonish and we went to both Town council and County Council meetings to present our ideas. The main goal was to procure local food availability in the downtown core and to have the local farmers and growers be more prominent in terms of produce and local "sustainable food " - long before this word was the buzz word it is today. A year round building for the benefit of the town, county, its food providers and residents, and bringing food back to the town. Thinking back to the frustrations we felt at the time of our presentations, the lack of openness to our suggestions, it was extremely lacking in foresight. Now, to have to be dealing with similar frustrations is quite upsetting!

Today..."the proof is in the pudding " as they say! The Farmers Market is booming! I mention the Voices committee, of which I was a founded member, only to prove my longstanding history and support for the development of local business! I was a small business owner my self.

My deep concerns with about having an oyster farm in a shallow estuary, are many. This situation will be extremely difficult to rectify if anything goes wrong. The damage will be

done.

I had hoped, by now, a level of awareness of environmental issues would prevail! There is so much evidence available it is unbelievable to be “gambling” with a delicate environment such as the estuary that is Antigonish Harbour. FOAH has had a biologist give his assessment,” One should use precautionary principle” and from his expertise, the Harbour would be at risk to have such a business in the estuary, Antigonish Harbour.

A personal friend of 40 plus years and an very large reputable oyster producer, has looked at our harbour in person- as we wanted to be open about our assessment of the viability and suitability of the harbour from a long standing professional- he did not believe it was deep enough for safe oyster production!!

I do know that the small town attitude of keeping your opinions to one’s self and not speaking out in public or letting your opinions be known are deep rooted. “One does not talk about religion, money or politics”.

I know as well, that support for FOAH, is deeper than many will say publicly. Make no mistake .. business is politics, certainly in this case it appears to me.

If there is support, why not find a safer body of water, why risk this body of water when when it is so chancy? I fail to understand the logic, if the business proposed is as sound as Mr. Porter claims, would it will not be safer and more viable in a deeper body of water, both for his business and most certainly for all the fish, fowl, animals and humans, fisherman and boaters, who now use it safely? Would it not be less disruptive to the residential community, the town and county residents who do use and enjoy it ? This business would most certainly be affecting the beauty that the Harbour offers now!

So you can see why some of “us “(residents who live in close proximity and others who use the Harbour’, might have deep concerns! I feel I have to say that it is sad, that "the appearance “ of support for "local "industry, should dominate over genuine concern for the future of the harbour. There are other bodies of water, which would support such an industry, with out disrupting the delicate balance of this very shallow estuary. I find the willingness to take this chance and gamble, more than shocking!

Support the a small single family owned business - somewhere where it can thrive and not take a chance that it could interfere with the eco system or residential, recreational and historical interests.

Why are we as tax payers, paying for one individual to start a business?

Why should we as tax payers support a business in a beautiful recreational area where we have chosen for years to live away from industry in peace with nature, why should we as tax payers support such a risky business of a distributive nature ? Another sensation. Which is worrisome, most likely tax payers would have to foot most of the to clean up a mess.....after the next big storm! Fiona will not the last.

As it is the part of the community who are opposed to it.. we will pay the biggest cost daily! The costs to the environment ...who will put a price on that? I say, let’s not take a chance that we “ the tax payer” will have to pay for clean up. Why take a chance on disturbing delicate eco system of Antigonish Harbour? It will be too late to say in years later... we didn’t know?

I have seen the pictures of the devastation of oyster beds and the coastline and the garbage

and tangled mess, thanks to Fiona... this will not be the last storm..we have been warned.. are you listening? Oyster farmers who could sink their gear in deeper waters over 10 feet, protected their investment with more success..else where..safely.

How will your children and grandchildren think of these kinds of decisions? The information is out there, please, please think long and hard before you allow any business to mess with this delicate estuary for those of us who can and care to speak out and for our grandchildren, I have nine and I am mad, but mostly I am worried!!

Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

A resident of Seabright,
Linda Murphy Bilek

Clerk of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223, Halifax, NS B3J 3C4

Re: The application by TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. for THREE MARINE AQUACULTURE LICENCES AND LEASES for the SUSPENDED CULTIVATION of AMERICAN OYSTERS - AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044 in ANTIGONISH HARBOUR, ANTIGONISH COUNTY

Dear Clerk of the NSARB,

I'm writing, again, in opposition to the development of this large-scale farm and facility in and around the Antigonish Harbour. While I followed this process, from afar, for several years, I moved back to my home, at Harbour Center, in May of 2020, after living in the north for 13 years. I've been following the alarming developments related to this proposed facility and I continue to be alarmed with regards to how its development continues to proceed, with what appears to be the support of the various governmental stakeholders, while there have been great errors, outright deceptions and falsehoods written within TPCI's overly-lengthy and misleading application.

Presently, there are several small-scale oyster harvesters working within the Harbour. I support them fully, since they are unobtrusive and hand-harvesting in small boats. The small-scale harvesting operations, of these harvesters do not negatively impact the sensitive habitat, nor do they intrude on my privacy (for any unfavorable length of time), nor do they impact my view or the potential devaluation of my property.

As a child, my family summered near my current home, in the early 70's. My father and I used to harvest eel grass, which washed ashore, in great abundance, onto the west side of Mahoney's Beach. Since 1985, my home has been on the northern end of the Harbour. My home is located approximately 2kms from where this development is proposed to go, at Town Point. The proposed lease regions are closer and within my view.

I know this Harbour intimately. I've operated an eco-friendly sea kayaking business there, from 1997-2007. This region is sensitive. It's home to a wide variety of flora and fauna. It was I, who reported the sudden and rapid decline of the lush eelgrass, back in the early 2000's, to David Garbary and Tony Miller, biologists at STFX, who began to investigate the cause. As you know, the eelgrass was completely depleted, over the span of a few short years. This Harbour died. The eagles, herons, osprey, kingfishers, etc disappeared. It was horrible. The Harbour is still recovering. Whether the cause was from the green crab invasion or from the accumulation of herbicides and pesticides, transported via the various drainages throughout the county, I don't know. What I do know is that the eelgrass, which was once dense and prolific, with strands well over 6 feet in length, does not exist. It is still making a comeback.

The neighboring beaches are the nesting grounds of the Piping Plover, which is an endangered species. There are eagles, osprey, great blue herons, river otters, sea bass, salmon, plus many more shorebirds. In the spring and the fall of the year, migrating waterfowl rest in the Harbour.

There are some years where the Harbour freezes, while some years it does not. During a cold winter, the only areas which remain open, are within the natural channels, within the Harbour. The proposed lease areas freeze and there is no doubt in my mind that the ice won't crush the infrastructure TCPI proposes to submerge. The lease areas aren't deep enough, at low tide. Why is this process continuing??

I also reiterate the local lobster fishermen's concerns, regarding navigational hazards posed by the structures within the leased areas. These leases are proposed to be located within areas which have been used for navigation, by the fishermen and sailors, for years. There is not much room for safe navigation within this harbour, regarding larger fishing boats or sail boats.

The Harbour is a very warm waterbody, and it is enjoyed by kayakers, canoeists, stand-up paddle boarders, small craft operators and swimmers. The locations of these proposed leases are going to restrict everyone's recreational usage. They will restrict my long-time recreational usage, since their proposed locations occupy the precise areas which are desirable to paddle within. Recreational paddlers, particularly those with a low skill level, do not want to be in the current. They seek shallow and moderately shallow regions.

I object to this large-scale industrialization of this pristine recreational, peaceful ecosystem, which is enjoyed by many of the town residents, locals and tourists.

I am very concerned about my property's devaluation, since the appeal to living along the Harbour is its seclusion, its view, its recreational usage and its quiet nature. TCPI's desired development is a large-scale commercial operation. Where is the processing facility going to be located? Porter will not tell us. Porter says he hasn't planned that far ahead. We all know that is yet another outright deception and the governmental organizations, associated with this potential development, continue to align and support this potential development.

The anger, resentment and hostility created, because of this proposed development, within our community, is very real and it's unforgiveable. Every time I have to sit and peruse documents or sit and write another letter, I become slightly more irate about this entire process, but I will always stand in alliance with those who seek to protect the well-being of the harbour's eco-system as well as the serenity of our properties and I do this not only for myself, but for future generations.

Thank you,

Trudy D Dunn
[REDACTED], Harbour Center
Antigonish County, NS
[REDACTED]

Dated March 20, 2023

March 20, 2023

To: Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

Applications made by TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. for NEW MARINE SHELLFISH LICENCES/LEASES in ANTIGONISH HARBOUR, ANTIGONISH COUNTY for the SUSPENDED CULTIVATION of AMERICAN OYSTERS. Town Point application (numbers 1442, 1443 and 1444)

We are writing to share our views on factors we believe are important to consider in making a decision on the Town Point Consulting Inc. oyster farm application for Antigonish Harbour.

Globally, the move to ecosystem-based management for aquatic resources and the adoption of sustainable development principles has resulted in a focus on “triple bottom line” objectives taking into account ecological, economic and social criteria. For example, the United Nations has identified three pillars of sustainability: economic development, social development, and environmental protection. As well, Canada’s Sustainable Development Strategy (2016) recognizes that “sustainable development encompasses and requires thorough consideration of economic, social and environmental factors.”

Presumably, the rationale supporting the proposed oyster farm is based on the economic benefits it would generate. The specific level of anticipated net economic benefits (e.g., income and employment) is an important factor to consider. Other important factors include the negative environmental and social impacts that would result from the oyster farm. At issue is whether the economic benefits of the farm would outweigh the negative environment and social impacts.

Based on the information available, the proposed oyster farm is expected to generate an estimated \$350,000 in annual wages when fully operational and employ 6 people full time and 5 seasonally. The farm would also be expected to produce negative economic impacts including reduced residential property values, lost income for commercial wild oyster harvesters, interference with the navigation rights of the lobster fishermen at Southside Harbour and a reduction in business opportunities related to tourism in the area.

Anticipated negative environmental impacts include potential destruction of eelgrass beds resulting in a detrimental impact on wildlife species that depend on them. The proposed oyster nursery and farm would introduce a new risk to Atlantic salmon that migrate annually past the proposed farm site. In addition, it can be anticipated that extreme weather events would shift the location of oyster farming equipment resulting in environmental damage.

A number of negative social impacts have been identified, including the loss of enjoyment that people living near the proposed farm site would experience if this scenic residential area becomes covered by thousands of floats. Also, the proposed oyster farm would significantly diminish the recreational experience of boaters, anglers and bird watchers who utilize

Antigonish Harbour. The fact that the proposed farm site includes a part of the protected Dunns Beach which is piping plover habitat raises additional concerns.

In our view, based on the information available, we believe that the potential net economic (income and employment) benefits that would be derived primarily by one family from the proposed oyster farm are vastly outweighed by the negative environmental and social impacts that would be felt by the broader affected community.

Sincerely,

Paul Macgillivray and Clare Ann Quirk
[REDACTED], Antigonish Harbour, NS

March 16, 2023

From: Dr. Jim Williams, Research Professor, Biology Dept., St.F.X. University

To: N.S. Aquaculture Review Board

Re: Application of Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, and AQ#1444

Before I address the factors requested by the board, I will briefly discuss my qualifications and how I became interested in the lease application. I taught at St.F.X. from 1997 until my retirement from active teaching in the spring of 2018. I was a tenured professor in the Biology Dept., and in the interdisciplinary Aquatic Resources program. I am a marine ecologist, who has worked primarily in estuaries, and have carried out several field research projects in both Antigonish and Pomquet harbours. I have published peer-reviewed articles involving many estuarine species, including Atlantic tomcod and smelt, a number of invertebrates including green crabs, ribbed mussels, quahogs, bay scallops, and the estuarine plants eelgrass and saltmarsh cordgrass. In the Aquatic resources program, I taught a foundational course with a strong component in estuarine ecology, as well as an introduction to aquaculture. I also taught the senior seminar course in this program, and for several years used a current finfish lease application as a role-playing exercise for students. In the biology department, I taught a third year course in Marine Pollution, as well as a course in Mariculture. In the mariculture course, I introduced each of the aquaculture species for Atlantic Canada, including oysters. After teaching about the life history and culture methods for each species, the focus of the course was to evaluate the ecological aspects of each culture species/method. Consequently, I know a great deal about the ecological impacts of different aquaculture methods on the receiving environment.

In the fall of 2020 I was asked to attend a zoom meeting with Antigonish town and county councils, during which council members could gain some understanding of oyster aquaculture from presentations by Dr. Rod Beresford (CBU), and Dr. David Garbary (St.F.X.) and myself. During the meeting, it became clear to me that the council members could benefit from a presentation of the science underlying the issue, but pitched at a level that lay people could easily understand. I produced a series of short videos that were intended to provide some factual background for a non-science audience. Even though they are very simplistic, I will mail them to include in my submission. In preparing for the meeting, I reviewed the lease application, and was very impressed with the quality and thoroughness of the document. In the following sections, I will address some of the eight factors listed by the ARB with respect to the lease application.

a) The optimum use of marine resources.

This factor really depends upon what you are trying to optimize. I would interpret it as not interrupting any present activity, but possibly adding additional resource use. The marine resource that would be used by the proposed farm would be a relatively small section of shallow harbour bottom. As such, the introduction of a suspended oyster aquaculture operation in these areas could be seen as optimizing the use of the harbour.

b) The contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic activity.

I am not an economist, and will leave the detailed interpretation of this factor to those with the expertise. However, it is clear that there will be more economic activity if the lease is approved. The proponent has indicated that there will be some seasonal employment during the active season, particularly during the first couple of years when the farm is being set up. Although the BOBR system is designed to allow a farm to be maintained with less labour, the flip side of that is assembly and distribution of BOBR units sold to other farms will require labour. The province and municipality will benefit from additional tax revenue. The operation will require supplies such as boat fuel, buoys, rope, screw piles, etc. In addition, there may be opportunities for some unanticipated collaborations with respect to tourism and recreation. For example, many of the people who may participate in kayak tours of the harbour may be interested in a brief on-the-water demonstration of how the oyster farm works, which could be followed by a sampling of the product at the end of the excursion. Many tourists, particularly those from Europe, would be accustomed to seeing aquaculture operations in estuarine settings. This collaboration may seem unlikely, given that a former operator of kayak tours is featured in one of the Friends of Antigonish Harbour (FOAH) videos as opposed to the lease. But my feeling is that if the lease is approved, and the farm set up, many people who are on the water will be surprised at the small visual profile of the BOBR units, and that the actual farm itself will occupy a relatively small part of the harbour. The experimental lease now operating in Pomquet Harbour uses the much larger oyster grow units, and to my knowledge there hasn't been much in the way of complaints. Certainly tourists from all locations are looking for interesting things to do while visiting the area, and an on-the-water tour of the operation would probably be attractive.

c) Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation

There is very limited harvest of commercial species in Antigonish Harbour. There is some harvesting of wild oysters, both by tonging and by snorkeling. If the farm is approved, some of the farm oysters will spawn before harvest, and an increased number of fertilized eggs will be released into Antigonish Harbour. Some of these will develop, and eventually settle on suitable substrate in areas where commercial harvesters operate. It is impossible to quantify this contribution given the huge stochastic element in oyster recruitment, but it is likely the operation of the farm will result in increased oyster recruitment in the harbour. FOAH materials list atlantic salmon, smelt, eels, and striped bass as using the harbour, but no study has ever demonstrated any negative impact of suspended oyster aquaculture on fish species. There are commercial lobster and snow crab fishermen who have docks in Antigonish Harbour, but they stay in the channels as their boats require deeper water.

d) The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation

I'd like to address the oceanographic characteristics first. Any structure that is added to the aquatic environment will alter flow patterns, as water is slowed somewhat as it moves around barriers. Suspended BOBR units will result in localized reductions in current velocity, although this will be confined to the depth of water occupied by the units. The degree to which velocity is reduced will depend on mesh size and volume of oysters. The reduction in water velocity may result in larger particles of suspended sediment settling out of the water column. Whether or not these particles would actually reach the bottom depends on depth, sediment size, and the current speed below the BOBR units. If deposition does occur, it will certainly be confined to a footprint below the cage field. Typically, we have not seen excessive sedimentation under suspended oyster culture cages. You would expect

that the oyster grow cages used at most farms would produce much more sedimentation than the BOBR units, as the oyster grow cages are much larger, and can have as many as five vexar bags with oysters inside. The fact that sedimentation beneath oyster grow cages does not seem to be a problem suggests it will not be an issue with the BOBR units.

The proposed farm would also result in more organic deposition under the culture units. Oysters are filter feeders, and obtain their food (primarily phytoplankton) by filtering large volumes of water. The filtered phytoplankton are ingested, the undesirable inorganic particles are bound up with mucus, and egested in the form of pseudofeces. Both the feces and the pseudofeces are generally negatively buoyant, and will fall towards the bottom. Whether or not they reach the bottom underneath the farm depends on the strength of the current at the time of release, as well as the depth of water. Studies have shown increased organic sedimentation underneath suspended oyster cages. The degree to which this would occur underneath the proposed farm is difficult to quantify due to a large number of variables, such as stocking density, season, depth, tide, wind, the amount of phytoplankton in the water column, the amount of suspended sediment, and so on. It is safe to assume that some organic deposition will reach the bottom under the cage field. It is also important to remember that every clam, mussel, and oyster living in the harbour also release feces and pseudofeces, and these may be consumed by deposit feeders, break down in the sediment, or end up as part of the detrital food web. Given that the stocking density per square meter of the BOBR units will probably be less than the commonly used oyster grow cages, I don't anticipate excessive organic buildup under the proposed farm.

The proposed farm could have a positive impact on the biophysical characteristics of the surrounding waters. Estuaries typically are nutrient traps, and Antigonish harbour has nutrients from decomposing plants, from river flow, from incoming coastal marine water, and from anthropogenic sources such as farm run-off, malfunctioning or non-existent septic systems, and the town sewage treatment plant. This abundance of nutrients supports high levels of primary production from eelgrass, salt marsh grasses, benthic diatoms, marine algae, and phytoplankton. At times during the warmer months, excessive growth of epiphytic organisms can coat the eelgrass leaves to the point where the supporting plant sees reduced growth, and occasional mats of filamentous algae can occur. Filter-feeding organisms such as oysters can help this problem in two ways. Firstly, by removing phytoplankton from the water column, oysters indirectly remove the associated nutrients and either incorporate those nutrients in oyster biomass, or move them to the benthos via feces. Those nutrients are not immediately available for use by the "nuisance" algae. Secondly, removal of both organic and inorganic suspended particles from the water increases the light penetration for species such as eelgrass. Adding oysters to estuaries as a method for improving water quality has been employed by agencies along the east coast of North America, most notably in the Chesapeake Bay region, where millions of dollars have been spent to re-establish oyster reefs.

One final aspect to consider is the impact the proposed farm structures may have by shading eelgrass beds on the leases. I am aware that my colleague from St.F.X., Dr. David Garbary, will be addressing this aspect in depth, so I will defer to his expertise. Again, much of our knowledge of this aspect is from studies with the larger oyster grow systems. These structures, which may contain as many as five vexar bags with oysters, would block significantly more light than the BOBR units used on the proposed farm. The smaller surface area of the BOBR units, coupled with their shallower deployment (The oyster grow

units extend much further down in the water column) should result in a smaller area of the bottom shaded.

So to summarize, I don't anticipate any significant negative aspects of the proposed farm on the oceanographic or biophysical characteristics of the surrounding public waters. In fact, the increased filter feeding capacity may locally improve water quality, particularly during the warmer months.

e) The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation

I've spent quite a bit of time boating in Antigonish Harbour, in the past with students carrying out research projects, and of late as a striped bass fly fisherman. I often put a small boat in at Southside harbour to motor to the mouth of the harbour for fishing. As such, I travel past one of the proposed lease sites. I don't anticipate any issues with the proposed farm, like most boaters, I tend to stay to the west of the proposed site in the deeper water. Both of the proposed lease areas are away from the main channels, which is where most motorized boats travel. No doubt there are lots of kayaks and paddleboards using the harbour, but given that the lease sites are less than 2% of the area of the harbour, there is lots of room to move past or around the farm sites. Some opponents have expressed concern that the natural beauty of the harbour will be diminished by the presence of the farm. I suspect people will be surprised at the small visual impact of the BOBR units, particularly when viewed from water level.

f) The public right of navigation

As stated in the previous section, most of the motorized boats using Antigonish Harbour presently stick to the channels. Certainly all of the larger vessels, such as the commercial fishing boats and larger pleasure craft can only easily navigate in the channels. Some shallow draft boats such as jet skis range more widely, but with only 2% of the harbour occupied with the proposed BOBR field, there is ample room left for all boating.

g) The sustainability of wild salmon

As an ecologist who has primarily worked with marine and estuarine invertebrates, I'm not in a position to provide much in depth comment re wild salmon. The spawning adults spend some time in the harbour before travelling up the rivers to spawn. Similarly the smolts spend time in the estuary as they adjust their physiology for the next few years in the marine environment. I don't see any direct link between salmon and the proposed farm. The BOBR structures, like any additional floating structure, will provide some shelter to schooling forage fish such as sticklebacks, mummichubs, and silversides. This may lead to localized concentrations of piscivorous fish species such as striped bass, but it is hard to imagine any direct impacts on the salmon population.

h) The number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation

There are no other active aquaculture leases in Antigonish harbour. There may be some old on-bottom oyster leases on the books, but there are no active leases in the harbour.

This concludes my comments re the specific factors specified by the ARB. I would like to finish by addressing some of the points raised by opponents to the farm. First of all, a number of opponents object to introducing an industrial operation in Antigonish Harbour, which they characterize as pristine

and untouched. I would object to the characterization of an oyster farm as industrialization, any more than a dairy farm would be considered industrial. I also think it is inaccurate to describe Antigonish harbour as pristine and untouched. At present, there is considerable commercial and economic activity on and around Antigonish Harbour. The town of Antigonish wastewater treatment facility discharges hundreds of thousands of liters of treated wastewater into the harbour on a daily basis. Even though this wastewater has been subjected to primary and secondary treatment, the final step of tertiary treatment is not done, and there is a very high nutrient load in the wastewater. There are varying sizes of agricultural operations bordering the harbour, and various sizes of floating and fixed wharves, accommodating everything from very small pleasure-craft up to commercial lobster and crab boats. There are also inputs of wastewater (some via groundwater) from functioning and non-functioning (or non-existent) septic systems, as well as wastewater from the abattoir in Antigonish landing. All contribute nutrients to the estuary.

The harbour has been characterized as “delicate” or “fragile”, but like most estuaries in the area, it is in fact very resilient and robust. Estuaries are difficult places to live, as the physical conditions change constantly. Depth, salinity, temperature, suspended sediment, all can go from one extreme to another in a very short period of time. However, for the organisms that can put up with these changing conditions, estuaries are extremely productive ecosystems, and these adaptive organisms can realize very high population numbers in estuaries. Estuaries typically have abundant nutrients from natural and anthropogenic sources, and these support five major groups of primary producers; eelgrass, salt marsh grasses, marine algae, epibenthic algae, and phytoplankton. This breadth of primary producers provide resilience, if one group is temporarily reduced, there is ample production from other sources.

The proposed oyster farm would be a small family-run operation, which will not significantly detract from the natural beauty of the harbour. Town Point Oysters have produced a very thorough lease application which could serve as a model for future applications. There have been three public meetings, and Town Point Oysters have conducted over 200 tours of their facility. They are to be commended for their outreach efforts and transparency. With respect to science, there is no credible basis upon which to refuse the application.

Jim Williams, Ph.D.

NSARB-2022-WRT-040

From: [Marilyn O'Brien](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish Harbour Oyster Farm
Date: March 21, 2023 5:02:10 PM

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I am writing the board as a concerned citizen living near the harbour. I have lived at this address near the Seabright Rd. since 1980.

I am not opposing an oyster farm as such but am opposed to the current proposed site. I believe the investor should find a more suitable coastal area outside of the almost completely enclosed Harbour proper to operate his business venture.

Antigonish Harbour quite recently was cleaned of septic pollution stemming from historical sewage and has become a pristine, scenic recreational area over the past number of years. Polluting it again with 23,000 cages and plastic floating platforms presents an ugly, environmentally unfriendly scene- summer and winter both.

.Town Point itself [in the harbour] has quite recently attracted home builders mainly because of this clean, quiet, secluded environment. They have invested in new homes at considerable expense which I am sure has contributed considerably to the county tax coffers. Placing an oyster farm based on this rather small peninsula would be akin to operating an abattoir in a new suburban development, considering the harvesting and processing side of the business. This in addition to the recreational infringement it would present not just to the immediate residents but to all who frequently visit and utilize the Yacht Club facilities on a regular basis.

In conclusion, the social pain of it all does not seem to be worth the economical gain either in the short or long term.

Respectfully submitted.

Marilyn O'Brien
[REDACTED]
Harbour Centre

NSARB-2022-WRT-041

From: dorothy.lander
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](mailto:)
Subject: Hearing re Town Point Consulting app for large scale oyster operation
Date: March 22, 2023 11:10:08 AM

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March 22, 2023

To: Clerk of the Board

Re: The application by TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. for THREE MARINE AQUACULTURE LICENCES AND LEASES for the SUSPENDED CULTIVATION of AMERICAN OYSTERS - AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044 in ANTIGONISH HARBOUR, ANTIGONISH COUNTY (hearing commences April 2023)

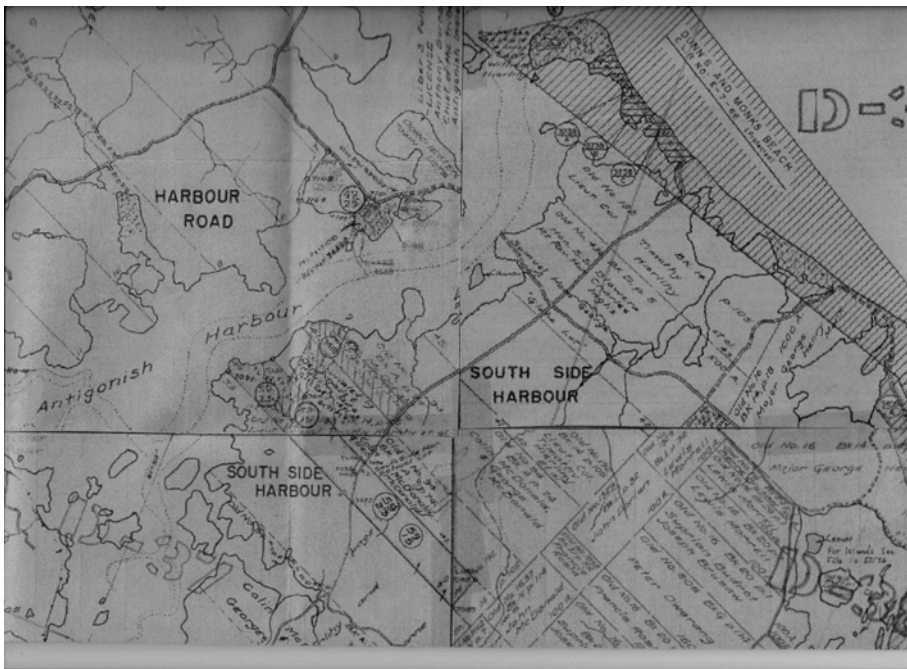
From: Dorothy Lander, [REDACTED], Clydesdale, Nova Scotia, [REDACTED]

Tel. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@gmail.com

In reviewing Section 3, I chose b) as it is the only factor that takes “community” into consideration, namely, the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development. Conspicuous by its absence is any acknowledgement of the community covered by treaty rights related to fishing or the history of Indigenous-Settler relations at Antigonish Harbour. The impact of colonization on “community” development in Antigonish continues to this day.

Given the Marshall Case that went to the Supreme Court in 1999 appealing on the basis of treaty rights to a “moderate livelihood” from eel fishing and the related Calls for Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, this is an egregious omission. The 1783 License issued to Chief Anthony Bernard from the Indian Superintendent George Henry Monk is still on the books at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia and is reflected on this map of Antigonish Harbour, the very area that is the focus of the hearing.



Community economic and cultural development and sustainability of our natural resources cannot be separated from the history of Indigenous-Settler relations dating to the first permanent European settlement of Antigonish at Town Point in 1784.

I urge the Aquaculture Board to include and listen to Indigenous voices in your hearing and to be aware of the historical documents regarding land rights and treaty obligations related to fishing in the waters around Town Point. A basic consideration of community and provincial economic development is sustainability of marine resources, which surely must take into account the global climate emergency. Everyday we hear from climate change scientists and climate justice activists that we must look to Indigenous stewardship of the lands and oceans. Given that 80% of all species on Earth exist only in Indigenous territories, it is clear that Indigenous ways of looking after the land and water and all the species that live there, offer our best way forward for survival of all species.

My personal interest and knowledge of the factors concerning this application emerged from my project initiative with Arts Health Antigonish (www.artshealthantigonish.org), in which I organized a popular theatre/pilgrimage to Town Point, entitled *1784: (Un)Settling Antigonish*, in which performers drawn from the many Nations of Antigonish (Mi'kmaw, Acadian, Irish, Anglo-Celtic, African) co-generated the script, challenging the Eurocentric records of the founding of Antigonish at Town Point. [REDACTED], the Land Coordinator for Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation [REDACTED]@gmail.com), was among the script-writers and performers who reported on and read the 1783 License to this Land:

On December 19, 1783, a license for this land was issued in Halifax to the chief of the tribe. The Public Archives of Nova Scotia holds this document from the Indian Superintendent's letter-book.

A License to be granted Anthony Barnard, chief of the Tribe of

Antigonish Indians for them to Occupy Undisturbed the several Villages and Tracts they have improved and settled upon on the River [that is, Antigonish Harbour] of the same name, to wit, on the Peninsula on the Western side of the River, where the Mass House is placed, also the Island near the Western side of the River, together with the village near the head of the Tide on Both sides the River with Liberty of Hunting and Fishing as Customary.

Do consider carefully if Indigenous “hunting and fishing as customary” can occur in Antigonish Harbour should the operation of a large-scale oyster farm (23,000 cages, over 90 acres with 9 Million oysters) go ahead.

In the summer of 2015, four of the five performances of our popular theatre event 1784 (Un)Settling Antigonish played outdoors at Town Point. The Indigenous-Settler friendships that were fused through this project endure to this day.

In the way of popular theatre, Elder [REDACTED] rose from the audience and told a story of colonization in the waters off Town Point, specifically the decimation of porpoises from Antigonish Harbour: [REDACTED] on YouTube.

Local filmmaker [REDACTED] has also created a documentary film of 1784: *(Un)Settling Antigonish*, which is available through our publishing house HARP Publishing The People's Press [REDACTED]. Watch the 7-minute trailer for a deeper understanding of how the “community” of Antigonish is committed to honouring and respecting Indigenous rights to the lands and waters at Town Point and Antigonish Harbour. The outcome of this hearing will stand as a record of the Antigonish community to truth and reconciliation as put forth in the 94 Calls to Action.

With respect

We are all treaty people

Dorothy Lander

--

Dorothy Lander (MAdEd - StFX, PhD - Nottingham) and John Graham-Pole (MD, MRCP-UK)

Publishers and Editors
HARP The People's Press
www.harppublishing.ca
harppoplespress@gmail.com

Welo'ltimk - Healing

We live and work in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.



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March 9, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-042

Nova Scotia Aquaculture review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

From: Jeffrey Dee

██████████
Antigonish, NS. ██████████

Regarding: Town Point Consulting Inc. (Town Point Oysters)
Applications AQ#1442, AQ#1443, & AQ#1444

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Mr. Bruce;

I grew up in a family of family businesses and come from a long line of entrepreneurs, and fully support all the benefits of this project to the local and Nova Scotia community. In February 2014, the Ivany report stated several goals were established, one being to develop a greater aquaculture presence. This project checks all the boxes that have been laid out almost nine years later.

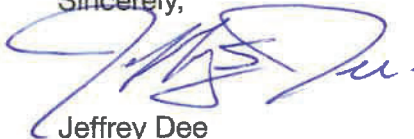
Small business is the backbone of any rural economy, especially rural Nova Scotia. This family is investing in our rural, coastal community in substantial and impactful ways. In my opinion this project checks off every box imaginable in what to do and how to develop a resource based family business.

The economic spin offs that can be brought in as a result of this project getting the go-ahead is in the millions of dollars. Local hotels, restaurants and increased retail spending to name a few. This aspect of the operation aligns with factor b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development.

Along with the initial project, the Town Point Oyster Farm is the possibility of the spin off company called Dock Port which is revolutionary in the oyster farming world. To have it based in Antigonish again would provide many well paying jobs, along with millions of dollars in additional annual revenue into the local economy through the local and provincial economy.

For decades Nova Scotia has been a have-not economy, ranked ninth or tenth in economic growth. As a life long resident this is embarrassing, this project is exactly what we need in rural Nova Scotia. There is an element of NIMBY syndrome (Not In My Backyard) which needs to be removed from opposition. In order to move our economy forward we need year round, locally based businesses such as this. For far too long, seasonal tourist based business have been the focus which does not drive the economy, this is an example of a business that can.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Dee

From: [Chisholm, William P](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Application #'s 1442, 1443, 1444. Town Point Consulting
Date: March 23, 2023 2:17:25 PM

Dear NS Aquaculture Review Board members,

As a generational landowner with over two hundred years family history in in South Side Harbour, Antigonish Co. NS these applications are an affront to the historical community use of Antigonish Harbour.

Antigonish Harbour is a resource shared by all for fishing, eeling, hunting, boating, swimming, skating and traditionally for harvesting eel grass from the shores to bank our houses.

There presently are oyster harvesters who have harvested wild oysters in Antigonish Harbour for over twenty years. These are “gatherers” of native oysters as my ancestors have done in previous years and indigenous peoples for millenniums.

This all with little to no impact to the environment or others shared use of Antigonish Harbour.

The proposed sites are in the most used portions of Antigonish Harbour particularly by boaters of all sorts from paddle boards to kayaks, canoes and power boats, both recreational and commercial.

Navigation at night, in poor weather or after a storm will be of concerns for all boaters with kilometers of rope and cable placed next to navigation channels.

Antigonish Harbour is truly an estuary which can support low impact activities only, not commercial farming.

A removal of even a portion of this community resource from the public for the benefit of a private corporation is not in the interest of the people of Antigonish or Nova Scotia.

The applicant Ernest Porter claims I support or at least do not oppose his applications.

I must state I strongly oppose these applications for the reasons stated and find him untruthful in his claim of my support.

Yours Truly

William P. Chisholm


Antigonish Co. NS 

BILL & STANLEY

Oyster Company

NSARB-2022-WRT-045

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Date: March 24, 2023

Re: Town Point Consulting Incorporated and licenses/leases for AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour (NSARB 2022-001)

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Brian Fortune. I own and operate Bill and Stanley Oyster Company Ltd. which farms American Oysters on eighteen leases in Guysborough County. I live at [REDACTED], Orwell, PE [REDACTED]

As an active aquaculturist, I have a 35 year history in the region and am aware of the Town Point applications and wish to express my views for consideration by the ARB.

Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia has been stagnant for many years. Our production lags far behind that of our neighbouring provinces and, as a result, our ability to compete in the marketplace is hindered. Supporting services in manufacturing, supply, consulting, and distribution have not developed to the extent they have in New Brunswick and PEI here because the demand is insufficient due to our negligible growth. Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia needs to grow and we see the Town Point applications as a test case for our future; the outcome of these applications will, to a large degree, show us where we are headed as a "low impact high value" industry. Shellfish farming around the world is a robust industry and when evaluating site applications only factual information should be considered.

I know, from my experience in shellfish farming, that this application more than satisfies the requirements:

- A. Oyster farms make optimal use of marine resources.
- B. Oyster farming will bring economic diversity to the area. It will create direct employment and provide spin off advantages to other business in the area. To name a few, transportation companies, welding shops and numerous other service providers.
- C. Oyster farming will enhance any fishery in the area, both commercial and sport fishing. Once established and under full production Town Point's oyster farming site will become a positive contributor to the historical fishery in the area.
- D. Oyster farming makes optimal use of the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the watershed. In many industrialized areas of the world oyster beds have been established only to assist in enhancing the overall health of the water sheds.

BILL & STANLEY

Oyster Company

- E. Oyster farming only has a positive effect on other users of the public waters.
- F. Oyster Farms are set up in a way to complement navigable waters. All lease markers are in accordance with the NPA guidelines and in many cases assist with public navigation through the water shed. Oyster farms are set up in a way to allow navigation corridors to and from private and public lands. There are safe navigation corridors between every line on a lease, additionally they are also set up to allow navigation corridors at right angles to the lines every 600 feet. In recent years we have found increased traffic in our leases from recreational, individuals, families, canoes, kayaks and sport fishing enthusiasts.
- G. It is a proven fact that oyster farming will assist with maintaining natural fish stocks in the watershed area by allowing places of refuge in the early stages of fin fish development.
- H. Oyster farming will assist in keeping the waters clean due to the massive amount of water they filter. They will have no impact on any other aquaculture operations currently in the area or future operations that may be encouraged by this initiative.

Please consider the merits of these applications and discount opposing views that are not based on valid science or economic necessity. Once established this farming proposal will become a positive contribution to your local watershed area. On a world scale, and even a provincial scale, this is a rather small initiative. For example, in Wine Harbour on the eastern shore, almost directly across the land from Antigonish, Bill & Stanley Oyster Company operates a 105 acre oyster farm. There is now more public use of that water shed with the development of this farming operation than had been ever seen in the past 50 years; clearly, aquaculture development has not had a negative impact on tourism

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Brian Fortune

Bill & Stanley Oyster Co Ltd

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [@billstanley.co](mailto:[REDACTED]@billstanley.co)

fortuneoysters.ca

Thank you,

Brian Fortune

NSARB-2022-WRT-046

From: [Stuart Beaton](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Fwd: Town Point Oyster Proposal
Date: March 24, 2023 10:14:24 AM

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----- Forwarded Message -----
Subject: Town Point Oyster Proposal
Date: Fri, 24 Mar 2023 09:52:56 -0300
From: Stuart Beaton [redacted]@eastlink.ca>
To: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Below is my submission with regard to the Town Point Oyster Proposal which is entering the public hearing process.

Stuart Beaton
[redacted]
Antigonish
B2G 0B4
Tel [redacted]

><(((+))> ><(((+))> ><(((+))> >
<(((+))> ><(((+))> ><(((+))>

Town Point Oyster Proposal 1

Stuart J Beaton
[redacted]

Town Point Oyster Proposal (Reference Application Numbers 1442,1443, & 1444)

BACKGROUND

I was a commercial fisherman for 32 years at Cape George and Cheticamp. I was involved in the Lobster, Snow Crab, Fixed Gear Groundfish, Herring and Mackerel fisheries over that time.

As a result I have had a keen interest in sustainable development of marine fisheries. I have seen both successes, Lobster and Snow Crab, which have been a major contributor to the economic wellbeing of Antigonish and failures. These fisheries are well managed and have a long track record of robust conservation strategies and a reliance of sound scientific advice and subsequent management. The buy in and participation of fishermen and their organizations in effective sustainability speaks for itself.

However I have seen the costs and pain of mis-management. The groundfishery in Atlantic Canada has been a disgrace. The Herring and Mackerel fisheries are currently stressed.

That said there are opportunities available, such as the development of a sustainable Oyster culture development in the County. As it is the Afton Aboriginal Band has built an operation in the County and in the adjacent Merrigomish Harbour in Pictou County there is an existing operation.

Upon my retirement from the fishery I attended the Australian Maritime College of the University of Tasmania, Australia, and attained an MBA in Marine Recourse Management with concentration on Sustainability and an Eco- system approach to fisheries management.

OYSTERS

Oysters are an iconic seafood choice and have been for years. The Chesapeake Bay in the USA has a long and storied history of Oyster harvesting including even “shooting wars” over access rights between Maryland and Virginia fleets a century or so ago. However after serious depletion in the Chesapeake robust management has caused a robust and sustainable industry to develop. This fishery is comprised of two components: wild capture on public beds and Oyster aquaculture.

In Wallace Harbour (and elsewhere) in Nova Scotia a system of public beds and private leases is in place. I am sure this is the case elsewhere in the Maritimes.

There are all sorts of tastes and preferences in the Oyster. Some prefer Chesapeake Oysters, some Gulf of Mexico area Oysters. Here in Canada Malpeque Oysters from PEI claim a market premium. Tastes vary.

However there is an alarming tendency for many citizens to prefer NIMBY Oysters.

These hearings reflect that “prejudice” or, often, strongly held opinions.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The hearing process for access to aquatic resource is well established. The Town Point application has been ticking the boxes with respect to their application. Those opposed, for whatever reason, have marshalled their arguments.

The terms of reference in the hearings document are both thorough and robust. (cited below)

Factors to be considered:

- (a) the optimum use of marine resources,
- (b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development,
- (c) fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation,
- (d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation,
- (e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation,
- (f) the public right of navigation,
- (g) the sustainability of wild salmon, and
- (h) the number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation.

Opposition is heartfelt. I have reviewed some but not all of the objections.

Some are spurious at best. One intervention spoke of the potential ill effects of an Oyster operation on Eel Grass and pointed to the severe decimation of Eel Grass in the Harbour a few years ago. Dr Jim Williams of ST FX University did the most extensive work on this phenomenon and determined that the invasive Green Crab was at the root of, rather the “uprooting” of Eel Grass beds.

It is useful I suppose to turn the clock back a century or so and we would likely find that rather large shoals of Oysters co-existed with extensive Eel Grass meadows for millennia.

So looking at the issue point by point from the above terms of reference I would “opine”:

(a) Optimum use....there is NO DOUBT the potential of the Harbour is in no way being utilized.

The current economic development approaches ZERO.

(b) There is little doubt that the creation of an industry which does not exist at the present time MUST have a demonstrable benefit to the local economy. I am unaware of ANY fisheries activity in the proposed area but I may stand corrected.

(c) I am unaware of any commercial activity in the Harbour at present.

(d) I cannot speak to this with any confidence but would leave that to experts such as Dr. Williams and others.

(e) The Harbour is rather shallow although there are a few channels. I leave it to the commercial and recreational users to flesh this element out. Both Commercial and recreational boats do use the deeper parts of the harbour for sailing and transit for several Commercial boats

(f) The “public navigation” issue is as above in (e). I cannot say with any authority what level

of traffic traverses the proposed areas.

(g) I cannot imagine what effect, if any, the proposed project might have on Salmon. I do suspect the explosion of invasive Striped Bass may have a deleterious effect on Smolts returning to the ocean, that is merely my hypothesis but is in no way related to any proposed Oyster operation.

(h) See Appendix for an overview of local, regional and international. As I noted above there are Oyster operations in Pomquet and Merigomish Harbours. The performance and results of these operations should be easy to demonstrate. It MAY be however that these operations have less “visual impact” than the Town Point proposal. This of course leads to NIMBY objections.

CONCLUSION

I believe the case will be decided on the merits. It does seem to me that the Aboriginal operation at Pomquet has been beneficial to the Afton Band.

The regulatory authority has a comprehensive list of areas of concern. I am sure some items will have more weight than others and the ultimate decision will be arrived at by balancing the various interests and concerns.

Personally I believe this proposal has considerable merit. The Harbour is a great resource which is under-utilized by both recreational and commercial interests.

APPENDIX

Mussel Aquaculture

I am familiar with the extensive Blue Mussel operations in PEI, notably St Peter’s Bay and PEI has developed an important industry producing a sustainable product with market cache as “Island Blues”. Mussel farming has rather high visual impact, nevertheless the PEI government has opted to support sustainable mussel production.

See You Tube See You Tube <https://youtu.be/yMn3HP9siZM> for an overview.

New Zealand has a large scale aquaculture industry producing the Green Lipped Mussel which is a major economic engine in the Havelock area and the Gulf of Haraki. I spent a day around the operations at Havelock, SI New Zealand.

See You Tube <https://youtu.be/1c4Hv5t5QNk>

Oyster Aquaculture.

I was fortunate enough to spend a day at n Oyster Farm at Coffin Bay in South Australia,

See You Tube https://youtu.be/Nf4ZUF_glss

It is interesting that the operators have expanded their farming operation into a tourist attraction.

PEI, as above, has developed a considerable Oyster aquaculture industry.

See You Tube <https://youtu.be/hffNSIX4qbE>

In the end If the project can meet the requirements set out above I can see no reason why it should not go ahead.

NSARB-2022-WRT-047

3/25/2023

Kenny Chisholm

[REDACTED]

South Side Harbour N.S.

[REDACTED]

Colin Chisholm

[REDACTED]

South Side Harbour N.S.

[REDACTED]

Clerk of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax N.S.
B3J3C4

Dear Board Members

We are writing you with regards to the application by Town point Consulting Inc. for Three Marine Aquaculture Licenses and Leases for the Suspended Cultivation of American Oysters- AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044 in Antigonish Harbour, Antigonish County.

As a lifelong residents living adjacent to the harbor we wish to express our opposition to the proposed project. We have become aware that our names have been included on a list of residents who support the project. We have neither given our consent to be on this list or have we related to anyone that we support the proposed project. We have only spoken to Mr. Porter once about the project when it was in its preliminary stage and gave no indication that we were in favor of it.

We are concerned that it will impact our property values, recreation activities and the lively hoods of our neighbors who rely on open navigational channels. We feel that kayaking recreational boating and fishing will also be affected.

The applicant has no experience in the aquaculture industry and little real knowledge of conditions in the harbour which local residents have observed for generations.

We are also concerned that if these leases are granted there will be nothing to stop more leases being granted in more areas of the harbour in the future, leaving the harbour looking like an industrial site.

Yours truly

Kenny Chisholm ,Colin Chisholm

NSARB-2022-WRT-048

From: [Yvon Grenier](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Oysters in Antigonish Harbour
Date: March 26, 2023 9:12:00 AM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]@stfx.ca. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444–
Ernie Porter, P.Eng., President

Dear Mr. Bruce:

I am a resident of Antigonish, NS, and I am writing to offer my support for Mr. Porter's project to develop an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour.

I am not a biologist, so I cannot offer informed views on the project. I do have full confidence in Mr. Porter's integrity, however, and I see no reason to doubt his claims about the sustainability of the project. We have, after all, other such enterprises in the province and the region, for the greatest enjoyment of Maritimers, who can enjoy fresh local produces.

I am a kayaker and a member of the Antigonish Boat Club. This is how I became acquainted with Mr. Porter. He is always the first to come and help if we need something fixed at the club. But back to my own perspective.

To begin with, the boat traffic on Antigonish harbour is very limited. I am stunned by how few are taking advantage of the site. I see absolutely no reason why his installation on the harbour would be a problem. I have paddled in Wine Harbour on the Atlantic side. There are hundreds of Oysters traps or barrils (not sure how to call them) and if need be, I paddle through them. Thing is, this is not an obstacle to navigation, there is plenty of space there.

There is a small but vocal group in Antigonish who always oppose any development. Some of the same individuals were oppose to have a boat club there: basically, a small building, and a launching areas for boats, with very little traffic in and out. While I respect their perspective, I think it is overblown, over the top, and counter-productive for a vibrant town and county that could use the extra jobs, prosperity, and enjoyment for the locals as well as for tourists.

Finally, my biologist friends at St. FX tell me that oysters in fact clean the water. We are not talking about a paper mill!

Mr. Potter and his family are wonderful citizens, always willing to help, and I think they should be encouraged in pursuing this project.

Many thanks for your time and consideration.

Yvon,

Dr. Yvon Grenier

Professor | Department of Political Science

Resident Fellow, Mulroney Institute of Government

St. Francis Xavier University | Mulroney Hall, Rm. 4067

2333 Notre Dame Avenue, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada B2G 2W5

Phone 902 867 3940 | Fax 902 867 5646

Email: ygrenier@stfx.ca

Webpage: <http://ygrenier0.wix.com/yvon-grenier>

Twitter: @ygrenier1

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 9:28 am, Mar 27, 2023

Breton oysters Ltd.

70 Causeway Dr
Sydney, NS
B1L-1C5

NSARB-2022-WRT-049

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Date: 03-26-2023

Re: Town Point Consulting Incorporated and licenses/leases for AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour (NSARB 2022-001)

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Kevin Pattengale. I own and operate Breton Oysters Ltd. which farms American Oysters on a lease in Lennox Passage, Richmond County.

As an active aquaculturist, I am aware of the Town Point applications and wish to express my views for consideration by the ARB.

Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia has been stagnant for many years. Our production lags far behind that of our neighbouring provinces and, as a result, our ability to compete in the marketplace is hindered. Supporting services in manufacturing, supply, consulting and distribution have not developed to the extent they have in New Brunswick and PEI here because the demand is insufficient due to our negligible growth. Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia needs to grow and we see the Town Point applications as a test case for our future; the outcome of these applications will, to a large degree, show us where we are headed as a "low impact high value" industry.

I know, from my experience in oyster farming, that such operations more than satisfy the requirements of factors a), b) and g). Oyster farms make optimal use of marine resources, make positive and impactful contributions to the communities in which they are located and have no impact on wild salmon sustainability.

I am not very familiar with Antigonish Harbour so cannot comment on the five other factors. However, I do know that, before an application reaches the ARB, there has been an exhaustive review of all eight factors by many government departments. Please consider the merits of these applications and discount opposing views that are not based on valid science or economic necessity.

Thank you,


Kevin Pattengale

Presentation to ARB in support of Town Point Oysters

Madame Chair, members of the board:

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444.

My name is Jessica Porter. I grew up in Antigonish, but have not lived full time for twenty years. I live now in Halifax. I have a B.Comm in Marketing.

I knew nothing about oysters per se, but as a business concept I was interested. And so at my father's (Dr Roger Porter) suggestion, I contacted Mr Ernie Porter so discuss the project. I was welcomed by him at his place and eventually met the rest of the family.

Mr Porter spent the next approximately two hours outlining his proposal for an oyster farm. We looked at maps of the harbour and area of lease applications. We discussed market opportunities, (Factor 3.b), whether or not the farm leases would be a hindrance to normal navigation (factor 3.e,f). I wondered about the possibility of pollution and effect on other species. Mr Porter spent considerable time in explaining how oysters are filter feeders and their positive effect on biodiversity. (Factor 3.d)

I think the most interesting part of the two hours was concerning the BOBR technology and its possible effect on the industry. This is amazing thinking. Nova Scotia is fortunate to have such people working in the province.

His planned nursery for oyster development was a bow around the whole package.

I trust the ARB will act quickly to grant the leases required.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica Porter
Halifax, NS

NSARB-2022-WRT-051

From: [Chris Almon](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Application for Oyster Farm in Antigonish Harbour
Date: March 27, 2023 3:15:51 PM

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Note: this is a copy of an email sent previously without my full civic address, which I have added here. Please disregard the previous email.

Hello,

I understand that my name is included in some document which indicates that I support TCPI's application for an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. I acknowledge that Mr. Porter dropped by our property to explain what his business plan was and that I signed a document that indicated that he had talked to me, but I was not aware that this document was to show support for it. I understood that it was simply part of his effort to inform community members of his plans.

I would appreciate it if you could take my name off the list of supporters.

I have reservations about the impact of this business on the environment of the harbour (re: Section 3d of the Licence and Lease Regs) which is in an already fragile state due to present agricultural practices surrounding the harbour. Although there has been investigation of the potential negative impacts of this project and appropriate mitigations discussed in the various submitted documents by TPCI, I am concerned about the future follow-up to determine if all of these actions will be done or accounted for. Aquaculture in Nova Scotia has a history of failings which do not engender a lot of public trust in new projects.

So, following a personal "precautionary principle" with regards to retaining a public common space has led me to determine that more harm than good will possibly come of this business and the ultimate result will be that there will be more negative than positive outcomes from it. Although this is rarely discussed in these kinds of projects, I am also concerned about the social impacts of the business on the residents on and around the harbour. The uncertainty about the real impact of this project's present plans and at this point, undiscussed but very possible future expansion have divided a once cohesive community.

I fear that the social impact of this proposed business (re:Section 3e of the Licence and Lease Regs) has and will continue to divide the community. And for what purpose? So that one person can exploit a common good and probably make some good money for himself and his family. Certainly there is an entrepreneurial spirit which can be lauded, but to the detriment of the community as a whole? I don't see the long-term value in it.

Thus I am conclusive about my decision not to support this project.

Thank you for your attention to take my name off the list of supporters.

Regards,

Christene Almon

[REDACTED]

Mahoneys Beach

Antigonish County, NS

NSARB-2022-WRT-052

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O Box 2223 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3C4
Attention: Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB clerk

Aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

March 19th, 2023

Dear Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing to you as a supporter of Town Point Oysters application for leases AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444 in Antigonish harbour and oyster farming in general.

I have been sustainably farming oysters for since 1999 when I was granted my first lease. My family has been involved in the oyster farming industry for 4 generations including my children. On top of oyster farming, I am the founder and co-owner of DockPort Ltd. the producers of BOBR.

The experience and the knowledge that I have gained before entering the industry myself, through my family, and since I have entered the industry will be what I base the following comments. My comments generally apply to factors A and B.

I have traveled all over the world and the further from Nova Scotia I go the more astounded and impressed I am at the equilibrium which different areas have created and achieved, to allow oyster farming to flourish and marine ecosystems to benefit. In these areas the marine and nonmarine benefits of sustainable oyster framing are promoted and advocated to all users of the marine ecosystem, whether they be recreational or commercial users, landowners, or members of the larger community.

Perhaps one of the many reasons this has been realizable in so many different scenarios and areas is that the science is clear. Oysters and oyster farming are an important and crucial part of our ever changing marine and social ecosystems. Be it the foundation of habitat for other marine organisms, the filtering of the water to allow organisms to exist and thrive, the health benefits of eating oysters, the sequestering of Carbon, the benefits to rural communities economies, the low carbon cost of producing high quality healthy protein in an era that we need to be conscious of how we produce protein or a multitude of other benefits of oysters. We in Nova Scotia should look towards these areas as positive examples of how to protect and benefit or marine ecosystems and rural economies.

The process to acquire a new oyster lease in Nova Scotia is not perfect and needs to evolve to catch up with our neighboring provinces and other areas of the world, where the benefits of farming oysters to the aquatic marine environment are welcomed and recognized for the positive effects oysters have on their environment. Oysters play an essential role in providing conditions favorable for healthy marine ecosystems, be it through habitat creation which provides other important species suitable habitat to grow or breed, or helping to clean the water so species can survive again.

Our provincial and federal governments are both in favor and forecasting growth in oyster farming. Healthy food production and helping to provide sustainable jobs in rural economies are often cited as reasons by these bodies. One hopes that through the lease application process that these government

bodies and network partners do their job and present supporting and opposing information gathered through their application review process to the ARB. All interested parties have ample time, opportunities and avenues to present their viewpoint or opinion. As I see it the ARB then has the job of taking this information and filtering through it for the facts and actual messaging that individuals of organizations present in order to make a decision which is in the best interest of Nova Scotia, and not one individual or organization.

I have attached a letter from a lady from Antigonish who visited our farm with two other people during Town Points application process. When the three arrived on our farm I asked the man driving if they were members of Friends of Antigonish Harbour (FOAH), he said he was not, so I spent the better part of two hours showing them portions of our farm, discussing oyster farming and answering their questions. Turned out he was not but his wife and the other lady in the car were, and both are in the documentary film about TPO. He failed to mention this. This is shared with the ARB to highlight that I have found often throughout the duration of Town Point consulting Inc. lease application process that Friends of Antigonish Harbour have often used miss messaging to disguise their actual motives. Perhaps their efforts would be of more value to the Antigonish community and the marine ecosystem in this harbour if they worked to address problems in the harbour relating to undesirable existing and historical anthropogenic inputs (sewage/ run off). This group is welcome to provide their opinion that is why the public component of the process is in place. But they should be honest about the facts they present, and the information provided to support this opinion and their place in the public realm. One should be weary of unfounded, inaccurate, or unrelated information to one's true message to achieve a desired outcome in this process.

The misinformation and changing of the messaging of FOAH with regards to oyster farming in general and their lack of willingness to accept many of the positive aspects of oysters and oyster farming on marine ecosystems is disappointing to say the least and has been negative for Oyster farming in Nova Scotia. I hope in the future working to improve the aging and insufficient sewage treatment plant at the end of Antigonish Harbour and out of date septic systems around the harbour take up as much of their time as opposing Town Point Oysters applications do.

Oyster farming is not a get rich fast business. It takes a lot of dedication, planning, risk tolerance and hard work in a continually changing environment. I believe that Ernie and his family have shown all of these and more positive characteristics throughout the process. If their work throughout the process is any indication of the work, they will put into being part of one of the most promising sustainable marine food production industries in Nova Scotia, I hope that the board will approve their applications.

Regards



Philip Docker

ShanDaph Oyster Co. Inc.

From: ShanDaph Oysters <[REDACTED]@godaddy.com>

Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 6:13 PM

To: [REDACTED] com [REDACTED]@shandaph.com>

Subject: A message from your ShanDaph Oysters contact form.

ShanDaph Oysters has received a new message.

Email:

[REDACTED]@gmail.com

Name:

susan ross

Message:

I just want to thank you very much for indulging us for so long this afternoon. Although I am not convinced that the environmental improvements you have seen would necessarily be replicated in Antigonish Harbour if Mr Porter's project is approved, and I believe we have a somewhat more complicated economic and social context than you do, I think it would be great if there were more farms like yours, run by people like you, in places like yours, in Nova Scotia. Cheers. Susan

Language:

en-US

Reply to this email to respond.

From: [REDACTED]@ns.sympatico.ca
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Support for Town Point Oysters
Date: March 28, 2023 12:18:06 PM

NSARB-2022-WRT-053

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]@ns.sympatico.ca. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Attention : Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

We are Hughie and Debbie Stewart, [REDACTED], Antigonish, N.S. [REDACTED]. This letter is in support of the Porter Family and their endeavours to bring this project under application numbers AQ#1442, AQ# 1443 and AQ #1444 to completion. From the beginning of this process the Porters have been very concerned with keeping the public in the loop of what they were trying to accomplish. My wife and I have been involved in the Antigonish business community for the past 52 years and encourage any new opportunities that will support a viable employment and economic addition to the area. Through open houses and information sessions it has been brought to our attention that oysters will provide a natural purifying system to public waters that have been an environmental concern for years. I have addressed items b(the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development) and e(the other uses of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation) of the submission requirements. I have personally inspected the area and see no impediment to other uses of the water for fishery activities. In general conversation I have asked if those speaking in a negative manner have been to the site and the answer was no. My concern is that opposition for this project is to keep the Porters from a profitable business. We totally support Town Point Oysters and wish them success on this application process.

Sincerely

Hughie and Debbie Stewart

NSARB-2022-WRT-054

Hana Nelson

[REDACTED]
Merigomish, NS, [REDACTED]

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3C4
Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca
Reference: Town Point Consulting, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

March 9th 2023

Dear Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing to you as a supporter of the Town Point Oysters Application for leases AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 to farm oysters in Antigonish Harbour. My area of expertise lies in sustainable seafood marketing and distribution, as the former owner of Afishonado Fishmongers Inc and as someone who has been actively involved in sustainable seafood and food system studies for over a decade. I have an undergraduate degree in Biology from Dalhousie and a Master's in Agroecology from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and ISARA-Lyon France. My comments will relate to the following points: a) the optimum use of marine resources, and b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development. I would like to present this letter as a sworn oral statement during the hearing.

I started Afishonado in 2014 from my observance that Nova Scotia lacked a brand that was focussed on high quality seafood from exclusively farmed and fished, eco-certified, recommended fisheries. We used the Ocean Wise recommended program as our principal guide for sustainable seafood procurement. Ocean Wise recommended fisheries represent those that are the best choice for the health of the ocean.

Farmed oysters are one of the best seafood sources from our ocean from a taste, carbon footprint, and nutritional perspective. In the context of carbon emissions, the consumption of low carbon footprint shellfish from the ocean is one of the best protein sources we can consume, outcompeting land-based animal proteins. Oysters are an unfed crop, consuming nutrients from the marine environment. They require no inputs. This concept of 'Blue Foods'ⁱ from Gephart et al., 2021 are those aquatic foods that have a lower carbon footprint than land based farmed animals. Oysters, as a blue food have some of the lowest environmental stressors such as "greenhouse gases, nitrogen, phosphorus, freshwater and land stressors for species groups.....unfed aquaculture results in negligible values for most considered stressors. Furthermore, blue foods provide the highest nutrient richness across multiple micronutrients. Farmed blue food is among the fastest growing food sectors and the global community now faces a unique window of opportunity to steer expansion towards sustainability."ⁱⁱ

In the seafood retail market space as more information is disseminated on the importance of blue foods it helps to increase consumption, and we already see this happening. Popularity of oysters on the half shell and in other uses has continued to rise. We see a steady demand, and even soaring demand in 2022 from our principal export market (the US). Eastern Canadian oysters are sought after both for their clean, crisp taste, but also for their shelf life in comparison to oysters cultivated in the Southern US. A

very attractive advantage for oyster bars and retailers that fetch a premium price as a result of these differences.

A presentation by John Sackton founder of www.seafoodnews.com at the 2022 Nova Scotia Ministers conference on Fisheries and Aquaculture showed data from the first half of 2022 for oyster sales and Maritime oyster pricing and volumes, which confirmed that Maritime oysters are seeing soaring demand. Most of this benefit has gone to New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island producers as Nova Scotia has not been able to increase its number of new entrants due to the restrictive regulatory process.

As ocean temperatures rise and the pressure sustained by our wild capture fisheries cause both fluctuations and decreasing stock abundance, we will continue to look to farmed seafood as an alternative. Fishing enterprises are critical to Nova Scotia's rural economies. The urgency is pressing to bring more blue food farming methods into the fold to sustain our rural economies. A statistic I find troubling is Nova Scotia's over-reliance on the wild capture fisheries. In 2021 Nova Scotia's seafood exports were \$2.48 billionⁱⁱⁱ. In 2021 Nova Scotia's aquaculture output value fell by 8.0% to \$83.0 million (the only province that reported a decline)^{iv}. Of the total aquaculture value, only \$6.12 million was attributed to shellfish in 2021^v. Those values translate to 3.46% of Nova Scotia's total seafood sales coming from all aquaculture sources in 2021 and 0.26% from shellfish. We are well off the global trend of over 50% of seafood coming from farmed sources. The threat to Nova Scotia's rural communities is looming if we do not take up the call to farm seafood with urgency.

One of the reasons I have been personally attracted to shellfish production and sales, is for its contribution to greater societal sustainability, as an environmentally friendly protein source, a healthy food choice, and as a livelihood for rural communities. I see all these as wins and I think the addition of Town Point Oysters as another oyster farm in our province will bring positive value to the community and provincial economy.

Sincerely,

Hana Nelson



hananelson@gmail.com

ⁱ Gephart, J.A., P.J.G. Henriksson, R.W.R. Parker, A. Shepon, K.D. Gorospe, K. Bergman, G. Eshel, C.D. Golden, B.S. Halpern, S. Hornborg, M. Jonell, M. Metian, K. Mifflin, R. Newton, P. Tyedmers, W. Zhang, F. Ziegler, M. Troell (2021) Environmental performance of blue foods. *Nature*. 597:360-365

ⁱⁱ Gephart, J. A. et al. Scenarios for global aquaculture and its role in human nutrition. *Rev. Fish. Sci. Aquac.* 29, 122–138 (2021).

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/ea-ae/economic-analysis/Canada-Fish-Seafood-trade-commerce-poisson-fruits-de-mer-eng.html>

^{iv} https://novascotia.ca/finance/statistics/archive_news.asp?id=18369&dg=&df=&dto=0&dti=3#:~:text=AQUACULTURE%2C%202021&text=Nova%20Scotia%20was%20the%20only,aquaculture%20industry%20increased%20by%205.9%25.

^v <https://novascotia.ca/fish/documents/aqua-stats/2021-production.pdf>

March 29, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-055

Submission to: Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

Re: Town Point Consulting, Inc., NSARB2022-001-002-003 (AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444)

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on this application for three marine aquaculture licenses/ leases by Town Point Consulting, Inc.

I will focus my comments on Section 3(e) of the Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations, “the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation.”

I have read through the online documentation, including the three reports on consultation, and the written submissions as available on March 20, 2023. Of particular concern to me is the potential impact of the proposed industry on certain issues raised by the Mi’kmaq during consultation, and by a local fisherman in the written submissions.

Potential Impediment to Fishing Activities

I noted a number of submissions by recreational users of the marine area(s) in question, but only one from an experienced local commercial fisherman. In submission NSARB-2022-WRT-028, Mr Darrel Beaton writes as “one of the 5 commercial fishermen who oppose the oyster lease application.” Mr. Beaton notes, with examples, that AQ area 1444 would constitute a direct impediment to navigation in the course of his fishing operations. This would also, by extension, impede the exercising of Mi’kmaw Treaty Fishing Rights. Nova Scotia has experienced serious issues in this realm during recent years; **further comprehensive investigation of Mr. Beaton’s concerns – prior to the issuing of licences -- is urgently warranted.**

Mi’kmaw Archaeological Resources

Local, national, and international bodies support the pressing importance of reclaiming Indigenous heritage. Dr. Dorothy Lander, an Antigonish academic, publisher and historical researcher, has collected important archival resources documenting the long history of Mi’kmaw presence and use of Antigonish Harbour in the Town Point area. The Nova Scotia Museum and the Mi’kmaewey Debert Cultural Centre project have been at the forefront of cultural reclamation efforts in our province, and Canada’s efforts to implement recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission give similar prominence to this process.

Internationally, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) recognizes the importance of revitalizing Indigenous cultural traditions through the protection of archaeological artifacts (Article 11). Significantly, the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage* recognizes the need to protect "all traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archaeological character" which have been under water for over 100 years. Article 5 states that practical means should be used to prevent or mitigate any adverse effects that might arise from activities that could incidentally affect underwater cultural heritage.

The process used in assessing the applications by Town Point Consulting, Inc. (TPCI) has included “moderate level consultation” with the Mi’kmaq under the Mi’kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Consultation Terms of Reference.

In a November 6, 2020 email, a representative of the (then) Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage noted, “As identified by CCH, there are 3 archaeological sites within 1 km of the proposed site.”

During the ensuing consultation, concerns were raised by the Mi’kmaq representatives about:

1. Impacts to the Piping Plover species
2. Impacts to submerged Mi’kmaq archaeological resources.
(Exhibits 08 & 09, p.10; Exhibit 10, p.9)

With regard to archaeological resources, Communities, Culture, and Heritage responded:

“This is an area of elevated archaeological potential. Given this is a suspended culture set up, immediate archaeology concerns are minimal. However, please communicate to the license operator, that if at any time artifacts are encountered during operations, the Coordinator of Special Places, John Cormier should be contacted immediately.”

In response “The Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia recommended a full Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment (ARIA) be undertaken.” (Exhibits 08 & 09, p.11; Exhibit 10, p.10.)

The recommendation for an ARIA was not accepted by the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, however. NSDFA decided that “requesting that the applicant contact the Coordinator of Special Places in the event any archaeological artifacts are encountered” was sufficient mitigation. The relevant Mi’kmaq bodies were “informed of this decision.”

Unfortunately, there is some uncertainty about the applicant’s understanding of the importance of cultural artifacts. An online article recounts “Ernie can’t help but find artifacts when he tills his garden, or dredges the beach to build his dock. Ernie guaranteed me that I’d be going home with an artifact or two, and he was right ... Sure enough, I had pulled out a piece of timber, part of a clay pot, and two pieces of a plate which together, showed a British coat of arms!!”

[\(https://johndavidphotography.ca/ernie-porter-an-environmental-portrait/\)](https://johndavidphotography.ca/ernie-porter-an-environmental-portrait/)

This way of handling colonial artifacts does not inspire confidence that any future Indigenous finds will be recognized if encountered, and reported appropriately.

A full Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment, prior to the installation of aquaculture equipment with fixed anchors in the ocean floor, would show respect for the reasonable concerns raised by the Indigenous Rights representatives, and ensure that valuable artifacts are not overlooked or lost.

This is an era when we are working toward reconciliation and greater cultural understanding. **The Mi’kmaq and non-Indigenous Nova Scotians deserve to have this “area of elevated archaeological potential” comprehensively surveyed before development takes place.**

Sincerely and respectfully,

Susan Adams

Beaver Meadow,
Antigonish County, NS



Charlene I LeBlanc, President

[REDACTED]
Lower West Pubnico, NS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [@leblancseededlines.ca](mailto:[REDACTED]@leblancseededlines.ca)
[REDACTED]

March 12, 2023

NS Aquaculture Review Board
1800 Argyle Street, Halifax, NS
B3J 2RS

Re: Town Point Oysters AQ#1442 AQ#1443 AQ#1444

I am submitting comments to the Aquaculture Review Board regarding the above applications.

I have had the opportunity to meet Mr. Ernie Porter several times, including a visit to his hatchery. There I also was introduced to his new technology for growing oysters; the BOBR, and attended a public engagement session in Antigonish, where I listened to supporters and non-supporters alike.

Having worked to further develop opportunities for shellfish and marine plants aquaculture in my municipality of Argyle, my first impression of Town Point Oysters, was how fortunate these residents are to have someone willing and capable to bring oysters into Antigonish Harbour.

Not only are jobs being created, but the health of the harbour will improve. I have been a member of the National Eel Grass Task Force, and have studied Managing Large Ecosystems, and having the opportunity to naturally filter that harbour and reducing turbidity should benefit grasses to grow and ocean habitats/nurseries for fish and shellfish species to thrive.

While on the shores of the harbour I watched fishing boats make their way the their docks across from Ernie Porters home. The harbour is vast, and while I saw the boats manoeuvre what appeared to be ledges near their navigation route, it was apparent that there was ample room for both aquaculture sites and fishing to co-exist.

I since saw updates on the size of the sites proposed by Town Point Oyster and the fact that he has reduced the size and moved boundaries more than proves his willingness to be a good neighbour, a friend of the environment, and a serious business owner. Asking for a mere 2% of the harbour, using equipment that is barely visual, providing jobs, while cleaning a harbour that all will use, are valid reasons to support Town Point Oysters.

Sincerely,



Charlene I LeBlanc

President, LeBlanc Seeded Lines



NSARB-2022-WRT-057

From: [Sean Cameron](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [Premier](#); greg.morrow@novascotia.ca; [REDACTED]
Subject: Opposition to Oyster Farm - Antigonish
Date: March 29, 2023 10:02:43 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]@townofantigonish.ca. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Please accept this letter as a formal letter of opposition to the proposed Oyster Farm project.

Ref: Town Point Oysters AQ1442, AQ1443 and AQ1444.

I was advised that my name appears on the list of residents in support of this application.

I do have unanswered questions regarding this proposal that have a negative impact on five local fishermen. These families have used the Antigonish Harbour navigational routes for generations. I stand with these families who may suffer financially due to this development.

Sincerely yours,

Sean Cameron
[REDACTED]

Sean Cameron
Councillor - Town of Antigonish
16-A MacLellan Street
Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 1V5
sean.cameron@townofantigonish.ca

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
Attn : Stacy Bruce.

To Whom It May Concern:

Reference Town Point Oysters AQ1442, AQ1443 andAQ1444

My name is Sean Cameron and I am an elected representative of the Council for the Town of Antigonish. Please accept this letter as one who opposes the development of the oyster

lease application of Town Point Consulting.

I had visited at the home of Mr. Ernie Porter and viewed his operation and signed his guest book. I was also present at the information session that was held at St. Francis Xavier University and the presentation that Mr. Porter had presented to the Town Council. Council was advised of the benefits of this operation (economic. cleaning of the harbour and his new technology about harvesting). This seemed like a win - win.

Since those two initial presentations, I was made aware of the ask of 95 acres of the harbour for his exclusive usage. This is near the mouth of the harbour. I have since been advised of the barriers that could prevent users of the harbour, both recreational and local fishers, from using this portion of the harbour. Removing access to the fishermen's berths, where their families have operated for generations will have a negative impact for them and our local economy.

As a lifelong resident of Antigonish, I oppose a new business to push out fishermen from using what they had access to for generations. Mr Porter's needs for the exclusive use of 95 acres of the Harbour for his commercial operation will negatively impact five local fishermen. I will stand with the fishermen to support their livelihood unimpeded.

For these reasons, I oppose this application.

Sean Cameron



Presentation to ARB in support of Town Point Oysters

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444.

My name is Ina Porter and I lived on the harbour for fifteen years. I live now at [REDACTED], Antigonish County.

I am writing to give support to the lease applications mentioned above. I will not repeat here the many scientific reasons for my support because my husband, Dr Roger Porter, has covered that effectively. I will, however, comment on the family.

Since getting to know the family over the past three years I have found them to be intelligent, outgoing, innovative, community-minded, and peaceful.

I say peaceful because in spite of the many personal attacks they have not responded to those attacks in any negative way, but have taken the high road and concentrated solely on sound reasoning with one goal in mind. They have reasoned publicly and privately based on science to satisfy all government requirements for the project.

I feel the time has come to move the lease applications to completion. It is pleasing to note that it is the ARB's responsibility alone to decide on this project.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ina Porter

NSARB-2022-WRT-059

From: [Beth Latwaitis](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: TownPoint Oysters AQ1442,AQ1443,AQ1444 Attn,SBruce
Date: March 29, 2023 12:59:21 PM

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Beth and Brian Latwaitis

[REDACTED]
Antigonish NS
[REDACTED]

Good Day to those of you reading this letter.

We are writing this to inform you of our opposition to the proposal of Town Point Consulting to develop an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour.

We have discussed this proposition and its effects on the harbour on which we live for a lengthy period of time.

We reside across the water from the Porters proposed development and have seen the changes in the harbour first hand - both of us- over the past 20 -years and over a period of almost 70 years -for Beth -as she has been coming to the beach around the Harbour lands owned by her family since the early 50's.

This harbour has provided a livelihood for the fishing families here for generations. They have been the stewards of our small harbour and its adjacent shores and have kept the area pristine.

They have shared its shallow waters with fellow fishers,oyster gatherers , boaters, swimmers -all in a spirit of enjoyment of this natural gift.

The changes in the harbour over the past 20 years have been unbelievable .We can not easily access Dunns Beach due to the build up of rock which has pushed up to the upper edge of the beach .Each storm brings new impediments.

The harbour is much more energetic given the force of the winds .Not just the Nor Easter's-The Southerly winds as well.

we need not remind you of the damage incurred by Fiona.

Our biggest concern is the size of the oyster growing areas.They cover 5per cent of this shallow harbour. The best 5 percent of the harbour.They will certainly affect movement in and around the harbour.Please look at the size and location of the proposed leases.

A public resource ,protected, enjoyed,worked on through generations is to become a commercial fishery?A harbour like this is a rarity in todays world. It needs our protection.

These people,the people of the harbour and its adjacent areas do not support this.

Into an environment in which grasses, wildlife, humans have been co operative for so long, to what advantage is this oyster farm?

In closing we respectfully ask.

90 acres of harbour being farmed?

9 million oysters being harvested ?

52km of ropes and cables being utilized?

What could go wrong???? we are honestly afraid.

Thank you . Brian and Beth Latwaitis

Sent from my iPhone

March 29, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-060
and associated
NSARB-2022-WRT-041

To: Clerk of the Board

Re: The application by TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. for THREE MARINE AQUACULTURE LICENCES AND LEASES for the SUSPENDED CULTIVATION of AMERICAN OYSTERS - AQ1442, AQ1443, AQ1444 in ANTIGONISH HARBOUR, ANTIGONISH COUNTY (hearing commences April 2023)

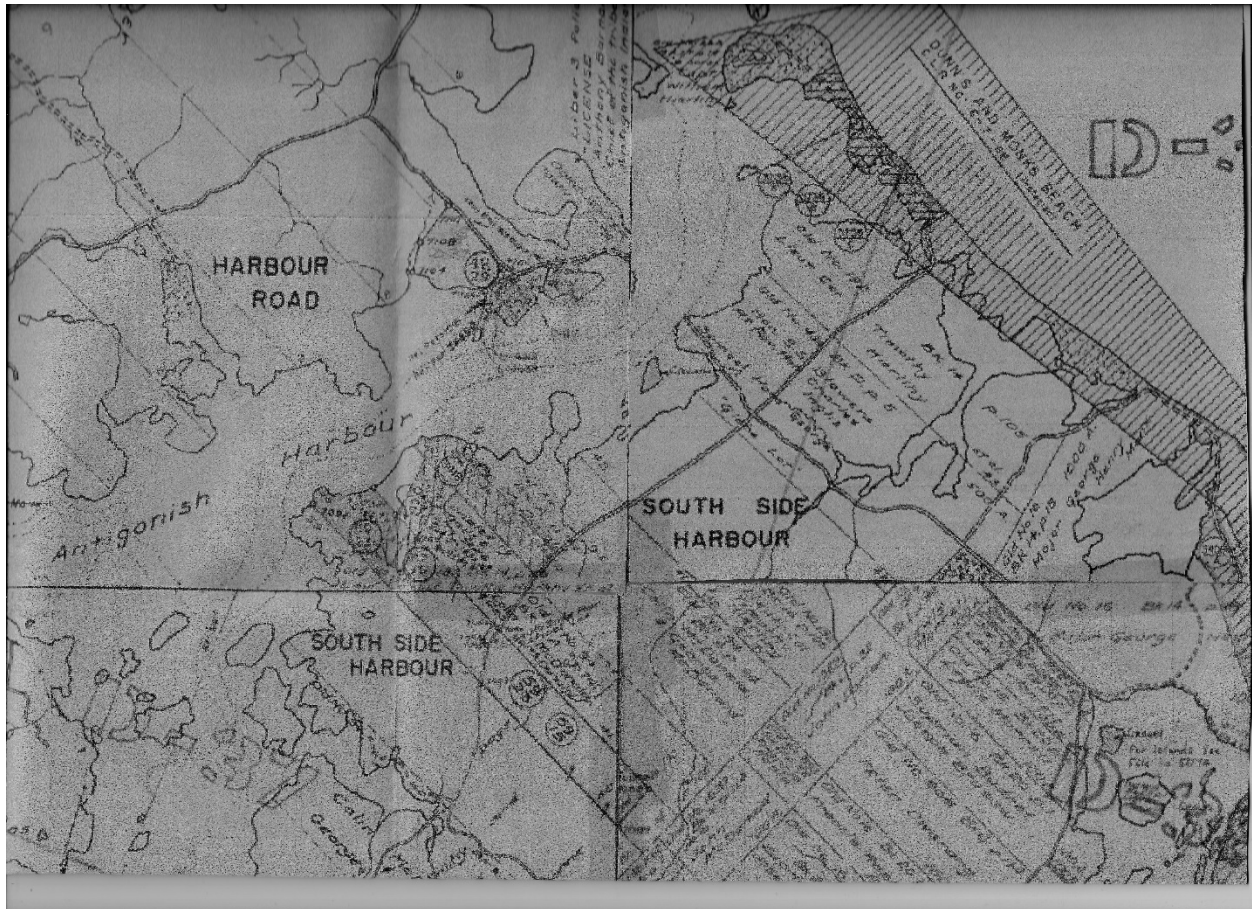
From: Dorothy Lander, [REDACTED], Clydesdale, Nova Scotia, [REDACTED]

Tel. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [@gmail.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@gmail.com)

In reviewing Section 3, I chose b) as it is the only factor that takes “community” into consideration, namely, the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development. Conspicuous by its absence is any acknowledgement of the community covered by treaty rights related to fishing or the history of Indigenous-Settler relations at Antigonish Harbour. The impact of colonization on “community” development in Antigonish continues to this day.

Given the Marshall Case that went to the Supreme Court in 1999 appealing on the basis of treaty rights to a “moderate livelihood” from eel fishing and the related Calls for Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, this is an egregious omission. The 1783 License issued to Chief Anthony Bernard from the Indian Superintendent George Henry Monk is still on the books at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia and is reflected on this map of Antigonish Harbour, the very area that is the focus of the hearing.



Community economic and cultural development and sustainability of our natural resources cannot be separated from the history of Indigenous-Settler relations dating to the first permanent European settlement of Antigonish at Town Point in 1784.

I urge the Aquaculture Board to include and listen to Indigenous voices in your hearing and to be aware of the historical documents regarding land rights and treaty obligations related to fishing in the waters around Town Point. A basic consideration of community and provincial economic development is sustainability of marine resources, which surely must take into account the global climate emergency. Everyday we hear from climate change scientists and climate justice activists that we must look to Indigenous stewardship of the lands and oceans. Given that 80% of all species on Earth exist only in Indigenous territories, it is clear that Indigenous ways of looking after the land and water and all the species that live there, offer our best way forward for survival of all species.

My personal interest and knowledge of the factors concerning this application emerged from my project initiative with Arts Health Antigonish (www.artshealthantigonish.org), in which I

organized a popular theatre/pilgrimage to Town Point, entitled *1784: (Un)Settling Antigonish*, in which performers drawn from the many Nations of Antigonish (Mi'kmaw, Acadian, Irish, Anglo-Celtic, African) co-generated the script, challenging the Eurocentric records of the founding of Antigonish at Town Point. [REDACTED], the Land Coordinator for Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation [REDACTED]@gmail.com), was among the script-writers and performers who reported on and read the 1783 License to this Land:

On December 19, 1783, a license for this land was issued in Halifax to the chief of the tribe. The Public Archives of Nova Scotia holds this document from the Indian Superintendent's letter-book.

A License to be granted Anthony Barnard, chief of the Tribe of Antigonish Indians for them to Occupy Undisturbed the several Villages and Tracts they have improved and settled upon on the River [that is, Antigonish Harbour] of the same name, to wit, on the Peninsula on the Western side of the River, where the Mass House is placed, also the Island near the Western side of the River, together with the village near the head of the Tide on Both sides the River with Liberty of Hunting and Fishing as Customary.

Do consider carefully if Indigenous “hunting and fishing as customary” can occur in Antigonish Harbour should the operation of a large-scale oyster farm (23,000 cages, over 90 acres with 9 Million oysters) go ahead.

In the summer of 2015, four of the five performances of our popular theatre event *1784 (Un)Settling Antigonish* played outdoors at Town Point. The Indigenous-Settler friendships that were fused through this project endure to this day.

In the way of popular theatre, Elder [REDACTED] rose from the audience and told a story of colonization in the waters off Town Point, specifically the decimation of porpoises from Antigonish Harbour: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWsLa9g6-W0> Search for All My Relations Thomas Christmas on YouTube.

Local filmmaker [REDACTED] has also created a documentary film of *1784: (Un)Settling Antigonish*, which is available through our publishing house HARP Publishing The People's Press (<https://www.harppublishing.ca/books/1784-unsettling-antigonish-film/>). Watch the 7-minute trailer for a deeper understanding of how the “community” of Antigonish is committed to honouring and respecting Indigenous rights to the lands and waters at Town Point and Antigonish Harbour. The outcome of this hearing will stand as a record of the Antigonish community to truth and reconciliation as put forth in the 94 Calls to Action.

With respect

We are all treaty people

Dorothy Lander

NSARB-2022-WRT-061

Letter of Support for Town Point Oysters

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

My name is Alex Bouchie and I live in Pictou County at [REDACTED], Trenton. I started working at a nearby oyster farm after I graduated with a degree in Aerospace Engineering. I am very familiar with Ernie Porters plans for three oyster leases in Antigonish Harbour and I also have firsthand experience in the work and dedication it requires to both go through this application process as well as running a farm.

The vast majority of available research already indicates that oyster farming has little to no negative impacts while also providing many positive environmental impacts when done sustainably. In a harbour that is designated as contaminated, the local users should be very much in support of an oyster farm as the oysters are filter feeders. There is already a bottom lease in the harbour as well as commercial fishery which is an indicating factor that oysters are present and thriving within the harbour.

While most of the environmental impacts of oyster farming are well documented and can be witnessed in person at other oyster farms (within the province or in NB or PEI), the benefits to the community and provincial economic development (Factor B) are harder to comprehend. If you spend any amount of time touring PEI, you will see oyster farms in the water and oyster dorys being towed down the road. These farms also have employees that do regular husbandry tasks and are members of their local communities. Not visible however, are the industries that service the aquaculture industry such as welding shops making specialized gear for different aspects of farming (ie work platforms, boats, thrashers, graders, conveyors, tumblers, etc). These machines can be run either hydraulically or electronically requiring further support from even further removed business. Nova Scotia hasn't had the demand to develop aquaculture gear resulting in farmers having to go to PEI for such equipment. Ernie has the design capabilities and scalability that would see Nova Scotian companies building aquaculture equipment (ie. the specialized farm vessel being designed and built with A.F. Theriault & Son Ltd.). Local fishing supplies stores, Maritime Marine Supply and Vernon d'Eon Fishing Supplies, will also benefit directly through sales to Town Point Oysters. Furthermore, the BOBR technology that Ernie intends to use has proven on our farm to produce higher quality oysters in less time and this gear is also being produced in Canada. Gear production, oyster production as well as all the supplies required also need to be transported/shipped, further benefitting the community.

Additionally, more high quality oysters coming from Nova Scotia will give the industry as a whole more recognition which has the potential to benefit all oyster farmers in the province. More directly, the oyster nursery at Town Point has the potential to supply quality seed to other farms as well as Ernie's leases. The oyster farming industry in Nova Scotia has been steadily falling behind the neighbouring provinces in production numbers as well as public

perception. Ernie has done his research, has given many tours and has changed many minds on their perception of oyster farming.

With respect to Factors E and F, I personally saw the proposed lease sizes shrink multiple times. They were adjusted specifically to accommodate concerns raised during consultations. These locations do not interfere with any navigable channels, nor do they go all the way to shore (allowing a boat to go fully around the lease). Oyster farming requires a presence on the water almost everyday while the water is open. Having a commercial oyster operation in the harbour, and watercraft always out working on the farm provides an extra layer of safety to recreational users of the harbour. I have personally rescued kayakers on two separate occasions in the last three years. I have also been a part of returning boats that have gone adrift.

While there has been a significant pushback by a very small but vocal group in the area, I firmly believe the benefits far outweigh the “not in my backyard” mentality. Their efforts to stop these leases and misinformation will have an ongoing negative impact on the industry. There seems to be no issue with thousands of styrofoam buoys being deployed in the Northumberland Strait during lobster season (as well as the navigational issues that arise from that) but a designated area to farm oysters (clearly marked as per the Navigable Waters Act) on the surface of intertidal waters causes worry and concern.

I fully support this proposal and I hope there are more oyster farming applications from new entrants in the not too distant future.

Alex Bouchie

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Freddy Pinochet

University of Santiago, Chile.

- Antarctica carbon footprint studies
- Degree in Applied Physics
- Physics Engineer

Saint Francis Xavier University

- Graduate Student, Earth Science Department

To: The members of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

Working with regional climate models, my primary goal is to assist small towns in preparing for the inescapable effects of climate change. As a new resident of Antigonish, I've been learning about indigenous cultures, conventional farming, and alternative agricultural methods. By chance, I ran across this family and learned about their plans to start an oyster farm. I am aware of the economic and social advantages a new farm could bring to Antigonish, but I will concentrate on global warming in this letter.

Earth's temperature is increasing due to the accumulation of greenhouse gases. These gases trap heat from the sun, leading to a rise in global temperatures [(1) IPCC6]. That is bringing problems like sea level rise and SST (sea surface temperature changes). We know that oyster populations have been reduced by at least 85% in the last 100 hundred years, and we know that oyster farms help to repopulate wild reefs. Being an important part of our ecosystem, we have to worry about the decline of this keystone species and try to repopulate them [2].

If you open a new farm, you always have to talk with your community (I don't mean just people that live around), and I am aware that this family has made extensive community communication efforts. I also know that this family is making efforts to collaborate with community and respect our environment, for example, using sustainable energy like solar panels to power their oyster nursery and talking with scientists in StFX to understand better their impacts. I see dishonest fear-mongering from those that don't want this change. We can't stop this project just because some people don't like it or don't want change. Decisions should be based on the farm plan's merits, factual information, and science.

We have the opportunity to reduce carbon footprint and benefit economy by supporting this oyster farm and other small local sustainable farms like it [1,4-6]. Studying this farm

is a great opportunity for StFX and beyond. We already know that human pollution and rising SST is bringing too much nutrients and phytoplankton to harbours, which is the primary food source for oysters. According to research [6], bivalve farming contributes to the maintenance of harbour currents and the availability of food sources in the harbour, which helps other species to have food, such as crustaceans, fish, birds, etc. A benefit to biodiversity. We can create a lot of studies about oysters on this farm, which will help StFX and our region to be a pioneer in this area. {factors a,b,d}

I support this farm because I believe it will benefit the environment and this area. As someone who studies climate change, I see this as more than a local issue. We need to rethink how we produce food on a global scale if there is any chance to combat climate change. Oysters sequester carbon! Future generations depend on our generation taking action now.

We as a community have a responsibility to make the oyster farm respect the environment, and I am confident that they already do this and will continue to. They are a respectable family who don't intend to harm the harbour because they also reside there. Local farms always spark debate, but I am confident that this family is willing to prioritize environmental science and discuss any issues and always keeps their doors open to anyone who wants to learn more.

Sincerely,

Freddy Pinochet

References

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Economic Valuation of Ecosystem Services Provided by Oyster Reefs, *BioScience*, Volume 62, Issue 10, October 2012, Pages 900–909

5. Altieri, Miguel A. Small farms as a planetary ecological asset: five key reasons why we should support the revitalisation of small farms in the global south. Vol. 7. Penang, Malaysia: Third World Network, 2008.

6. Influence of oyster and seaweed cultivation facilities on coastal environment and eukaryote assemblages in Matsushima Bay, northeastern Honshu, Japan. Okumura, Yutaka; Masuda, Yoshio; Matsutani, Minenosuke; Shiimoto, Aki- hiro. *Frontiers in Marine Science*; Lausanne (Jan 10, 2023)



PREMIUM
seafoods group

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 3:02 pm, Mar 30, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-063

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PO Box 39
Arichat, Nova Scotia
Canada B0E 1A0

Phone: +1 902 226 3474

Fax: +1 902 226 0026

www.premiumseafoods.ns.ca

March 29th, 2023

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Re: Town Point Consulting Incorporated and licenses/leases for AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour (NSARB 2022-001)

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Edgar Samson and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of Premium Seafoods Ltd. Our company owns and operates an aquaculture lease in Arichat Harbour that farms American Oysters, Sea Scallops, and Sugar Kelp. I live at 3215 Hwy 206, Petit de Grat, Nova Scotia B0E 2L0. As part of a small group of sea farmers in Nova Scotia, I am aware of the Town Point Consulting applications for three new marine leases and wish to express my support and my views for consideration by the Aquaculture Review Board (ARB). I would like to speak specifically to factors a) the optimum use of marine resources; b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development; and g) the sustainability of wild salmon.

Aquaculture plays a vital role in the long-term survival of our coastal communities. It provides a sustainable source of protein, creates career opportunities for those who wish to stay and work in our communities, and generates considerable economic growth. Moreover, aquaculture can support our traditional fishing communities that have experienced fluctuations in wild fishing populations and helps to ensure that our coastal communities can continue to thrive for generations to come.

Despite the abundant opportunity for sustainable aquaculture activity in the province, our shellfish aquaculture industry has remained stagnant for many years. The lack of growth in our province has impacted our competitiveness in the market. As a result, services that support our industry are also affected such as manufacturing, consulting, and distribution. In contrast, our neighbouring provinces, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, have seen significant growth in their aquaculture industries and the accompanying economic benefits.

While I am not familiar with Antigonish Harbour specifically, sea farmers have been farming shellfish in our own community for many years. In our experience, shellfish farming aligns with the principles of sustainable and responsible aquaculture by promoting the long-term health and productivity of our marine ecosystems, in turn, making optimal use of our marine resources. Moreover, shellfish aquaculture has no impact on wild salmon sustainability.

Currently, we have three of our own lease applications with the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture that we hope to be promoted to the ARB for consideration in the future. I know first-hand the exhaustive review process undertaken by the province for such applications to have been recommended to the ARB for consideration. This not only requires approval from the various provincial departments but also various network partners including the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Environment Climate Change Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Transport Canada, and First Nations consultation. I am confident that all of the eight factors for consideration were carefully reviewed. It is imperative that we give due consideration to the merits of these applications and dismiss any opposing views that lack valid scientific evidence or fail to demonstrate economic necessity.

In summary, I believe that supporting the growth of shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia is crucial, and the Town Point Consulting applications represent an important step in this direction. I encourage the board to approve these applications and to continue promoting sustainable aquaculture practices in the province.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Edgar Samson
President & CEO
Premium Seafood Ltd.

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 3:14 pm, Mar 30, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-064

David MacFarlane

██████████
Antigonish, N.S.
██████████

March 30, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture and Review Board

Re: application numbers – AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support the application for Town Point Oysters Farm. I have attended the public meetings and found Mr. Porter to be straight forward and transparent in answering all questions and concerns brought forward. In addition, Dr. Garbary's expertise was helpful in understanding Antigonish Harbour and possible impacts of an oyster farm.

The introduction of the oyster farm allows development of an underutilized resource in our area. Food sustainability is becoming increasingly important and having aquatic resources spread throughout the province is a positive step. What is most impressive with oyster farming is that at worst its environmentally neutral but most likely to help improve the water quality of Antigonish Harbour.

I also believe this will be a positive addition to our local economy by adding needed jobs to our local economy along with enhancing the local restaurant culture by serving locally produced seafood.

Yours sincerely

David MacFarlane

NSARB-2022-WRT-065

George Cawkwell
Laura MacKinnon

[REDACTED]
Lanark, NS
[REDACTED]

RE: Town Point Application (Numbers 1442, 1443, 1444)

We are opposed to the proposed oyster farm on multiple grounds, including health and safety of boaters and lobster and recreational fishermen, interference with use and enjoyment of the harbour as a public resource, and potential for negative environmental impacts. In our opinion, we do not consider that any economic benefits to the people of Antigonish Town and County will exceed the current economic benefits (commercial fishermen, tourism, property development, construction, wild oyster harvesting and food fishing) that depend at least in part on unobstructed access to and use of harbour waters.

Given that Tourism is one of Nova Scotia's primary industries, it is vital that this valuable industry be protected. In particular, the tourism impact on the Antigonish Town and County is significant and one of the primary selling points is access to the Ocean – which will be impacted greatly by the proposed oyster farm.

In our view that the size and scope of the proposed project oyster farm is far too big for the Antigonish estuary – 90 acres of oyster cages (approximately 23,000 cages) and 52 km of ropes/cables. It would be a threat of the ecosystem of the estuary which should be protected.

There will be a risk to navigation in the harbour and the bay as well as risk to our properties of all this gear being dislodged during Fiona-like storms.

The Antigonish estuary, a community resource, highly valued by recreational boaters, fishermen, birdwatchers, duck hunters, and the community at large would be dominated by a tightly held private corporation

Lobster fishermen from Antigonish Harbour all on record as opposing due to safety, navigational and concern over the impact on the environment with the shallow harbour, among other reasons.

Your Truly

George Cawkwell
Laura MacKinnon

NSARB-2022-WRT-066

Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia
PO Box 22041 • RPO Bayers Road • Halifax, NS • B3L 4T7
e: seafarmers@seafarmers.ca • t: 902-422-6234

seafarmers.ca

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223 Halifax, NS B3J 3C4

March 30, 2023

Dear Mr. Bruce:

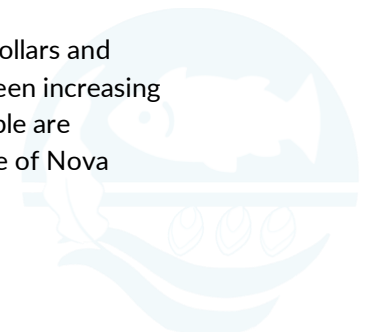
The Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia (AANS) is pleased to provide a letter of support for the application by Town Point Consulting Inc. (Town Point Oysters) for three new marine lease/licenses AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour.

My name is Michelle Samson and I am the current President of the Board of Directors of the AANS. I am also the Director of Aquaculture at Premium Seafoods Limited where I oversee the cultivation and sales of scallops and oysters from our company lease in Arichat, Richmond County, Cape Breton.

The AANS was founded in 1977 and currently engages more than 100 sea farmers and stakeholder members throughout Nova Scotia, representing more than 95% of all active farm operations in the province. We are governed by a 13-member Board of Directors and two independent Science Advisors. The mission of the AANS is to support the production of quality seafood in the cool clear waters of Nova Scotia, creating wealth based on a renewable resource. The AANS supports our finfish, shellfish, and sea plant members in developing viable businesses by representing their interests with government, pursuing access to funding, providing appropriate services, and promoting sea farmers as producers of diverse, low impact and high-quality seafood products.

Given the increasing global demand for farmed seafood, there is tremendous opportunity to responsibly expand the diverse aquaculture industry in Nova Scotia. The farmed seafood sector offers the prospect of year-round, skilled, and high paying jobs in rural and coastal communities. These jobs are not just for those with aquaculture-specific training, but also include skilled trades such as plumbers, electricians, truck drivers, and general labourers. Aquaculture has the potential to reduce unemployment in these communities by offering year-round, full time, enriching careers, especially to members of under-represented minority groups such as First Nations, African-Nova Scotians, new Canadians, and women.

Aquaculture production in Nova Scotia in 2021 was valued at nearly \$83 million dollars and production volume was nearly 11.1 million kgs. Both value and production have been increasing slowly over the past two decades, despite regulatory slowdowns. Nearly 900 people are employed in part- and full-time jobs at the 232 sea farm leases across the province of Nova Scotia.



Regulatory Guidelines

As sea farming operations continue to grow across all regions of Nova Scotia, it is important to note that they are doing so under strict regulatory guidelines. The introduction of the 2015 provincial aquaculture development regulatory framework (following up on the recommendations of the 2014 Doelle-Lahey Panel) has provided not only a transparent platform for Nova Scotians on development initiatives in the aquaculture sector in our province but has also established a robust set of regulations that all aquaculture operators must follow. Sea farm operational regulations are strictly followed by operators and are monitored and enforced by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change. Therefore, for sea farmers to produce and operate, they must do so under a provincially approved Farm Management Plan, and farms must adhere to the provincial Environmental Monitoring Program that ensures environmental stewardship on all marine farms is at the highest standard.

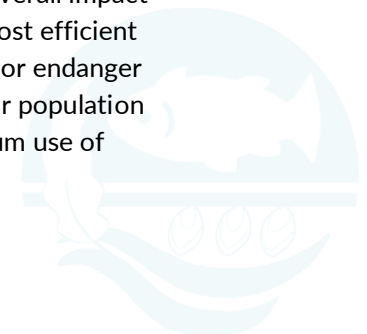
All marine farms are required to have an approval under the Navigation Protection Plan (issued by Transport Canada) and must properly mark all aquaculture leases per the site marking requirements mandated by Transport Canada. All marine farms in Nova Scotia are also required to have an approved surety bond in place (in accordance with the 2015 regulatory framework requirements) to ensure that Nova Scotia waters are protected against abandoned marine debris due to closures, transfers, and forfeitures of Nova Scotia aquaculture leases.

Community engagement outreach by Sea Farmers ensure that local communities and their residents are informed about practices and changes with regards to the operations on aquaculture leases. Final approval of all marine aquaculture lease and license applications are ceded to the independent Aquaculture Review Board. These include new lease applications, lease expansion applications, and amendments to add finfish production to shellfish leases.

Opportunity for aquaculture

Nova Scotia's North Shore, including Antigonish Harbour, holds great potential for a substantial, sustainable, and profitable shellfish and marine plant industry. Shellfish farming is characterized as low impact, high value aquaculture, and defined by Doelle and Lahey as having a low level of adverse environmental and social impacts while producing positive economic and social value. Shellfish aquaculture can provide sustainable seafood and improve the surrounding environment by providing valuable ecosystem services. According to the FAO's 2022 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture, sustainable aquaculture development is critical to supply the growing global demand for aquatic foods, especially as fishery resources continue to decline. Shellfish aquaculture is strongly-aligned with five of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future: zero hunger, good health, economic growth, climate action, and life below water.

Town Point Oysters' proposal to raise oysters responsibly can help minimize the overall impact on the ocean while still feeding our growing population. Shellfish are one of the most efficient sources of protein and oyster aquaculture does not damage coastal environments or endanger wild fish stocks. This moves us closer to a sustainable balance between feeding our population and caring for the environment. Town Point's operation plan demonstrates optimum use of marine resources, as required by the Review Board (factor a).



In Canada, shellfish aquaculture was a \$122 million industry in 2021. But despite global growth and local opportunities, the value of shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia is continually and consistently dwarfed by the value of the industry in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, which are four and 12 times, respectively, the size of the industry here. Furthermore, while the Nova Scotia aquaculture industry as a whole has been slowly growing in value and production, the majority of this growth has been in the finfish sector, while the value of the shellfish sector relative to total industry value has declined.

The Northumberland Strait shoreline offers excellent conditions for low impact, high value aquaculture: shallow, protected bays with moderate tidal range and optimal temperature and salinity. Many shellfish producers have been operating in the region for years and have been well-accepted by their neighbours and other coastal stakeholders, who benefit from direct and indirect economic benefits, local food production, and untapped tourism potential.

Innovative Approach

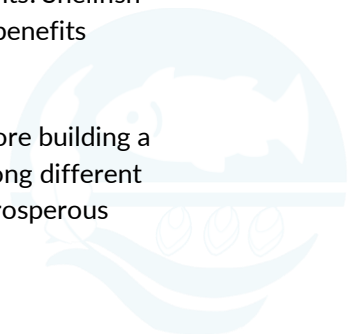
Town Point Oysters has been working through the lease and license application process for three new suspended culture oyster leases in Antigonish Harbour since 2019. Their application process has been executed in a coordinated, thoughtful, and science-based manner as they have proceeded through all the appropriate licensing and permitting steps. They have been met with opposition to their proposed operations but have handled objections with an openness to compromise, flexibility, and a willingness to work with community stakeholders to achieve a shared vision for Antigonish Harbour. One that achieves a balance of varied perspectives.

In partnership with a nearby oyster farmer, Town Point Oysters has taken technological innovation for oyster farming into their own hands with the development of a new growth unit called the BOBR: Benefit Of Being Round. Floating only a few inches above the water's surface, this type of cage has a reduced visual profile, blending in with the water surface rather than standing out. The BOBR units also take protection of eelgrass into account, as their design allows for more sunlight to penetrate through the water column into the surrounding environment, and the sinking method keeps cages off of the bottom during the winter. Town Point Oysters, along with their partner ShanDaph Oysters, received AANS's 2023 "Innovator of the Year Award" for their work on BOBR. The award is in recognition of the significant contribution the BOBR has made to the advancement of aquaculture in Nova Scotia.

Economic Opportunity

The AANS anticipates multiple ways that Town Point Oysters will contribute to the local economy. As has been demonstrated in Prince Edward Island, shellfish aquaculture can form a significant part of a region's tourism brand. As Town Point matures into a well-established producer of fresh seafood, it will play an important role in drawing visitors to Antigonish to enjoy the experience of tasting fresh from the sea oysters at the farm or in local restaurants. Shellfish farming communities in PEI and New Brunswick also enjoy the spillover economic benefits resulting from the support services required to operate the shellfish farm.

The Ivany Report was commissioned in 2014 by the provincial government to explore building a new economy for Nova Scotia. It recommended cooperation and collaboration among different regions, communities, and economic sectors in Nova Scotia to support building a prosperous



economy where future generations can live and thrive. Also known as the “One Nova Scotia Report”, it highlighted opportunities for entrepreneurship and increased global trade in ocean-related sectors to support and achieve meaningful economic and demographic improvements. According to the latest data, our Province is not progressing on track with three of the 18 goals stated in the One Nova Scotia Report. These goals include increasing new business startups, increasing the value of our exports, and increasing the number of firms participating in export trade. While the value of fisheries and agricultural exports are growing as planned, we know that shellfish aquaculture is contributing less and less to the total value of fisheries each year. Considering the uncertainty of the global wild capture fishery, the opportunity for aquaculture is immense, and Nova Scotia is poised to contribute. The business that Town Point Oysters is proposing to operate is well-aligned with many of the Ivany Report’s goals for sustainable and diverse growth of the economy. AANS is confident that Town Point Oysters will make a meaningful and positive impact on economic development in Antigonish and in Nova Scotia, as required by the Review Board (factor b).

The AANS fully supports Town Point Oysters’ application for leases in Antigonish Harbour and we look forward to supporting them as their business grows and thrives.

Thank you,



Michelle Samson
President of the Board of Directors
Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia



NSARB-2022-WRT-067

March 24, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Email: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce,

We are writing to confirm our support of the referenced oyster aquaculture marine lease applications. We bought our property on Town Point in 2002 and built our home there the following year. Our property is two doors down from the Porter's. Initially we used our home seasonally until 2012 and thereafter it has been our permanent residence. Our home overlooks the outer harbour and would have a direct view of two of the proposed lease areas.

We have a seldom used zodiac, a canoe, three kayaks, an unused sailboat, and a dock in Grahams Cove. While we no longer use these boats our children do when they visit each summer. We regularly walk the shores of Town Point, Mahoneys Beach and Dunns Beach. This activity is daily when weather is suitable. In such, our use of the harbour is strictly recreational. Regarding factor (e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation I would like to point out that despite the claims of frequent recreational boating activities, when I am walking the beach or observing the harbour from our home, I seldom see anyone on the water or on the beach. In reading the submissions to the ARB that claim extensive boating use it seems this must take place only when we are not at home. I have often remarked about the lack of activity on our harbour, its like Town folk have yet to discover this beautiful place exists. It is my impression that over the last 15 years no significant change in boating activity in Antigonish Harbour has occurred.

My wife and I were both born and raised in Germany and my career has taken us to many countries worldwide. This experience has given us a broad view of many different cultures including that of numerous coastal communities. It is remarkable how important oysters are to so many coastal communities. We have been fortunate to experience how these communities integrate oysters into the fabric of their lives. We have always found this to be a significant attraction to these communities and we see no reason something similar couldn't happen here in Antigonish. This observation relates to factor (b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development.

I am a frequent swimmer in Antigonish Harbour and have been for more than 15 years. During this time, I feel the water quality has not changed. We are both aware that oysters are filter feeders and work diligently to remove unwanted excess particles from the water and in the

process contribute to improved water quality. This would be a very welcome effect of the proposed farm. This relates to factor (d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.

We are very impressed by the design of the BOBR system and understand that if this farm is approved it will serve a second purpose to promote this Nova Scotian technology. We feel this activity will attract potential BOBR customers from many countries who will stay in Antigonish while learning about the new system. This will provide a direct positive effect benefiting the many hospitality businesses in the region. This relates to factor (b).

Regarding the size and location of the proposed lease areas, we feel they do not restrict navigation to and from Grahams Cove or the harbour entrance. We also feel there is adequate distance from the proposed lease areas to Dunns Beach and Mahoneys Beach to ensure no negative impact on the users of these beaches.

Yes, we like oysters!

Respectfully submitted,

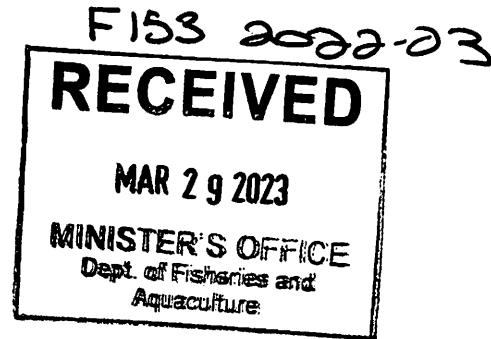
Rainer and Birgit Wunn

NSARB-2022-WRT-068

H. Basil Mattie

[REDACTED]
Tracadie, NS
[REDACTED]

March 27, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P. O. Box 2223
Halifax NS
B3J 3C4

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

RE: Town Point Oysters, AO# 1442, AO#1443 and AO#1444

It is with great concern that makes me undertake this effort in support of this proposed development. My interest in oysters stems back to when I was kid, picked oysters from the shores of the local harbour and now to my every effort to obtain oysters for personal consumption and to promote consumption whenever the occasions arise.

More important at this time is the support for the development proposed by Town Point Oysters for the approval of their application as noted above.

My main effort is in relation to factor:

b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development.

In my efforts to obtain oysters for personal consumption, for many years I have visited many oyster operations and even assisted several farm developments through my Consulting Engineering business. These experiences have shown me, not only the work required to operate an oyster farm but the commercial opportunity that they offer all the while in enhancing a benign environment since oysters are filter feeders actually helping to clean water bodies.

I can appreciate the economic activity that each of these operations provides in rural Nova Scotia, thus the opportunity for the economic activity that Town Point Oysters will provide locally must be allowed. From my personal experience of the work involved in the development of oyster seed, a very up and coming oyster farm is owned by my young cousins so I see what it takes to provide oyster seed for grow out. They too are providing economic activity. I was very impressed seeing first hand what Town Point Oysters is developing in this regard. Not only will they provide employment locally but assist many of the other oyster farms to advance through the development of their BOBR technology.

Oyster consumption in Nova Scotia is expanding, something like 60,000 oysters were consumed at the latest Oyster Festival in 2022. This creates economic activity not only in the local area. Town Point Oysters will augment this growth throughout the industry.

2/...

S. Bruce

March 27, 2023

A few comments on some other factors:

a)the optimum use of marine resources

In 1971, French oceanographer Jacques Cousteau stated: “We must plant the sea and herd its animals using the sea as farmers instead of hunters”. An oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour using up 2% of the harbour space is an optimum use of marine resources.

Again, oysters being filter feeders will enhance and sustain optimum use of the harbour in the future.

f)the public right of navigation

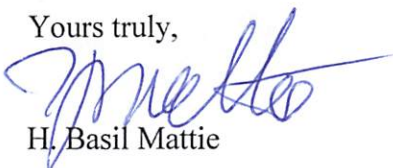
Again through my consulting engineering practice, I was briefly involved with the development of site for a rowing club in Antigonish Harbour. Had this happened it would have had a much greater impact on public navigation with the massive layout of the lanes for club activities and competition. A national rowing event was held on an Antigonish County lake some years later. This would have curtailed a significant amount of space in comparison to 2% requested by Town Point Oysters. The lake in question is only a small fraction in size in comparison to Antigonish Harbour. The rowing club is now located on this lake. I had the opportunity to observe the layout for the competition event and there was still more than adequate space in this lake surrounded by the boating public.

Through my professional work I was responsible for a survey carried out to locate the extent of the large scale lobster industry in a harbour, very much smaller than Antigonish Harbour. For the proposed project to be located in the area, I was the principal observer for an exercise to demonstrate the ability of large LNG tankers to navigate within the harbour. This harbour was also to accommodate the arrival and departure of vessels for the transport of the product. These operations were approved by the regulatory agencies.

When in comparison to these large scale manoeuvres; rowing and vessel movement in a lake and harbour, both much smaller than Antigonish Harbour, all reviewed on retained mapping, I am suggesting that ‘the public right to navigation’ would not be impacted on.

I look forward to the opportunity of Town Point Oysters to able to operate in Antigonish Harbour to create economic activity, assist the development of the industry and to enhance the availability of oysters.

Yours truly,



H. Basil Mattie



RECEIVED March 30, 2023

March 25, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

NSARB-2022-WRT-069

Attention: Mr. Bruce, ARB Clerk

Email: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Re: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce;

My name is Brian MacLeod and I live at [REDACTED] in Lanark, Antigonish County. My home is on the shores of Antigonish Harbour where we have a dock, and while last year I sold my pontoon boat I do plan to purchase another this summer. My property has several hundred feet of waterfrontage on the harbour and my home commands a beautiful view of the upper harbour. My boys and I use the harbour for recreation during summer months.

I am the founder and principal owner of the MacLeod Group of companies. We have a significant presence in Antigonish where we own commercial properties and have our head office that operates many nursing homes in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. I am very concerned about the future wellbeing of our community and our province.

With regard to Factor (b) that relates to economic development I would like to point out that our community and our province is very reliant on government and institutional activities to support the many services we require. This is not an ideal situation; it basically amounts to having government jobs contributing tax revenue to support government services. Essentially pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps! This is unsustainable in the long term. We must add more primary production economic activity. The proposed oyster farm is exactly that – a primary producer.

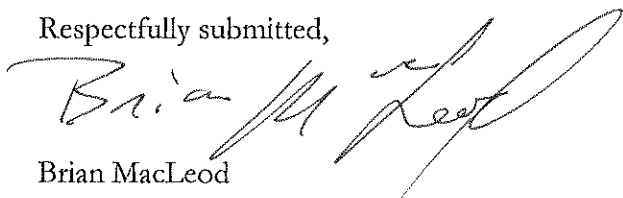
Furthermore, approval of this application may pave the way for more such operations throughout the province. I find it astounding that we in Nova Scotia with our extensive marine resource base are laggards in shellfish aquaculture with respect to our neighboring provinces.

I am a big believer in value added contributions to economic development. I can imagine after this farm is in full production that the operators could easily add local processing of their product combined with sales and marketing on a broader basis like that done by Island Creek Oysters in Cape Cod a large and very successful oyster business.

It seems to me the approval of this farm would present a great opportunity for increased tourism. I have fond memories of tours taken that explored features of the communities we would visit while on vacation. An on-water tour of our harbour featuring a visit to the Town Point Oyster farm would be a big attraction for tourists. This is just the kind of activity tourists seek when visiting a place new to them.

In closing, please count my voice as one of the many supporters of this proposal. I am confident you will judge the proposal on its merits and determine the benefits far outweigh any potential risks. Thank you for considering my comments.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian MacLeod". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Brian MacLeod

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 4:07 pm, Mar 30, 2023



NSARB-2022-WRT-070

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Date: March 24, 2023

Re: Town Point Consulting Incorporated and licenses/leases for AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour (NSARB 2022-001)

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Norma J. Prosper. I am the Oysters Project Administrator for Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation which farms American Oysters in Pomquet Harbour, Antigonish County. Our offices are at [REDACTED], NS [REDACTED].

As an active aquaculturist, I am aware of the Town Point applications and wish to express my views and support for Town Point consulting for consideration by the ARB.

The Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia has been stagnant for many years. Our production lags far behind that of our neighbouring provinces on our ability to compete in the marketplace is challenging in the sector. The supporting services in manufacturing, supply, consulting, and distribution have not been fully developed when compared to New Brunswick and PEI. The result is of an underdeveloped niche. Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia needs to grow. We see the Town Points applications as a test case for our future; the outcome of these applications will, to a large degree, show us where we are headed as a "low impact high value" industry.

I know, from my experience in oyster farming, that such operations more than satisfy the requirements of factors of optimum use of marine resources, operation to community and economic development and the sustainability of wild salmon. Oyster farms make optimal use of marine resources, make positive and impactful contributions to the communities in which they are located and have no impact on wild salmon sustainability.

The Paqtnkek oyster farm has great support from the Paqtnkek and Summerside communities which employs not only Paqtnkek members but also members from the surrounding areas such as Antigonish, St. Andrews and Havre Boucher. Our community farm largely supports the local service industry on a yearly basis and continues to work with, support and share ideas with local oyster farms, including Town Point, to help continue our small businesses that operate on a small environmental footprint.

Paqtnkek oyster have invested in the BOBR technology developed by Phillip Docker and Ernie Porter, which allows oyster farms an opportunity to afford a cost-efficient alternative to the OysterGro cage. Not only does this technology help with cost efficiency but benefits the local economy in offering jobs





which are typically seasonal but will work towards having year-round jobs. Town Point lease, as well as Paqtnkek's oyster area were selected to ensure not to be frequented by other users, infringe on any marked channels, commercial vessel fishing routes or any of the common boat areas. The water quality of both Antigonish Harbour and neighbouring Pomquet Harbour will only improve with operational oyster farms as they promote healthier environments for sustainable growth.

Paqtnkek sees a future in our farm as fully operational, providing meaningful employment, ensuring food security, and contributing to the success of our community Paqtnkek. The opportunity to have an ongoing relationship with a local oyster farm, Town Point, operating in the adjacent harbour that is built upon mutual respect that will add to our successes.

I do know that, before an application reaches the ARB, there has been an exhaustive review of all eight factors by many government departments. Please consider the merits of these applications and discount opposing views that are not based on valid science or economics.

We support the development of the Town Point Oyster farm as it provides a wide-ranging benefit to the community, the Antigonish Harbour and the Province of Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,

Norma J. Prosper
Paqtnkek Oyster Project Administrator



██████████, Lanark, N.S. ██████████
██████████@gmail.com
██████████

March 30, 2023

Dear N.S. Aquaculture Review Board members,

RE : TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. for NEW MARINE SHELLFISH LICENCES/LEASES in ANTIGONISH HARBOUR, ANTIGONISH COUNTY for the SUSPENDED CULTIVATION of AMERICAN OYSTERS

This letter regards applications 1442, 1443 and 1444. It addresses factors b) contribution to economic development; d) characteristics of the surrounding waters; e) other users of the surrounding waters, and identifies concerns beyond the defined factors.

In preparing to write the Aquaculture Review Board (ARB), I have reviewed the letters received to-date about the Town Point Oysters (TPO) applications, and re-reviewed the websites of TPO and its associated citizen-led community liaison committee, Friends of Antigonish Harbour and the involved legislation and regulations.

To situate me and my interest in these applications, I bring a science, environmental and sociological awareness to the questions before the ARB. I am a retired public health policy specialist, who has directed an environmental protection office and a national public health knowledge centre. Although not a marine biologist, I began my adult life studying harbour seals on the coast of Maine. I own and occupy a year-round home in Lanark, significantly distant from the proposed sites. I am an avid kayaker and swimmer, especially in the Antigonish Harbour.

As a child growing up near the shore in Connecticut, my naturalist father took me to visit oyster operations that harvested oysters from natural, leased and managed sea beds. As a young naturalist living on the coast of Maine, I observed the modernization of oyster farming using longlines and bags at large river mouths and I've seen oyster farms in NB and PEI. When I first learned about the proposal to oyster farm in the harbour, I was positive.

I began my consideration of the applications, a few years ago, with a review of N.S.'s aquaculture strategy and intentions. I start by reminding us all that N.S.'s 2015 aquaculture regulatory framework was designed to build on the 2014 Doelle-Lahey Panel's recommendation that "aquaculture that integrates economic prosperity, social well-being and environmental sustainability is one that is low impact and high-value." I would champion a low impact, high value proposal that brings tangible gains. However, in this case, the TPO proposals are neither lower impact nor higher value than keeping the harbour waters public and recreational. Accordingly, I strongly encourage the ARB to reject the TPO applications.

In brief my key concerns are:

- The scale of the leases being sought is too great. My research (undertaken in 2022) suggests that the TPO operation, if approved, would exceed acreage of most N.S. oyster farms. The acreage is not even slightly equivalent to the Pomquet Harbour cages to which TPO's proposal is often compared. While

there isn't significant literature about impact in relation to size of operations, to approve such a large operation in an untried location carries high environmental risk and is likely to exacerbate already polarized community positions. [*a, optimum use (compared to recreation); d, oceanographic/biophysical characteristics of surrounding waters; e, other users/uses*]

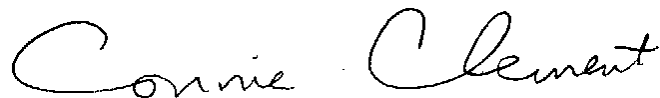
- I remain concerned about potential biological impact given the harbour's shallowness and flow dynamics. My direct observation is that it takes 3-4 tides for runoff to clear after a heavy rain. Most oyster operations which I found in published literature or have observed are in locales with more rapid, greater tidal flow. [*d, oceanographic & biophysical characteristics of surrounding waters*]
- The oyster farm (and the related businesses, which I remind the ARB it is not currently assessing) will negatively impact tranquility. This may, in turn, have an impact on present and future recreation, and residents on both sides of the harbour. (In the 1990s, Maine included an esthetic factor in some environmental and impact assessments. I wish the ARB factors were so inclusive!) [*e, other users/uses*]
- The economic benefit of the suspended oyster farming is minimal. (The spin off businesses initiated and under consideration are separate from the ARB's decision and are not dependent upon the water-based farm, although they are often referred to as a single project.) Given the limited economic impact, it's feasible (yet hard to estimate) that current and future non-aquaculture socio-economic benefits might be equivalently diminished if TPO oyster farming proceeds. [*b, economic development contribution*]

Sadly, the Aquaculture Review Board does not include in its criteria factors that reflect some of my concerns:

- Increasing risk and frequency of storms combined with minimal insurance requirements means that ghost gear and potential shortline/property storm damage is likely to become a community problem.
- Future ownership is, of course, unknown. I, therefore, encourage the ARB to ignore reference to the proponent as a small, family-owned, locally-concerned and invested business, since once approved the N.S. Government currently has no mechanisms to ensure that such parameters are maintained. In fact, if PEI serves as something of a predictor, an offshore, multinational with no local interests might well become our future neighbour.

In closing, I state my regret that current regulations assume a private corporation's right to profit from what has historically been a public good (a harbour, ocean waters, shoreline) without concurrently setting standards for appropriate safeguarding of public assets and ensuring returns to the public. Further, I regret that the Government, on behalf of Nova Scotians, does not require and is not itself tasked with undertaking comprehensive socio-environmental impact assessments to inform aquaculture decisions, especially given long-lasting impacts on natural resources and communities.

I commend the ARB members for undertaking the difficult task before you.



Connie Clement

From: [Kathleen Robertsson](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: RE: Town Point Consulting Inc AQ# 1042, AQ# 1043, AQ#1044
Date: March 31, 2023 9:38:50 AM

NSARB-2022-WRT-072

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Please confirm receipt of this email

Kathleen Robertsson

[REDACTED]
Antigonish NS [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

March 31, 2023

For the Attention of the Review Board

Dear Review Board

RE: Town Point Consulting Inc AQ# 1042, AQ# 1043, AQ#1044

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed oyster farming operation in our harbour. While I understand the potential benefits of oyster farming, I believe that this operation would have significant negative impacts on the health of our harbour ecosystem and the recreational enjoyment of the area in which I live.

It has taken 25 years for the harbour to recover from the damages done through sewer and dumpage in the past. We are finally at a place where the harbour has once again become a healthy ecosystem. It is a place where marine and birdlife thrive. As a resident on the harbour, I see first hand the joy of the recreational users and the tourist who stare in wonder at the beauty of the scenes and the wildlife that abounds. Antigonish thrives because our harbour thrives.

My family worries that the oyster farming could lead to the degradation of water quality in the harbour. Oyster farming can release excess nutrients, organic matter, and other pollutants into the water, which can contribute to the growth of harmful algal blooms, increase in the existing green crab population and other water quality concerns. As a result, the harbour could become unsafe for swimming and other recreational activities.

Additionally, oyster farming infrastructure such as cages, ropes, and other structures could create navigation hazards and detract from the natural beauty of the harbour. This could negatively impact the recreational enjoyment of the area, especially for those who use the harbour for activities such as swimming, kayaking, and fishing.

Furthermore, oyster farming could lead to the displacement of other marine species and the disruption of the natural balance of the harbour ecosystem. This could have negative impacts on the biodiversity of the area and the overall health of the harbour ecosystem. Our harbour is shallow and it will not take much for it to be filled in with pollutants – we only have one narrow passage that is deep.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to reconsider the proposed oyster farming operation in our harbour. Instead, I believe that we should focus on preserving the natural beauty and ecological health of our harbour and promoting sustainable and responsible recreational activities in the area.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Robertsson

Kathleen

Kathleen Robertsson



NSARB-2022-WRT-073

Lease proposal #1442, #1443, #1444
Factors: A, B, C, D, E, F & G
Date: March 21,2023

Dear Nova Scotia Aquaculture and Review Board,

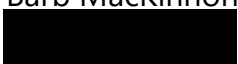
I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed shellfish licence/leases applications (1442, 1443, 1444) that would convert over 90 Acres of Harbour to aquaculture sites and contain over 23,000 oyster cages. As a resident of Jimtown, I have spent most of my life in this community and thoroughly enjoy the natural beauty it offers, including the Antigonish harbour, which is a particularly beautiful place to engage in recreational activities like hiking, swimming, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and bird watching.

I have several concerns about the proposed aquaculture licence/lease. Firstly, the conversion of the protected lands of Dunns beach to an aquaculture site will harm endangered species like the piping plover and other at-risk flora and fauna. Secondly, the damage to eelgrass meadows, which are nurseries for many different species of fish, is not acceptable. Thirdly, the disturbance of habitat that is home to the endangered Atlantic Salmon is not an option.

Furthermore, the conversion of natural habitat to commercial enterprise is concerning, as it goes against the principles of protecting our environment. It reminds me of the lyrics in Joni Mitchell's song, "we paved paradise and put up a parking lot." Additionally, the proposed aquaculture site will reduce recreational opportunities, which provide economic and social benefits to our community. As we are trying to attract and keep young people who are interested in working remotely and enjoying the benefits of doing so, the proposed lease will discourage them.

Lastly, the economic benefits of five full-time jobs and six part-time jobs at low wages will put extra pressure on the local workforce. Given the shortage of labour for this type of work, it is not beneficial to our community.

In conclusion, I urge you to reject the proposed shellfish licence/leases applications (1442, 1443, 1444) and protect our natural habitat. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Barb MacKinnon

Jimtown Nova Scotia

NSARB-2022-WRT-074

From: [Kathleen Robertsson](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point Consulting Inc AQ# 1042, AQ# 1043, AQ#1044
Date: March 31, 2023 10:44:55 AM

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Jeff Robertsson

[REDACTED]
Antigonish NS [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

March 31, 2023

For the Attention of the Review Board

Dear Review Board

RE: Town Point Consulting Inc AQ# 1042, AQ# 1043, AQ#1044

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed oyster farming operation in our harbour and the possible consequences of a green crab growth spurt through the introduction of oysters.

Green crabs are a significant threat to a healthy harbour. Green crabs are aggressive predators and will readily feed on oysters. Oysters hide in eelgrass; one of the most effective ways in which a harbour cleans itself. Green crabs will readily tear out the grass to get to the tasty morsels that may have fell through the cages.

The impact of green crabs can be especially severe if the crab population experiences a growth spurt. During periods of high crab density, the crabs can quickly decimate an area –this is happening in other areas of Nova Scotia and we are keen to keep our population in the harbour at a manageable level.

I have sent several emails to provincial and federal levels and they all have either referred me to someone else or assured me that study was completed. To date no one has sent me a copy of that study, please forward me a copy of that study at your earliest convenience.

Remi Daigle – Oceans Canada:

To answer your question about the proposal to farm oyster in Antigonish Harbour: there may not be any 'boots on the ground' field studies done on this specific proposal, but I can assure you that the risk of introducing or spreading an any invasive species, including green crab, will be or already has been considered at multiple steps in the process. First when the aquaculture lease is initially licensed for that species (i.e. oysters) and again when the operator(s) applies to transfer live product (i.e. oysters) to their lease.

We must be vigilant about monitoring and managing these invasive species to minimize their impact. What has Town Point put in place – it needs to be more robust than simple cages and what are the steps to monitor and control the spread of this invasive species which could easily destroy our fragile ecosystem if allowed to grow in numbers.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Jeff Robertsson



NSARB-2022-WRT-076

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: TPCI applications #1442, 31443, 31444
Date: March 31, 2023 2:09:24 PM

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Dear sir or madam,

From Anna Syperek, civic address [REDACTED], Antigonish [REDACTED]

I am concerned about TPCI's applications #1442, #1443, and #1444 for a very large-scale oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour for many reasons, some of which I outline below.

--[if !supportLists]-->1. <!--[endif]-->Who would be responsible for cleaning up the inevitable mess after the inevitable storms? It has already been established at one of the information meetings that the money pledged by the company would not be enough. Recently, in PEI on Panmure Island, we saw the shorelines of people's homes and cottages covered with a tangled web of gear, mostly buoys, and they told us that no-one seems responsible. Will the government step forward if the company doesn't?

--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->

Concern e. the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation:

A large part of the harbour will essentially be privatized, leaving all the fishermen, lobster boats, canoeists, unable to feel free to enjoy what should be a community resource. It's like someone using Columbus Field as their own farm.

Concern b. not much contribution to community or Provincial economic development:

--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->The benefit from this project will go to one family, with little additional part time employment.

Concern d. the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation:

--[if !supportLists]-->4. <!--[endif]-->Ecologically it is way too big! Uncharted results for a large monoculture covering a lot of the harbour.

We live close to and have land on the harbour and have watched it change over the years. There is a new channel and the ocean is washing over the sandbar at Mahoneys Beach, perhaps making the project at risk from shallower water.

--[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->We know the government is in favour of more aquaculture, but we must make sure that these new businesses are done in a sustainable way and that the company obeys the rules and doesn't move ahead without permission, which apparently this company has done. The government must clearly respect the many other people who love and live and make their living on the harbour.

--[if !supportLists]-->6. <!--[endif]-->Another concern is long-term ownership. What happens when the company wants to sell or is bought out and the new owner is a big company with desires to expand? The beautiful harbour will have essentially been industrialized, with noone else able to use the harbour, for business or pleasure.

Thanks, Anna Syperek [REDACTED]. Antigonish [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-077

From: [Peter Murphy](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: RE: Town Point application (# 1442, 1443 and 1444),
Date: March 31, 2023 2:12:16 PM

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Concerning (d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

I not in favour of supporting this application, numbers 1442, 1443 and 1444, for many reasons This is too sensitive environment to set up an industrial oyster operation of this size. We live year round about 500 yards from the harbour at Mahoney's beach and every year we see dramatic increases in the erosion of the sandbar that separating St.Georges Bay from the Antigonish Harbour.

As far as any one can remember there was only one entrance to the Harbour...that was until the day Boxing Day 2004 when after the giant tsunami struck South East Asia, the very next day a storm created a second entrance to the harbour much closer to our end of the harbour.

Then In the last few years a new entrance has started to open up and during high tides a large part of the remainin sandbar, (about 200 meters) gets washed over and shrinks. This area until a few yeas ago had sea grasses growing on it and plovers nesting. Soon this section and more of the sandbar will be gone and gradually more and more of this protective sand bar will get gobbled up. It's just too sensitive an environment and is not at all stable.

This and many other reason proved to me that this is not the right location for a large oyster operation and is bound to not end well.

Thank you

Peter R. Murphy
SeaBright Productions

Civic Number is [REDACTED], Antigonish [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-078

March 30, 2023

Subject: Concerns about Aquaculture Applications Number 1442, 1443, and 1444 Factors A, E and G – Optimum use of marine resources, other users of the public waters and sustainability of wild salmon

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the aquaculture applications numbered 1442, 1443, and 1444 submitted by Town Point Consulting Inc. As descendants of the first settlers in Antigonish County, my family has a strong connection to the harbour and its surrounding areas. My family's land grant is the 11th, and we still reside on the land today.

Over the years, my late husband and I have seen many changes to the harbour. He used to complain about the smell of the harbour before the town invested in a treatment plant. Since then, the harbour has become a much nicer place to be, and for many years, he would fish smelt in the winter and trout later in the year. We have noticed efforts to protect the fish and wildlife that make the harbour their home. However, the proposed oyster farm is a cause for concern.

The application for the oyster farm is too large, and the potential impacts of the farm are unknown. It is particularly concerning that part of the protected Dunns beach will be converted to commercial purposes. The beach is an important nesting ground for the endangered piping plover and other shorebirds. The proposed project raises questions about the long-term impacts on the environment and the local community.

As a community, we should not rush into making a decision without fully understanding the implications of the proposed oyster farm. We need to take the time to study the project's potential impact on the harbour and its ecosystem. We should prioritize the protection of our environment and wildlife over commercial interests. We need to ensure that the project will not harm the natural habitat of the harbour's inhabitants and will not disrupt the community's way of life.

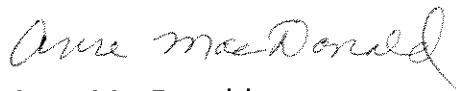
I believe that we should carefully consider the implications of the proposed oyster farm before granting approval. We should involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process and take into account their concerns. The decision we make today will have a long-term impact on the harbour and the surrounding

community. We must ensure that our decisions are guided by the principles of sustainability, environmental protection, and social responsibility.

In conclusion, I am opposed to the oyster farm application by Town Point Consulting Inc. I believe that it is a backward step when we should be moving forward. Moses Cody challenged us to work as a community and be masters of our own destiny, but this project has divided the community, putting our harbour's destiny in other people's hands.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,



Anne MacDonald

[REDACTED]
Lanark, Antigonish Co [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-079

April 1, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

Aquaculture.Board@Novascotia.ca

RE: Application From Town Point Consulting – AQ#1042, AQ# 1043, AQ#1044 in Antigonish Harbour

My husband and I are writing in reference to the Application from Town Point Consulting Inc for three marine aquaculture licences and leases for the suspended cultivation of American oysters in Antigonish Harbour. Our family cottage is located at [REDACTED], in a location where generations of our family, dating back to 1919, have spent their summers.

As has been well established, Antigonish Harbour is a highly sensitive environment and a valued natural resource that is central to the history and culture of the surrounding area. As well as being a place of great beauty and renewal, it is also a constant reminder of ecological loss and the fragility of the natural world. Positive steps have been taken in my lifetime to protect this treasured harbour, including the designation of Mahoneys as a protected beach, ending the extraction of sand from its dunes, preventing the further destruction of its channels and coastline, along with the installation of a sewage treatment plant to mitigate the impacts from raw sewage flowing into the harbour.

Alongside these positive steps, the accelerating rate, pace and scale of impacts on the harbour's sensitive shoreline and submerged lands' environment from the climate crisis have been shocking. Governments and private citizens seem to be powerless in the face of our climate crisis. Modelling, if it exists, appears to be uncertain in terms of where these changes will lead. I have been part of this Antigonish Harbour environment all of my life. For my first 50 or so years, there were slow and gradual changes to the shoreline and its natural protective vegetation. One exception, where the rate of change was more dramatic, was the period of extensive aggregate extraction in the 1960s which did threaten that environment. Government's action to end that practice and protect the area's fragile environment was effective, preventing further damage.

In the past 10 years, accelerating in the past 5, and now annually, the submerged lands and shorelines have undergone dramatic loss. The once abundant and protective marram grasses have disappeared, along with the rest of the vegetation. A place of beauty and natural habitat is diminished. The rate of shoreline erosion has accelerated and is now threatening public road access. What are the impacts on the harbour as tidal flows into and out of the harbour are affected by the diminishment and disappearance of the long spits of land now providing less and less separation of harbour from ocean? What will be the impact on the harbour when they disappear? What will be the impacts on the harbour from the severe weather events that are becoming common weather events?

What does all of this have to do with the Town Point Consulting application? Our concern is that the area is under threat and risk from climate crisis. It is rapidly changing and where this change will take us and our harbour is uncertain. How the harbour environment will be altered is uncertain. Rather than introducing another risk into this fragile and treasured environment, measures to preserve and protect it to the extent possible seem a more prudent way to be good stewards of our lands and waters.

The oyster farm model is one of private exploitation of a public good. This has been an accepted model but one that will bring few benefits to the community. It will bring the possibilities of risk and damage to this special place in our natural world, a value in itself, in addition to bringing threats to our enjoyment of the area.

Respectfully submitted.

Joan MacKinnon

[REDACTED], Halifax NS [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@gmail.com

Alfred Doucet

[REDACTED] Halifax NS, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@gmail.com

NSARB-2022-WRT-080

From: [Nicole Chiasson](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Supporting Town Point Oysters
Date: April 1, 2023 2:58:26 PM

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**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

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To the Aquaculture Review Board reviewing Town Point Oysters Consulting Inc lease approval. I am writing this letter of support in favor of Town Point Oysters in Antigonish Harbour. A little bit about myself, my name is Nicole Chiasson from Bedford Nova Scotia, I have studied at Dalhousie University in the Marine Biology program. I moved to Antigonish in August 2021 and have had the great opportunity in becoming a part of the Antigonish community. Not knowing anyone first moving here I had the pleasure of meeting the Porter family. They are hard working and very nice people who have done and still continue to do so much for the community and supporting local businesses while starting a community family based business of their own.

When I first heard about their oyster farm I was eager to learn more. The Porters are very open and honest people who have shared all of their plans to the public community. They offer tours to go see the farm and learn about the environmental benefits the oyster farm has created. Being an oyster lover myself I got to learn alot about how they produce high-quality oysters in a sustainable environment with their innovative ideas and that they stive hard to be eco-friendly. I was impressed with being shown the filtration process of the harbours water and how the farm helps to improve the water quality and filters it back into the ocean. One oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water a day which will do amazing things for our Antigonish harbours water quality.

The farm itself is located on their property that does not affect any traffic to the surroundings, on land and also in the harbour. Only 2% of the harbour is being converted with the outcome to the harvest of a sustainable local food source. I am amazed at the work they have done and put into this business. Not to mention the amount of jobs this can provide to our local community.

I hope our community can see all the amazing benefits Town Point Oysters has created thus far and be a part of this sustainable food movement. I am in full support for this positive

change for the community and also our environment.

Sincerely,

Nicole Chiasson

, Antigonish NS

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 8:00 pm, Apr 02, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-081

From: [Catherine O'Brien](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish Harbour Oyster Farm
Date: April 1, 2023 7:52:43 PM

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**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

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I am writing to express my concern about the possibility of an Oyster Farm in the Antigonish Harbour. I grew up in this area and intend to retire to a property close to the Antigonish Harbour in the next decade. I visit this area every summer to visit family.

This area has always been a beautiful recreational area for the public to enjoy. A community has also built at Town Point. An industry built in this area will cause physical and sound pollution which will ruin this pristine area for everyone except those profiting from the business.

My hope is that the oyster business opportunity can be found in an area which does not result in such a strong environmental and recreational loss to the surrounding community.

Respectfully,

Catherine O'Brien

[REDACTED]
Savannah, GA [REDACTED]
USA

NSARB-2022-WRT-082

April 1, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
Aquaculture.Board@Novascotia.ca

RE: Application from Town Point Consulting – AQ#1042, AQ# 1043, AQ#1044 in Antigonish Harbour

We are writing in regard to the Application from Town Point Consulting Inc. for three marine aquaculture licences and leases for the suspended cultivation of American oysters in Antigonish Harbour. We, along with other family members (Joan MacKinnon, Alfred Doucet and Fiona MacKinnon), are cottage joint owners at [REDACTED]. Four generations of our relatives have spent their summers at Mahoneys Beach, going back to 1919 when Dr. William F. MacKinnon, purchased land from the Mahoney family, and subsequently built a cottage. Since then, our family (MacKinnons) and relatives have continuously summered at Mahoneys.

Let us state upfront that we oppose the granting of an application to Town Point Consulting to construct and operate a large-scale oyster operation in Antigonish Harbour. The reasons for our opposition follow.

The Antigonish Harbour, which empties into St. George's Bay, is a highly sensitive ecosystem, home to rich and diverse plant, tidal and marine life. Antigonish Harbour, with its rich biodiversity, and historic, geographic, and cultural importance, is a precious legacy for future generations of human and non-human species. It is also a place of cultural, spiritual, and historic importance for Indigenous peoples in the area. For hundreds of years, prior to colonialization, Indigenous peoples lived, fished, hunted, and gathered in Antigonish Harbour and environs.

The Climate Crisis is not a hypothetical risk. A consensus of experts agree that extreme weather events such as Hurricane Fiona, eroding coastlines, warming of the Atlantic Ocean, must be planned for. We have seen what damage extreme weather has inflicted on aquaculture and fishing operations in Newfoundland and the Maritimes. There is no reason to think that comparable damage would not result from extreme weather events along St. George's Bay and Antigonish Harbour. Couple that reality with uncertainty about the specific locational impacts of the climate crisis on St. George's Bay, coastline and Antigonish Harbour – and Town Point Consulting oyster operations in turn. The precautionary principle should be foremost in our public policy decisions. It would be imprudent to approve a 90-acre farm to grow 90 million oysters in 23,000 floating oyster baskets in Antigonish Harbour. We do not believe that approval of the proposed oyster operation is supported by science or other robust evidence.

While nature has a remarkable capacity for resilience, the negative impacts of human intervention on our ecosystem have been evident in Antigonish Harbour and the adjacent coastal area. In the 1960s, the provincial government banned the extraction of sand from the sensitive dunes along Mahoneys Beach and the Harbour, to prevent the further destruction of its channels and coastline. In the same time period, the Town of Antigonish built a new sewage treatment plant to mitigate the impacts from raw sewage flowing into Antigonish harbour. Positive steps have been taken in our lifetimes to protect this beautiful coastal and harbour area, including the designation of Mahoneys as a protected beach. On the

negative side of the ledger, what was once an abundant salmon and mackerel fishery in St. George's Bay, is largely gone, due to overfishing, poor resource management and climate change.

The accelerating rate, pace and scale of impacts of the climate crisis on St. George's Bay's sensitive shoreline and Antigonish Harbour have been alarming. Over the last decade and in particular in the last five years, the coastline is becoming more and more eroded, and is now threatening public road access and negatively impacting marine and plant life. There is great uncertainty around big questions and concerns such as:

- Tidal flow changes and their impacts on Antigonish harbour as a result of coastal erosion and other alternations.
- Creation of new channels from St. George's Bay into the estuaries of the harbour
- Impacts of the warming Atlantic Ocean on the harbour
- Impacts of the above points on the oyster operations
- Unintended negative consequences of the scale of the proposed oyster operation on other marine and plant life

We understand that the proposed oyster operation would create some employment and economic benefits. However, given all of the uncertainties associated with the climate crisis, the scale of the operation, and the relatively modest collective economic benefits accruing, we do not believe that it is in the public interest to allow Town Point Consulting to proceed.

Sincerely,

Mary Pat MacKinnon and David Siversky

████████████████████, ON ██████████

████████████████████@gmail.com

████████████████████@gmail.com

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 8:14 pm, Apr 02, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-083

March 23, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Re: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce,

I am Archie MacKenzie and I live at [REDACTED] in Morristown, Antigonish County just a few kilometers from Antigonish Harbour. I support Town Point Consulting's applications to do oyster aquaculture in Antigonish Harbour.

I volunteered to serve on the Community Liaison Committee as a concerned area resident. Through this experience I learned a great deal about the proposed operation and everything I've seen and heard has proved to me this proposal should be approved.

I am a lifelong resident of Antigonish County. I am now a senior citizen but still working to the fullest extent possible. Most of my life I have relied primarily on fishing lobster as well as silversides, herring, mackerel, tuna, and many other species to support my family.

While I am in the process of transferring my licenses to my son [REDACTED], I am still involved on a day to day basis. For decades I have fished silversides for lobster bait within Antigonish Harbour. I also hold a license within Antigonish Harbour for eel. I am very familiar with the waters of Antigonish Harbour and St Georges Bay.

I would like to point out that usually when we are fishing within Antigonish Harbour we see no other boats. We know this harbour is seldom used and the likely impact of the proposed oyster farm on other users of the harbour will be very minimal. (Factor e). Also, the location chosen for the three proposed lease site are not within the channel or usual navigation routes. This I know from many decades of navigating these waters.

Antigonish Harbour needs some help. It is better now than before construction of the sewage treatment plant, but it is still far from pristine. This proposed oyster farm will add millions of oysters each of which will help remove the excess nutrients in the water and make the harbour cleaner for everyone. (Factor d).

Having lived in this community all my life I know jobs are scarce. Now that I am getting on in years and find the need to access our healthcare system more frequently, I worry about how our community and our province will continue to pay the associated costs. There is an ongoing concern in our community about the possible closure of St Martha's Hospital. We desperately need more economic activity in our rural communities to generate tax revenue required to fund the services we need. This proposed farm can be part of the solution. (Factor b).

Antigonish Harbour is a great natural resource, but it is hardly used at all for commercial purposes. Some people say there should be no farm because it would get in the way of their recreational use. This is nonsense! Communities cannot exist if its all play and no work! I have

worked hard my whole life and I respect those who value the contribution hard work makes to a successful community. I know the Porter family understand what hard work is, they have already demonstrated this through their ability to achieve a challenging goal just by persisting through this long application process.

Our community needs more primary productive economic activity. An oyster farm in our harbour would contribute to this need. Adding this oyster farm would be an optimum use of the harbour as a marine resource. (Factor a).

Please judge the TPO application on its merits, ignore the false and misleading noise coming from selfish opponents and approve the farm. We need it.

Respectfully

Archie Mackenzie

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223 Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

NSARB-2022-WRT-084

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
RE: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

My name is Amy Hill and I live in Bible Hill, Nova Scotia, at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, majoring in Animal Science and Aquaculture, acquired in 2020 from Dalhousie University's Agricultural Campus. I joined the aquaculture industry in August of 2021 when I accepted a job at an oyster farm in Merigomish, Nova Scotia. Having seen the workings of an oyster farm firsthand for a year and a half, it's easy to recognize that it is no small feat. Oyster farming requires hard, dedicated labor, even on a small operation; it requires knowledge of the ecosystem and how different areas of environments interact. Ernie and I have only known each other for a short time, but from our limited interactions, I can tell he has the dedication, intelligence and compassion for the environment to sustainably run an oyster lease.

The other aspect of the position I accepted in 2021 was working on a new type of oyster farming gear called BOBR by DockPort LTD., which Ernie is also a part of. As someone who worked on research for the gear while also actively using and building it, I can confidently say that it is beneficial to work with. Not only are BOBRs easier to maneuver physically and have improved efficiency in oyster farming when compared to traditional gear, but it would also provide farmers with the ability to have work available in the off-season that we have in Nova Scotia. Because the harbours freeze during the winter, many employees are left to find a new job at this time of year. The business plan of DockPort includes the goal of convincing farmers to only buy the materials to assemble BOBRs, which will provide them with an opportunity to offer year-round employment. This will also provide jobs for locals looking for work, effectively contributing to the community and provincial economic development.

The main concern of a lease should be the impact it will have on the environment and life surrounding the area. In terms of pollution, oysters are filter feeders, meaning they actually reduce the amount of certain harmful components from the water column. Even though an aquaculture lease may not add much to the visual appeal of a harbour, research shows that shellfish aquaculture has one of the lowest impacts on the environment^{1, 2}, while providing an extremely nutritious protein. Furthermore, if the visual appeal (or "not in my back yard" mentality) of an area is weighted too much, we would have no farms to provide food for us, whether it be aquatic or terrestrial.

Oyster farmers tend to work together, which allowed me to have the pleasure of meeting many in the surrounding area. The oyster farmers I have interacted with are acutely aware of the effect of leaving broken or misplaced gear that gets lost in the water and have practices in place to reduce the frequency of this occurring. This is in contrast to many fishing units, of which I have heard first-hand accounts of how little regard is taken for the environment. The leading source of plastic pollution in the ocean is fishing gear, and their catch nets are a significant

source of marine life entanglement and resulting demise. This being said, the fishing industry is extremely important to preserve, especially in Nova Scotia; the regulations that are in place and actually practiced are minimal compared to those in aquaculture. This isn't to say that there is zero pollution that comes from an aquaculture lease; the results from hurricane Fiona have shown us that anything can happen that will result in a massive loss of gear. In the fight against climate change and to protect the environment, we don't need everybody to convert to a perfect zero-waste lifestyle; we just need a lot of people to put in an effort to reduce the size of their footprint. Oyster farming has demonstrated that it is trying to have as little impact on water pollution as possible. The fishing industry has not convinced me they are making the same effort at this time.

I can only speak to what I know, as such I cannot contribute significantly regarding the specific harbour in question. What I can contribute is that this province would only benefit from more oyster or aquaculture leases like this one. They will provide endless job opportunities and a protein source with minimal environmental impact. In addition, the alternative option is taking wild oysters directly from a harbour, and like every other fished species, can result in a decline of the natural population. There are enough fish stocks in decline as it is, and without aquaculture, we have no future that involves the consumption of any aquatic food source.

Thank you for your consideration. This lease application has my full support.

Amy Hill

¹Hilborn R, Banobi J, Hall S, Pucylowski T, and Walsworth T. **2018**. *The environmental cost of animal source food*. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 16(6): 329-335. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1822>

²Turner J, Kellogg M, Massey G, and Friedrichs C. **2019**. *Minimal effects of oyster aquaculture on local water quality: Examples from southern Chesapeake Bay*. *PLoS ONE* 14(11): e0224768. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0224768>

NSARB-2022-WRT-085

From: [Frank Harrison](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish Point app (numbers 1442, 1443 and 1444)
Date: April 2, 2023 1:21:59 PM

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**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

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I write to the board to indicate my opposition to the broadening of commercial oyster farming in the area of town point, Antigonish. Having been a permanent resident in the area for the past 50 years, I am sure that the bulk of residents want to maintain the natural beauty of the environment -- for pleasure and fishing.

I am sending a copy of this to my political representatives at federal, provincial and local levels of government, to add my concern to that of the thousands of others.

J. Frank Harrison, [REDACTED], Antigonish,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Mailing address – [REDACTED], Antigonish, N, [REDACTED]

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 8:33 pm, Apr 02, 2023

From: patsy.macisaac
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Proposed aquaculture leases 1442,1443& 1444
Date: April 2, 2023 2:27:28 PM

NSARB-2022-WRT-086

** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE **

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Dear Mr Bruce

As a recent permanent resident to Seabright, on the Antigonish harbour, I wish to express my disapproval for the proposed aquaculture leases.

Mr Ernie Porter and Town Point Consulting Inc. has demonstrated a lack of environmental stewardship. In his application for water rights for his land based aquaculture site, Mr Porter applied to install two underground pipes into the harbour, but without permits from Transport Canada, the Environment or the Municipality, trenched and laid three pipes into the harbour on a Sunday evening. Mr Porters has blocked the public road and obliterated the historic road bed into Town Point. It causes me great concern that a man of this repute could be granted 3 large leases on this public recreational area.

As a novice kayaker and canoeist, I insist that it is in the better interest of the general population to keep this area free from hazards imposed by commercial aquaculture and the hands of a man without sincere civic interest.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to express my concern.

Best Regards,

Patsy MacIsaac

[REDACTED]
Harbour Centre, NS
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

NSARB-2022-WRT-087

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4
March

Attn: Mr Stacey Bruce

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444.

Dear Sir:

Our names are John and Frances Corsten and for forty years we owned and operated a large dairy farm in Harbour Centre, Antigonish Co, NS.

While farming we always felt that growing local and producing an excellent product was a must. (Factor 3.a of the Act)

Since then we have retired in the same local area, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Antigonish, Co., and still feel strongly about local food and bringing an excellent product to market. (Factors 3.a,b) Our former dairy farm is still producing and we feel very proud that we were part of its success going forward.

Local employment (Factor 3.b) is very beneficial for our local economy. Therefore local businesses like restaurants and farmers markets would benefit from showcasing these oysters.

From there we are able to supply other Canadian provinces and we would be exporting to other countries. (Factor 3.a) They would benefit from a superior product and our economy would also grow.

Oysters are filter feeders and so act to clean the waters of the harbour that have excess of nutrients. (Factor 3.d)
Therefore the harbour is an ideal location for the oyster operation (Factor 3.a, d)

Fishing boats and pleasure crafts use the harbour but there would be no restriction to the public right of navigation since the locations are in shallow water and completely out of motorboat and sailboat routes.(Factor 3.f)

For these reasons we feel very confident that this operation should be able to go forward.

Thank You,

John and Frances Corsten

NSARB-2022-WRT-088

From: [Marie McDonald](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Application numbers 1442,1443,1444
Date: April 2, 2023 7:56:51 PM

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My name is:
Marie E. McDonald

[REDACTED]
Lanark, Antigonish County, N.S.

In the general area of the supposed business lies Mahoney's Beach, adjoining the entrance to the harbour. This beach has been used for over 50 years for summer retreats, swimming, boating, gathering of friends, families and the general public. I myself, have been using that beach since 1970 nearly every day during warm weather and have seen tourist busses stop there. The harbour is also used, for kayaking, boating, canoeing and water board sailing. In the winter when frozen, the harbour is used for skating, cross country skiing and ice fishing.

Surely there are other locations for oyster fishing which are not surrounded by houses, cottages, and sunbathers. In fact that whole area could be used to attract tourists if developed as such. Then the beach and surrounding area could be enjoyed by many people instead of just one business.

Are there not other sites, perhaps across the harbour entrance or farther away, which would be more suitable?

As a long time resident of the area, I do NOT support this application.

sincerely,
Marie E. McDonald.

NSARB-2022-WRT-089

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

P.O. Box 2223

Halifax, Nova Scotia

B3J 3C4

April 2, 2023

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To the members of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing you to extend my support for the Town Point Oyster (TPO) farm project. I have lived in Antigonish for most of my life. My family has owned and operated an independent business in this community for over 50 years. I currently work as a Music Therapist for Nova Scotia Health in the Eastern Zone. I consider myself to be a very active and integrated community member. I am very proud of our community and am genuinely concerned with all things that impact it.

Over the past three years I have been very interested in the TPO project and have attended several information sessions that were put on in the community. I learned of the many benefits the project would have on our community from both an aquaculture and commerce standpoint. I tried searching for what possible negative aspects this project would have on our harbour and our community. Through the research and having listened to a group opposing the project, I have not found substantial evidence to suggest the TPO project should not go forward.

I use the Antigonish Harbour for recreation year-round. In the winter months, I skate / play hockey and in the warmer months I canoe/Kayak. From my research into this project, the TPO farm will not interfere with my recreation on the Antigonish Harbour.

If the application is approved, I genuinely believe that the TPO project will yield economic benefits to our area by creating jobs, increase tourism, and offer local food to our restaurants. Through the scientific research I have read regarding the impact oyster farms can have on aquaculture I am confident that the farm will provide great environmental benefits to Antigonish harbour, enhancing its aquatic biodiversity.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Tom Curry, MTA

[REDACTED]

Antigonish N.S

[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-091

██████████
St. John's, Newfoundland
██████████

April 2, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax Nova Scotia
B3J3C4

Attention: Stacy Bruce
Reference: AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To the members of the Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. I am not convinced that ventures like this are the best use of marine resources. While this business may produce a few seasonal jobs (besides the jobs for the owners and their family), I would note that serious economic and social costs are associated with adding large commercial developments to residential areas.

My partner and I lived at █████ Seabright Lane from May 2021- September 2022. It was easy to see why so many of our neighbours built homes in this Harbour community in the past 15 years. The area's natural beauty attracts many: the Seabright road sees regular hikers, dog walkers and cyclists every day, during all seasons, and the Harbour itself is an ideal place for beginners to learn the basics of sailing, canoeing, or kayaking. In fact, it is where our puppy, Dutton, first learned to swim.

I was recently accepted to Dalhousie Medical School and will begin my training in September 2023. If rural Nova Scotia is to attract and retain doctors, I believe we must preserve the integrity of coastal communities like the Antigonish Harbour. Indeed, Nova Scotia has proved to be an attractive destination during the pandemic precisely because of communities like these. I am not against all aquaculture, but I do believe there are better locations for aquaculture than in the middle of growing residential communities. I sincerely hope your committee considers all perspectives before making any consequential decisions.

All best,
Margaret MacDonald

NSARB-2022-WRT-092

From: [Elsa Pinkohs](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point application numbers 1442, 1443, and 1444 - 3rd and hopefully final time sending due to small errors
Date: April 3, 2023 9:05:29 AM

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**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing with regards to TownPoint Consulting (Application numbers 1442, 1443, and 1444) and their plan to have an oyster farm in the Antigonish Harbour. I was born and raised in Antigonish and lived on Antigonish Harbour most of my entire life. I work as a counsellor in the education system and I think that sometimes we remove the human element when contemplating an endeavour such as the proposed oyster farm. We have fallen on hard times in the Maritimes. What an expression and how true it is! I work hard for my income, and put in a very long day at a difficult yet rewarding job, as do many others. I am very concerned about all of the lovely tax paying money that is going towards a business that will benefit very few people in the community. I have brought this up multiple times; who will pay when the next hurricane or storm comes and washes away all the lovely plastic contraptions that had no business being in Antigonish Harbour to begin with? How transparent will Town Point Consulting Inc. be with regards to all grants and handouts received from the provincial and federal government? How come taxpayers are maligned when they bring up the touchy subject of their hard earned money being siphoned off to already wealthy individuals? Why aren't the impacts of the strong storms and hurricanes being discussed more seriously when it comes to Aquaculture and all of the equipment that is in peril every single autumn. There is an oyster farm in Sheet Harbour that suffered great damage during Hurricane Dorian. They quoted directly in a CBC article that they were gunning for government assistance. I am not even going to get into the unfortunate mess that Hurricane Fiona left in her wake and the impact that was felt at various aquaculture operations throughout Atlantic Canada. Please consider the following:

*The threat to the ecosystem from the addition of 9 million oysters, 23,000 cages, 52 km of ropes/cables, and the "oystermatic" barges that pose a threat to everything from eelgrass to salmon and migratory birds. Also consider the risk to navigation in the harbour and the bay as well as risk to properties of all this gear being dislodged during Fiona-like storms.

I particularly love the argument on NIMBYISM, my feeling is that there is such an intense greed and obsession with aquaculture that the province of Nova Scotia wants to turn into PEI with their increasingly ugly coastlines due to an overabundance of aquaculture. People are worried about tourism, being able to enjoy naturally kept and beautiful waterways that can be shared with more and more people. It isn't about

NIMBYISM, it is about common sense, protecting fragile areas for ALL, and moving forward in a peaceful, respectful way. If this operation gets the green light how will this farm directly affect possible employment for those who want to run a business associated with the harbour for tourism? If this farm gets the full green light this could impede a person's ability to have their own businesses especially if the harbour would be utilized for water related activities. Tourists are wanting to be around more natural, untouched landscapes and coastlines especially if they are trying to escape the rat race that is their life. The Antigonish harbour and certain surrounding areas are able to provide a valuable service to kayakers, boaters, stand up paddle boarders, wind surfers, and people who just want to enjoy a more natural and eco-friendly vacation. This could negatively impact tourism in the area and associated livelihoods. I for one would not want to start a business near a large aquaculture operation, and I fear that will scare others away from even thinking about investing in tourism in the area. Please consider the following:

*The threat to the continued economic benefits from residential improvements and developments around the harbour if the most frequently used and most visible portion of the harbour is dominated by 90 acres of oyster cages. The false claims there is no economic benefit currently being derived from the harbour. The commercial fisherman who keep boats here, the licensed oyster gatherers, sport fishermen from near and far, boaters, kayakers, paddlers, and people who have invested in homes around the harbour all have an interest in safeguarding and promoting environmental stewardship of the harbour.

Certain local restaurants are supposedly salivating at getting these local products into their dining establishments? Apparently there aren't enough oyster businesses in the town, county and throughout the province to supply some of the restaurants in Antigonish that there is a need for another oyster farm! Could it be possible that most of these farmed oysters will be enjoyed by rich folks on their respective terraces in Toronto and overseas markets in Asia? Wait a second! I thought it was all about being local, environmentally friendly, and not increasing our carbon footprint!!! This leads me into my next point: food insecurity, one of my favourite arguments used! I wonder if the people who say that oysters might help with food insecurity realize that Nova Scotia has some of the highest food insecurity in the country, and that young children are actually really hungry. Yes kids are hungry in our communities and it isn't because they don't have enough farmed oysters to eat. I am not really connecting the dots on how oysters are going to help the students who don't have access to healthy food. Why doesn't the government focus on access to healthy lunch programs for all in lieu of yet ANOTHER oyster farm and all associated handouts. Guess what... a healthy lunch program would create many more secure jobs for communities and kids would be fed healthy, nutritious lunches. What a novel idea! Please keep in mind:

*TPCI's plan calls for a few full time jobs, for their family, and seasonal jobs during the warmer months. Finding workers in the warmer months is a chronic problem already in the town/county most notably in the construction sector. Seasonal jobs obviously do not replace secure full time jobs. I thought the push in Canada was for jobs with transferable knowledge and an ability to be more mobile throughout the province and beyond. I thought the focus was for particularly hard hit sectors ie. health care and

trades (carpentry, electrical, etc.).

In conclusion this proposed farm has divided Antigonish folk, and has been a very contentious and a hot button topic. I personally have a family member who was bullied and harassed by a person in the community who is "pro" oyster farm and has been vocal and quite frankly aggressive in their support for Town Point. They harassed my family member partially because my family member was not in favour of the oyster operation. You may not think this is a valid point, but I would be remiss if I did not bring the human spirit into the argument. The way some people have been treated in a public setting over this proposed farm, and the long term friendships and community connections that have been fractured is quite disappointing. It is detrimental to the health of community members that they have every right to voice their opinion without fear of discriminatory or derogatory comments. No ethically sound community member with good and honest intentions should be subject to embarrassment, isolation, and shaming over any aquaculture business. This in itself is disgusting and should not be tolerated in a community that claims to be inclusive and welcoming to all productive members. Put plainly, it is a disgrace.

I digress.

Sincerely,

Elsa Pinkohs (I am not pretentious and I don't feel the need to put multiple designations after my name stipulating all of my "formal" education - if you really want to know about my education, call me and inquire.) What is more important is that I will always stand FOR and WITH the real people of Antigonish County and Town who have a spine and integrity.

Address:

[REDACTED]

Antigonish, Nova Scotia

[REDACTED]

[\[REDACTED\]@gmail.com](#)

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 9:15 am, Apr 04, 2023

NSARB-2022-wRT-093

[REDACTED]
Lanark, NS
[REDACTED]

April 2, 2023

Dear Aquaculture Review Board,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide a written submission expressing some of my concerns regarding the Town Point Consulting, Inc. aquaculture proposals (AQ #1442, AQ #1443 and AQ #1444). I have lived in Antigonish County since 1974 and been a resident at my present address on Antigonish Harbour for over 21 years. My background in marine biology, community-based natural resource management and adult education also informs my concerns.

The factors my concerns are best addressed within are (a), (d), (e) and (g). However, I am also concerned about navigation for commercial fishers and others (f) as well as understanding that there are other oyster leases in the area that should be considered (h). The fact that these lands and waters are unceded reinforces that we must prioritize and uphold our Peace and Friendship Treaty obligations to the Mi'kmaq people.

According to the science frequently reported in the credible news media, we are facing global biodiversity collapse and catastrophic climate change. Given this alarming situation, one can understand why local residents are concerned about the significant negative impacts of a large aquaculture proposal to local biodiversity and carbon sequestration locations. It would seem a responsible and reasonable reaction to question whether the possible economic benefits to a few outweigh the negative impacts created for the many. The many users and inhabitants of the Antigonish Harbour include humans and other-than-humans. This estuary is a nursery to many fish species and a refuge for a myriad of wildlife and birds. To imply that there would be negligible negative impacts created by such a large aquaculture farm on the animals and plants who already reside there seems reductive, naïve and irresponsible. The shading of eelgrass beds and disruption of sediments and substrate seem highly likely to negatively impact this very important ecosystem. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/the-secret-weapon-in-fight-against-climate-change-planting-eelgrass-1.6553071> The degradation of ecosystems worldwide is a process of cascading losses; the way to repairing our damaged biosphere is to protect ecosystems that are still intact, not to cause more harm. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jan/04/eelgrass-endangered-marine-plant-vital-keeping-climate-stable> We need to ask questions about our connections to habitat destruction, such as eelgrass meadows, and use an ecosystems-based approach when analysing possible harm. The precautionary principle is one which needs to be used here: putting the damaged ecosystem back together after the damage is done is simply not possible.

It would also seem reasonable to wonder if the impacts of more extreme and frequent weather events will create disastrous outcomes for the infrastructure associated with the operation in the form of ghost fishing gear in the Antigonish Harbour and St. Georges Bay, as well as

substrate damage and marine animal entanglements from dislodged anchors and ropes. Ferocious storm events such as post tropical storm Fiona (September 2022) *will* become more common. It is difficult to imagine that events such as these will not rip apart the proposed aquaculture gear as happened in PEI and NS last September. The scale of the proposed operation is simply too large for this small and shallow body of water, and the risks of damage to the eelgrass ecosystem and the animals and other living organisms associated is too great.

This application by a private company to lease and control a common waterbody has created significant conflict and discord within the community. The users of the Antigonish Harbour commons include many who: own land, own homes, fish, recreate, hunt, boat, and paddle; the well-being of the community needs to be carefully considered. The many benefits of a healthy and accessible estuary for all users must be given serious value when considering the possibility of leasing the commons to a private business.

The window of opportunity in which to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all is rapidly closing. Every region of the world faces “increasing, multiple risks to ecosystems and humans...every increment of global warming will intensify multiple and concurrent hazards,” the IPCC warns. With further warming, climate change risks will become increasingly complex and more difficult to manage. The IPCC reinforces that in protecting land, water, and food systems, the best option for success is to **reduce the loss of natural ecosystems**. Thinking globally and acting locally can help us make choices to protect the ecosystems with which we are most familiar in order to maintain a liveable planet for future generations. It is for these reasons I voice serious concerns about this aquaculture proposal in Antigonish Harbour.

Respectfully,

Heather Mayhew

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 10:19 am, Apr 04, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-094

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

P.O. Box 2223

Halifax, NS

B3J 3C4

March 29, 2023

Attention: Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Bryan Druhan, and together with my wife, we own and operate Candid Brewing Company, a family business located in the heart of downtown Antigonish. As a small business owner, I am keenly aware of the social and economic benefits that a thriving business community can contribute to the health, viability, and long-term sustainability of communities in rural Nova Scotia. As such, I would like to offer my support and endorsement of Town Point Oysters' lease application to operate an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour.

My support for this project is based largely on factor b), "the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development." With 7,400km of coastline, Nova Scotia has ample marine resources but has lagged behind other jurisdictions in our ability to develop thriving and sustainable industries around these resources. Town Point Oysters' proposed operation would harness the abundant natural resources of Antigonish County and develop an industry around a uniquely local, value added product. Considering the importance

of the service industry to the economy of Antigonish, it would be a fantastic opportunity for local restaurants to feature a distinctly local product on their menus. From my experience in the craft beer industry, visitors to our province are attracted by the allure of quality, locally produced specialties, and are willing to pay a premium for unique local experiences.

Beyond the economic benefits of the natural resource itself, I was thoroughly impressed with the innovative BOBR technology being developed by Mr. Porter's other venture, Dockport Ltd. While I am a brewer by trade and do not have experience harvesting oysters, I am always impressed when people develop intuitive and simplified technologies that reduce manual labour and increase ease of processing. I believe that Dockport's BOBR technology has the potential to disrupt the oyster industry. This innovation will transform oyster processing and it would be a lost opportunity for Antigonish County to miss the boat on being home to the flagship oyster farm demonstrating this impressive technology. The interest generated in the area and the economic benefits that would spin-off from a project like this would be the envy of many rural communities.

Beyond the economic benefits, I would like to address concerns relevant to local opposition to the project, which are related to factor e), the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation. As an Antigonish resident for most of my life, I have had very little opportunity for recreation on the harbour. Access to the harbour is quite limited for most residents of Antigonish, with the exception of private land owners surrounding the harbour, which are mostly people with access to pleasure craft. My understanding is that the proposed operation would lease somewhere around two percent of the harbour to Town Point Oysters. I fail to see how the scope of this operation will impede anyone from enjoying the harbour as it is presently used. Small pleasure craft and kayakers will still be able to enjoy free use of the

harbour, and residents who traditionally lack access to the harbour stand to benefit from the development of this valuable public resource.

Lastly, the quality of the water in our harbour stands to benefit from the installation of an oyster farm, which is relevant to factor a), the optimum use of marine resources. Antigonish Harbour is not immune to surrounding environmental pressures, which include runoff from local agricultural activities that can introduce excessive nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus into the ecosystem. The ability of oysters to utilize these nutrients and improve the overall health of the harbour's ecosystem make the oyster farm a nice complement to our existing agricultural activities.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my support for Town Point Oysters and their proposal to develop an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. I am confident that the review board will find that the benefits of developing and harnessing our abundant natural resources will be a net benefit to the residents of our region over the long term.

Sincerely,

Bryan Druhan

Candid Brewing Company

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 10:29 am, Apr 04, 2023

Gerarda and Doug Mac Donald
[REDACTED],
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-095

April 3, 2023

Clerk of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223,
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Dear Sir/Madame:

We are writing to express our opposition to the application of Town Point Consulting Inc. for three marine aquaculture licences and leases for the suspended cultivation of American Oysters - AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044 in Antigonish Harbour, Antigonish County. We strongly oppose the proposed Oyster farm.

Our opposition is based on three factors that will be considered determining whether to approve the Town Point Consulting Inc. application:

- Factor C – fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;
- Factor D – the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;
- Factor G – the sustainability of wild salmon;

We understand that Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (NSDFA) reviewed the Nursery Application (#1422) of Town Point Consulting and stated that "*the nearest salmon-run rivers are 30-50 miles distance*" of the proposed Hatchery site. This is not true. In fact, important recreational salmon fisheries exist in both the West and South Rivers that flow into Antigonish Harbour, and both Rivers are well within 30-50 miles of the Hatchery site.

Doug has fished for salmon on the West and South Rivers for 50 years, and was flabbergasted to hear that NSDFA made a statement that implied that there are no salmon in these Rivers! This statement is contradicted by information in the attached document entitled "Update of Indicators of Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo Salar*) in DFO Gulf Region Salmon Fishing Areas 15 – 18 FOR 2020 AND 2021 prepared by the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat, Gulf Region of DFO (Science Response 2022/021). This document not only proves that a significant recreational salmon fishery exists on the West River, but also shows that the salmon stocks that support the fishery are imperilled. For example, the Report notes that "*Over the recent 12-year period, the trend for catch rates of large salmon declined 31% in West River (Antigonish) ...*"

The importance of Atlantic Salmon to the people of Nova Scotia was described as follows in a Spring 2022 report produced by DFO.

“Wild Atlantic salmon is an iconic species for the people of Atlantic Canada and Quebec, and an indicator of ecosystem health. Strong cultural and socio-economic ties to the species remain for many people who live and work in the region, despite closure of the commercial fishery. It is an important species for Indigenous peoples, and continues to be fished for food, social, and ceremonial purposes by more than forty First Nations and many Inuit communities. Salmon angling is also a valued recreational activity for both local residents and non-residents. It is these strong connections to salmon that inspire organizations and individuals to contribute to the conservation of the species.”

(Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Status Report on the Wild Atlantic Salmon Conservation Implementation Plan 2019-21, Spring 2022)

We are not experts in the impacts of Oyster farming on Salmon stocks, but we do know that salmon spend time in the harbour, in both the juvenile and adult stages of their life cycle. Obviously, a large Oyster farm would have significant effects on salmon, and the food chain and environment that sustain salmon in the Harbour.

We are aware of DFO’s Precautionary Principle which states that *“The Precautionary Principle recognizes that in the absence of scientific certainty, conservation measures can and should be taken when there is knowledge of a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the environment and/or resources using best available information.”*

(DFO, Guiding Principles, <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/oceans/networks-reseaux/principles-principes-eng.html>)

We ask the Aquaculture Review Board to ensure that the Precautionary Principle is applied to salmon conservation in Antigonish Harbour, and to order the completion of an Environmental Review on the impacts of Town Point Consulting’s Oyster farm on salmon stocks before approving a licence for them to operate in the Harbour.

We have one additional point to make about the environmental impacts of Town Point Consulting’s Oyster Farm application. We have been told that the Province intends to alter the protected area set aside for Piping Plovers by providing some of the protected acreage to Town Point Consulting for its operations. If this is true, it is outrageous. The Piping Plover is listed as Endangered in Canada under Schedule 1 of the Species at Risk Act. On February 22, 2020 the Province of Nova Scotia released a “Recovery Plan for Piping Plover (*Charadrius Melodus Melodus*) in Nova Scotia” that was adopted by the Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forestry. The Report notes that Piping Plover populations were endangered due to “... *ongoing threats from habitat loss and degradation* ...”. It would be scandalous for the Province of Nova Scotia to contribute to habitat loss by removing land from protected area status and turning it over to a commercial operation.

Yours Truly,

Gerarda and Doug Mac Donald

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335318528>

UPDATE OF INDICATORS OF ATLANTIC SALMON (*SALMO SALAR*) IN DFO GULF REGION SALMON FISHING AREAS 15 -18 FOR 2017

Technical Report · March 2018

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UPDATE OF INDICATORS OF ATLANTIC SALMON (*SALMO SALAR*) IN DFO GULF REGION SALMON FISHING AREAS 15 – 18 FOR 2017

Context

The last assessment of stock status of Atlantic Salmon for Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Gulf Region was completed after the 2013 return year (DFO 2014) and updates on stock status in 2014 to 2016 for each of the four Salmon Fishing Areas (SFA 15-18) were prepared (DFO 2015a; DFO 2015b, DFO 2016, DFO 2017). DFO Fisheries and Aquaculture Management (FAM) requested an update of the status of the Atlantic Salmon stocks in DFO Gulf Region for 2017. Indicators for adult and juvenile Atlantic Salmon in SFAs 15 to 18 are provided in this report. This Science Response Report results from the Science Response Process of February 20, 2018 on the update of indicators of Atlantic salmon to 2017 for Salmon Fishing Areas 15 to 18, DFO Gulf Region.

Background

All rivers flowing into the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence are included in DFO Gulf Region. Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) management areas in DFO Gulf Region are defined by four salmon fishing areas (SFA 15 to 18) encompassing portions of the three Maritime provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) (Fig. 1).

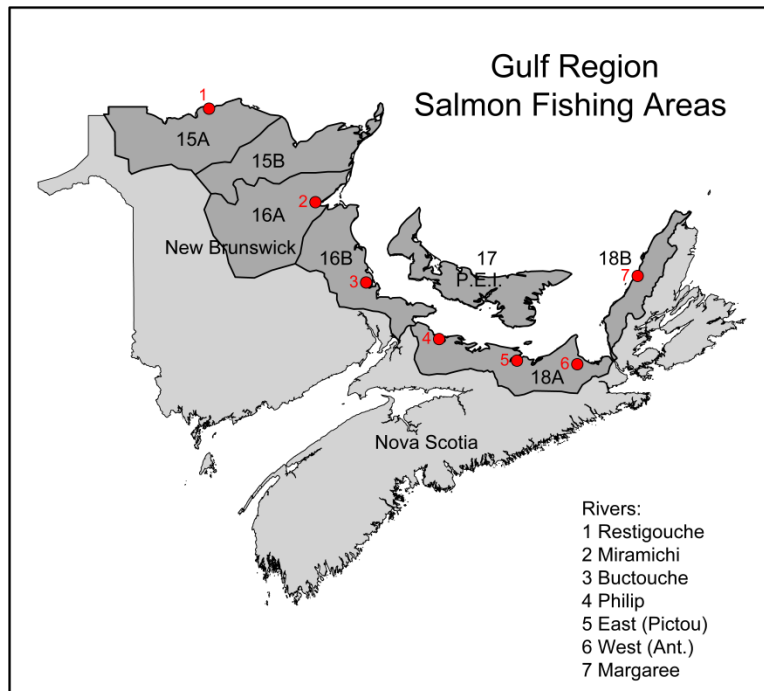


Figure 1. Salmon Fishing Areas in the DFO Gulf Region and locations of rivers mentioned in the report.

For management purposes, Atlantic Salmon are categorized as small salmon (grilse; fish with a fork length less than 63 cm) and large salmon (fish with a fork length equal to or greater than 63 cm).

This report presents indicators of abundance of adult salmon and juvenile life stages. To provide a perspective on recent trends, the changes (exponential regression of change) in the indicators over the recent twelve years, approximately two generations, are presented.

During 2015 to 2017, mandatory catch and release measures for the recreational fishery were in effect in all Salmon Fishing Areas where recreational fisheries were authorized. This was a change from 2014 and previous years when retention of small salmon had been allowed in SFA 15, SFA 16A, and SFA 18. In 2015 to 2017, rivers in south east New Brunswick (SFA 16B) remained closed to all directed salmon fishing.

Analysis and Response

Abundance indices of adult salmon

SFA 15A Restigouche River

Information on adult salmon abundance from the Restigouche River (NB; excluding Matapedia River which is entirely within the province of Quebec) comes primarily from angling catches and effort as well as end of season spawner counts. For recreational fisheries, catches in the Restigouche River are based on lodge catch reports compiled by DFO Science and Crown Reserve angling catches compiled by the province of New Brunswick excluding catches from public water. As of the date of this review, the catch data from lodges for 2017 were incomplete with information missing for 3 of 24 lodges. Catches from all lodges was estimated by assuming that the catch data from the missing lodges was of the same proportion to total catches based on the previous three years.

Effort from lodges and leases in 2017 was estimated at 5,285 rod days, a 5% increase in effort compared to 2016. However, monthly effort analysis showed that effort decreased by over 50% in August and September compared to the long term means (2001-2016). Lodges reduced or stopped their fishing activity in August and September because of low water levels which were interfering with navigation on the river. Total parties registered in Crown Reserve waters in 2017 decreased by 2% from 2016 (908 anglers in 2017 compared to 929 in 2016). Of the registered parties, 54% had returned creel forms. Estimated Crown Reserve catches were raised to totals based on the returned creel forms. Combined, the provisional recreational fishery catches for 2017 are 1,682 large salmon and 1,685 small salmon from the Restigouche (NB) waters (excluding Matapedia River).

Based on an assumed angling exploitation rate of 40% and raised by estimates of aboriginal fishery harvests in the estuary, an approach similar to previous assessments (DFO 2014), returns to the Restigouche River (NB) in 2017 were estimated at 4,457 large salmon and 4,254 small salmon (Fig. 2). Over the recent 12 year period, (approximately two generations), the median annual abundance of large and small salmon has decreased by 10% and 42%, respectively.

Based on the angling catches index, the returns of large salmon were equivalent to 79% of the conservation requirement. Accounting for losses from fishing (in river FSC harvests and 6% catch and release mortality), the potential egg depositions by large salmon represented 72% of the conservation requirement. Based on an angling exploitation rate of 40%, the Restigouche River (NB portion) has met or exceeded the conservation egg requirement in 6 of the last 10 years (Fig. 3).

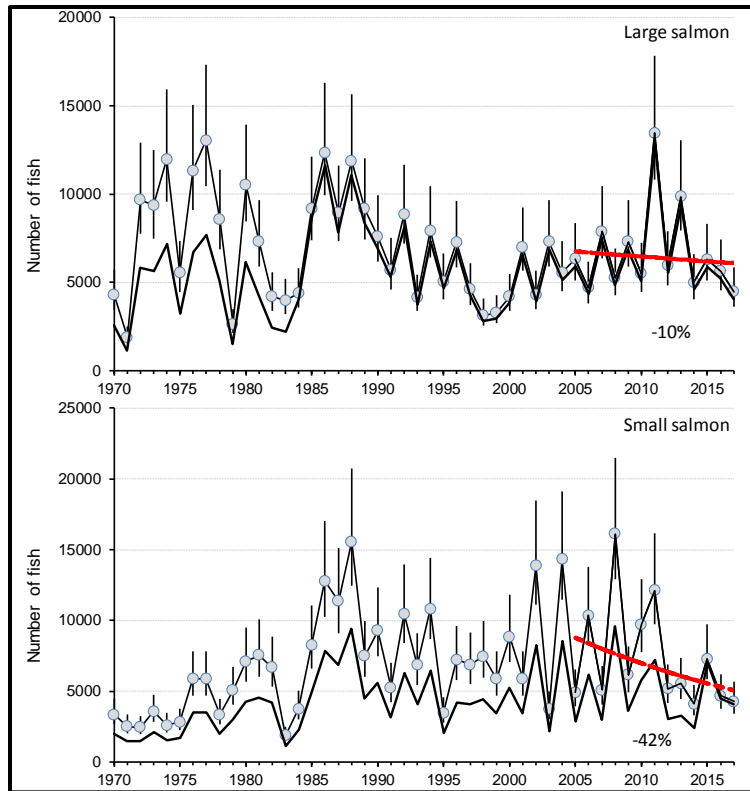


Figure 2. Returns (grey circle are for 40% catch rate and vertical error bars show range based on catch rates of 30% to 50%) and spawners (solid line for 40% catch rate assumption) based on angling catches of large salmon (upper) and small salmon (lower) to Restigouche River (NB portion), 1970 to 2017. The data for 2017 are preliminary. The red dashed line is the trend line (exponential regression) of the returns and the corresponding percent change over the twelve year time period (2005 to 2017) are also shown.

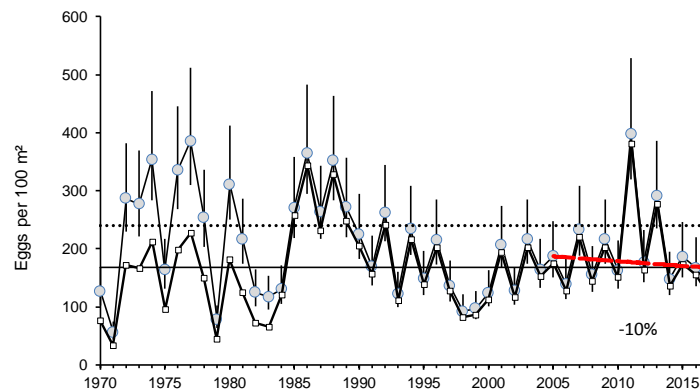


Figure 3. The potential eggs (expressed as eggs per 100 m² of wetted habitat area; total area of 21.6 million m²) by large salmon for the returns (grey circles are assumed catch rate of 40%, error bars show range for catch rates of 30% to 50%) and the spawners (white square symbols for an assumed catch rate of 40%) in the New Brunswick portion of the Restigouche River, 1970 to 2017. The solid horizontal line is the egg deposition rate of 168 eggs per 100 m² presently used to assess attainment of conservation for the Restigouche River. The dashed horizontal line is the egg deposition rate corresponding to 240 eggs per 100 m² used in other rivers of Gulf Region. The estimates for 2017 are based on preliminary data. The red dashed trend line (exponential regression) and the corresponding percent change for spawners over the twelve year time period (2005 to 2017) are also shown.

Assessments on the Restigouche River are also informed by spawner counts at the end of the season, after all fisheries and in river losses. In late September 2017, end of season spawner counts were conducted in four Restigouche (NB) tributaries (Kedgwick, Little Main Restigouche, Upsalquitch, and Patapedia) and the main stem Restigouche (Fig. 4). Based on the end of season spawner count index, the eggs from large salmon spawners in 2017 were above the conservation (1.68 eggs per m²) requirement (135%).

The difference in status in 2017 based on angling catches with assumed exploitation rates compared to end of season snorkel counts can be largely explained by unfavourable angling conditions which likely resulted in lower catches and a lower exploitation rate than the assumed value of 0.4. For 2017, the spawner counts are considered to be more representative of status than the estimates derived from angling catches.

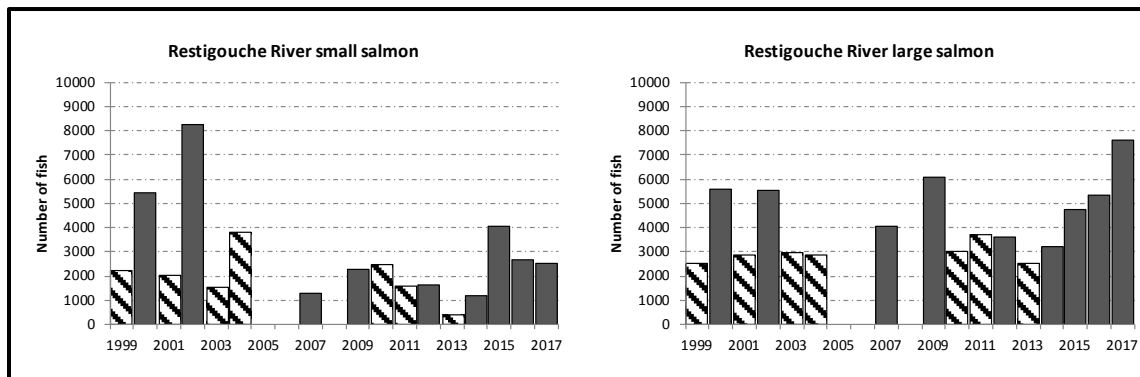


Figure 4. Summary of end of season salmon counts by size group (small salmon left panel, large salmon right panel) from four tributaries and the main stem of the Restigouche River for 1999 to 2017. Spawner counts could not be completed (hatched bars) in all years depending on water conditions.

SFA 16A Miramichi River

The Miramichi River is the largest river in SFA 16 and DFO Gulf Region. Returns of small and large salmon are estimated using mark and recapture experiments based on catches at various monitoring facilities throughout the watershed (DFO 2014). The estimates of returns and spawners of Atlantic Salmon for the Miramichi River and to each of the Northwest Miramichi and Southwest Miramichi branches are repeated here from DFO (2018).

The estimated returns of large salmon to the Miramichi River in 2017 were 14,600 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range 11,000 to 19,900) while small salmon returns were estimated at 13,300 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range 10,500 to 16,600). Returns of both large salmon and small salmon to the Miramichi River in 2017 were below 2016 levels and below the average returns estimated for each size group over the time series 1971 to 2017 (Fig. 5).

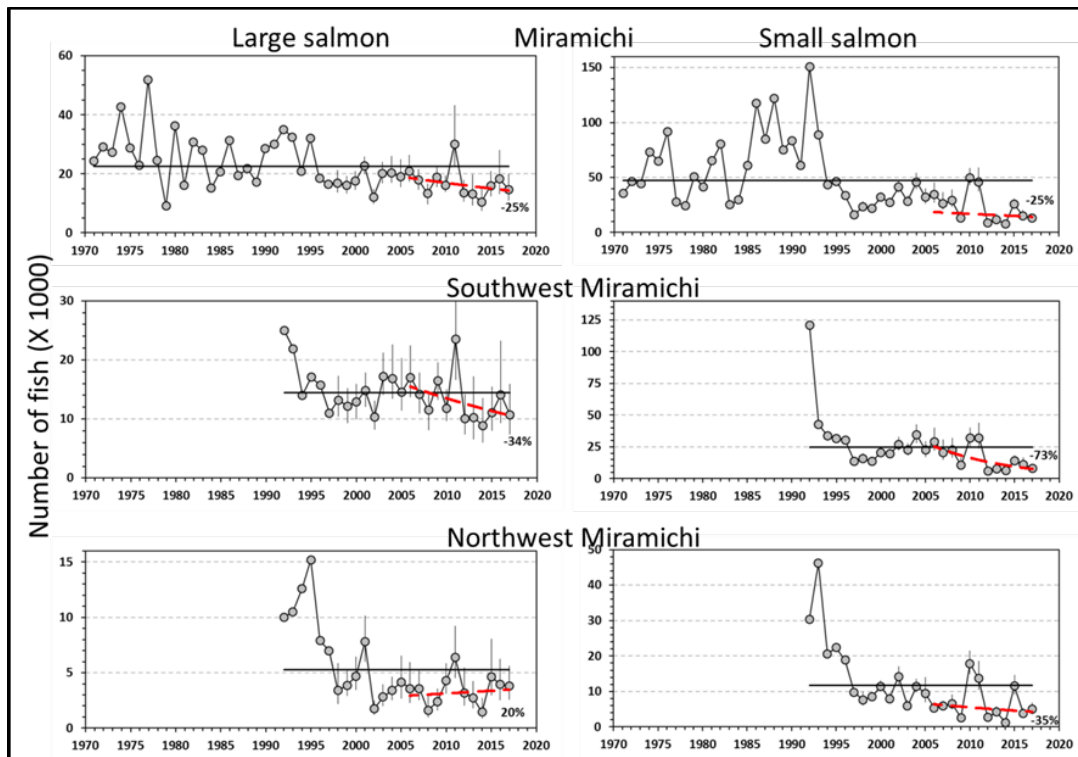


Figure 5. Estimates (median and 5th to 95th percentile range) of large salmon (left column) and small salmon (right column) returns for the Miramichi River for 1971 to 2017 (upper row), the Southwest Miramichi River 1992 to 2017 (middle row), and the Northwest Miramichi River 1992 to 2017 (bottom row). The black horizontal line is the average of the median return estimates of large salmon or small salmon for the available time series. The red dashed line is the trend line (exponential regression) and the corresponding percent change over twelve years estimated for the period 2006 to 2017 are also shown.

Estimated returns for the two main branches of the Miramichi River are available since 1992 (Fig. 5). The returns of large salmon to the Southwest Miramichi River in 2017 were estimated at 10,700 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range 7,400 to 15,900), whereas small salmon returns were estimated at 8,100 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range 5,700 to 11,300) (Fig. 5). Returns of both large salmon and small salmon to the Southwest Miramichi River in 2017 were below 2016 levels and below the average of the median return estimates for each size group over the period 1992 to 2016 (Fig. 5).

The returns of large salmon to the Northwest Miramichi River in 2017 were estimated at 3,800 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range 2,600 to 5,600), whereas small salmon returns were estimated at 5,000 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range 3,600 to 6,900) (Fig. 5). Relative to 2016 levels, the return estimates in 2017 represented a decrease for large salmon but an increase for small salmon. Both large salmon and small salmon return estimates in 2017 were below the average of the median return estimates for each size group over the period 1992 to 2016 (Fig. 5).

Over the recent 12 year period, approximately two generations, the estimated returns of large salmon in the Miramichi overall and the Southwest Miramichi have declined by 25% and 34% respectively, while estimated returns of large salmon to the Northwest Miramichi have increased by 20% (Fig. 5). The estimated returns of small salmon have declined in the Miramichi River overall and in each of the main branches, particularly in the Southwest Miramichi (73% decline) (Fig. 5).

Biological characteristics of adult Atlantic Salmon, including mean fork length, proportion female, and eggs per fish for small salmon and large salmon were updated to 2017 (DFO 2018). Considering these biological characteristics, the estimated total eggs in the returns of large and small salmon combined in 2017 were equivalent to 78% of the conservation requirement for the Miramichi River overall, 85% of the conservation requirement for the Southwest Miramichi River, and 63% of the conservation requirement for the Northwest Miramichi River.

With the introduction of the mandatory release of small salmon in the recreational fishery in 2015, losses due to catch and release mortality were assumed to be 0.9% of total returns (3% mortality on catches equivalent to 30% of the small salmon return), identical to the formula for calculating large salmon losses in the recreational fishery since 1984. After accounting for harvests in aboriginal food, social, and ceremonial fisheries and losses from recreational fisheries, eggs from small salmon and large salmon spawners combined were equivalent to 76% of the conservation requirement for the Miramichi River overall, 83% of the conservation requirement for the Southwest Miramichi River, and 60% of the conservation requirement for the Northwest Miramichi River (Fig. 6).

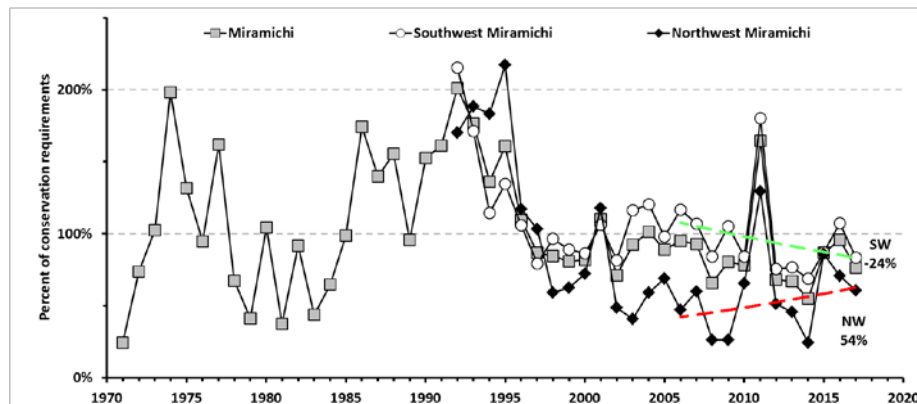


Figure 6. Percentages of the conservation requirements (eggs) attained for small salmon and large salmon spawners combined for the Miramichi River overall (1971 to 2017), the Southwest Miramichi (1992 to 2017) and the Northwest Miramichi (1992 to 2017) rivers (DFO 2018). The trend lines (exponential regressions) for the Northwest Miramichi (red) and the Southwest Miramichi (black) and their corresponding percent change over the twelve year period 2006 to 2017 are also shown.

Conservation requirements for both major branches and the Miramichi River overall were last achieved in 2011 although the Southwest Miramichi exceeded conservation in 2016. The eggs in combined small salmon and large salmon spawners in the Southwest Miramichi River exceeded the conservation requirement in eight of the last 20 years and in three of the last 10 years. The eggs in the combined small salmon and large salmon spawners in the Northwest Miramichi River were sufficient to meet or exceed the conservation requirement in two of the last 20 years and once in the last 10 years (Fig. 6).

SFA 17 Prince Edward Island

Salmon redds have been surveyed at least once since 1990 in all rivers in PEI that currently have salmon. The methods for converting redd counts to female salmon spawners and assessing against attainment of river specific conservation requirements are described by Cairns and MacFarlane (2015).

There are 25 rivers in SFA 17 with current or recent Atlantic Salmon occupancy, based on confirmed observations of redds or juveniles (Table 1). Seal River (Vernon) has been removed from the list of salmon rivers (DFO 2017) because the identity of redds reported to be those of salmon has not been independently verified, and because electrofishing has failed to locate

salmon juveniles. Redd surveys were completed in 24 of the 25 salmon rivers in 2017. Estimated spawners exceeded conservation requirements in five of 24 rivers and were below 50% of conservation requirements in 17 of 24 rivers. Three of the five rivers that exceeded conservation requirement are located in the northeast extremity of PEI (Fig. 7).

Increasing trends in the percent attainment of conservation requirements are noted in seven of 10 rivers in which redds were surveyed at least seven times during 2006 to 2017 (Table 1). However, this should not be taken as indicating an overall positive trend in Atlantic Salmon status on PEI, because the analysis does not cover rivers with small and precarious populations which are generally surveyed only intermittently.

Table 1. The percentage attainment of Atlantic Salmon conservation requirements in monitored SFA 17 rivers, 2011 to 2017. A dash indicates no survey was completed. The spawner requirement column is the estimated number of spawners, sexes and sea ages combined, corresponding to the conservation egg requirement for the river (Cairns and MacFarlane 2015). Also shown is the percent change (over 12 years) in the percent conservation attained for rivers in which redd surveys were conducted at least seven times between 2006 and 2017. Percentages of conservation attainment for previous years are available in Cairns and MacFarlane (2015).

River	Spawner Req.	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent change
Cains Brook	26	139	102	95	-	95 ^a	110	187	-
Carruthers Brook	40	472	210	157 ^a	-	165 ^a	151	191	-
Trout River, Coleman	160	-	-	24	15	15	18	17	-
Trout River, Tyne Valley	46	-	-	0	0	-	-	4 ^a	-
Little Trout River	20	61	-	0	0 ^c	4	-	44	-96
Bristol (Berrigans) Creek	39	-	7	11	0	1 ^a	-	9	-
Morell River	270	108	58 ^a	78 ^a	93	34 ^a	49	46	-
Midgell River	61	80	59	26 ^a	55	102	-	76	+37
St. Peters River	42	55	73	46	45	70	21 ^a	20	-64
Cow River	22	-	2	102	24	137	114	78	-
Naufrage River	41	459	46	484	232	165	115	95	+208
Bear River	16	-	-	43	8	35	95	19	-
Hay River	25	2	5	78	27	65	74	27	> 300
Cross Creek	42	200	87	282	203	250	179	202	+ 220
Priest Pond Creek	24	37	39	283	242	258	131	281	> 300
North Lake Creek	45	346	103	325	178	256	245	208	+17
Vernon River	66	-	5	7	5 ^a	0	-	11	-
Clarks Creek	44	-	0	3	-	0 ^a	-	4	-
Pisquid River	45	67	34	38	15 ^a	46	28	27	-42
Head of Hillsborough R.	51	0	0	2	-	0	-	0	-
North River	94	5	-	10	-	-	-	4	-
Clyde River	40	0	- ^b	- ^b	- ^b	- ^b	-	0	-
West River	210	28	27	52	35	35	45	46	+76
Dunk River	220	-	4 ^a	-	-	-	-	23	-
Wilmot River	79	-	-	-	- ^c	- ^c	-	3	-

^a Considered to be a minimum value due to incomplete survey coverage.

^b Juveniles were found by electrofishing in 2012 but not in 2013, 2014, and 2015.

^c Juveniles were found by electrofishing in 2014 and 2015.

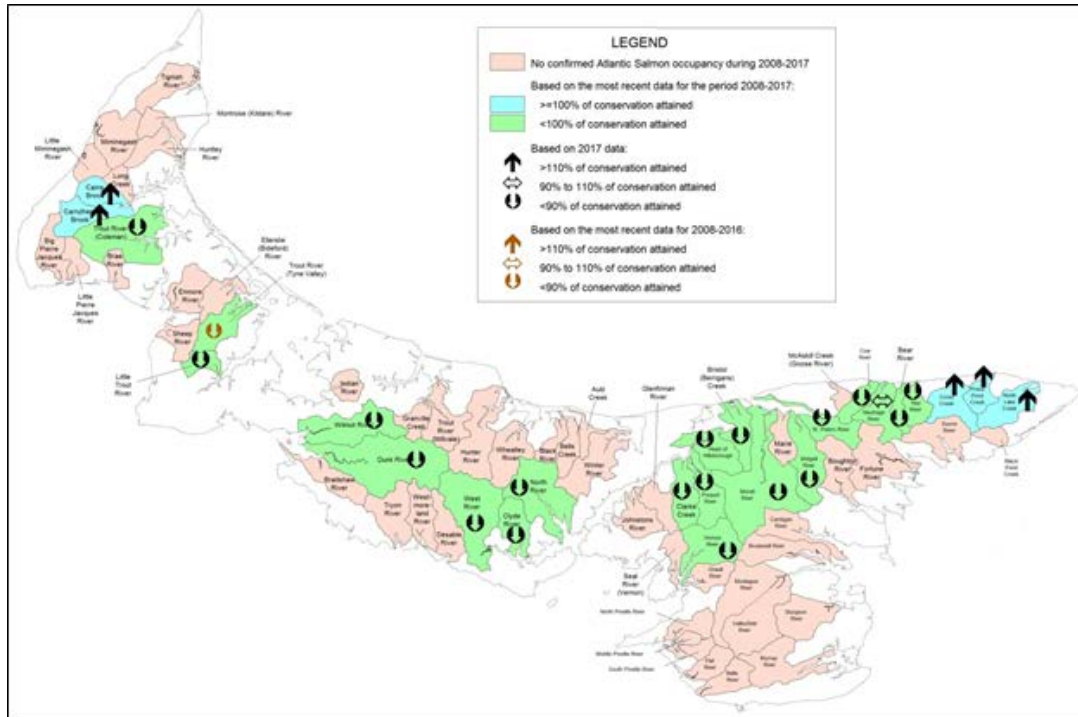


Figure 7. Location of SFA 17 watersheds with historic or current Atlantic Salmon occupancy and summary of their status relative to the percentage of the conservation requirements attained in 2014 (Trout River Tyne Valley) and in 2017 (all other watersheds). Blue shading indicates watersheds which have met or exceeded conservation requirements. Green shading indicates watersheds that are below conservation requirements. Pink shading indicates watersheds with no evidence of salmon presence since 2008. The symbols are as follows: U less than 90% of conservation requirements attained, ⇔ between 90% and 110% of conservation requirements, and ↑ greater than 110% of conservation requirements.

SFA 18 Gulf Nova Scotia

Indices of abundance from the recreational fishery for 2017 are preliminary and based on extracts from the licence stub return database to Feb. 16, 2018 (379 licence stubs returned out of 1,954 licences sold in 2017; 19.4% return rate). Catches and efforts from the returned licence stubs are raised to total licence sales to estimate total catch and effort.

SFA 18A Mainland Gulf Nova Scotia

The estimated catches of large salmon for West River (Antigonish) and East River (Pictou) were the lowest values since 1984, and River Philip had the lowest value since 2007 (Fig. 8). Values for all three rivers were much lower than their respective long term (1984 to 2016) average (Fig. 8). The catch rates, estimated catch per rod day, of large salmon were lower for all three rivers in 2017 compared to 2016. West River (Antigonish) and East River (Pictou) both had the lowest values in the time series and it was the lowest value since 2007 for River Philip (Fig. 8).

Over the recent 12 year period, the catch rates of large salmon declined by 46% in West River (Antigonish) and by 71% in East River (Pictou). Catch rates of large salmon in River Philip increased 52% over that time period (Fig. 8). All three rivers also had notable declines in catches and catch rates of small salmon. Catches on West River (Antigonish) and East River (Pictou) were the lowest in the times series. Catch rates declined by 85% for East River (Pictou), by 74% for West River (Antigonish), and by 18% for River Philip (Fig. 8).

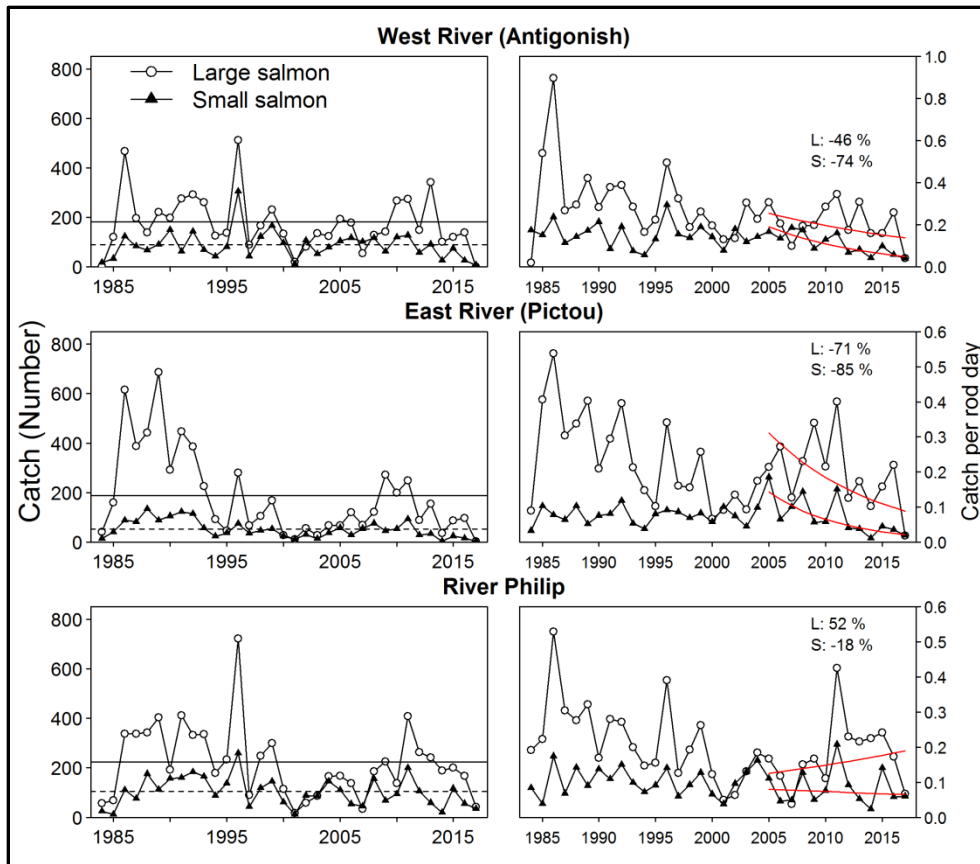


Figure 8. Estimated catches (left panels) and catch rates (catch per rod day; right panels) of large salmon and small salmon from the recreational fishery in the three largest rivers of SFA 18A, 1984 to 2017. In the left panels, the horizontal lines are the average catch for large salmon (solid) and for small salmon (dashed line) for the time series (1984 to 2016). The solid red lines in the right panels are the exponential regression over the recent twelve years, 2005 to 2017. The percent change over that time period is shown in the upper right corner for L = large salmon and S = small salmon. The data for 2017 are preliminary. Note the different y axes range for the figures in the right panels.

SFA 18B Margaree River

The estimated catch of large salmon for the Margaree River was lower in 2017 compared to 2016, and the estimated catch of small salmon was similar to 2016. Catches of both size groups were well below their respective long term averages, and were the 3rd lowest value in the time series (Fig. 9). In 2017, the estimated catch per rod day of large salmon for the Margaree River was lower than in 2016 whereas for small salmon, it was similar to 2016 (Fig. 9). Trends in catch rates over the recent twelve years show a decline of 27% for large salmon and 53% for small salmon (Fig. 9).

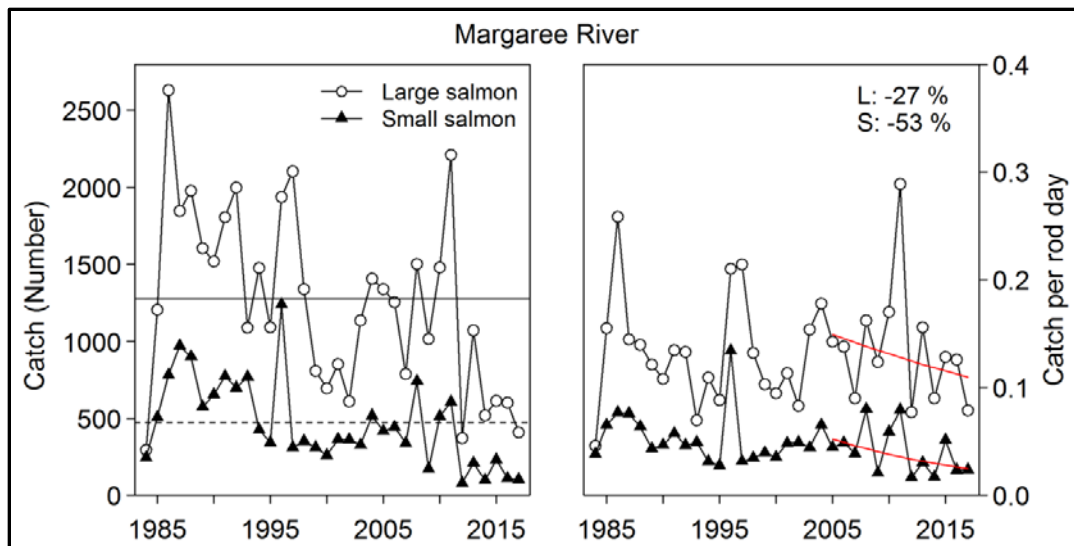


Figure 9. Estimated catches (left panel) and catch rates (catch per rod day; right panel) of large salmon and small salmon from the recreational fishery on the Margaree River (SFA 18B), 1984 to 2017. In the left panel, the horizontal lines are the average catch for large salmon (solid) and for small salmon (dashed) for the time series (1984 to 2016). The solid red lines in the right panel are the exponential regression over the recent twelve years, 2005 to 2017. The percent change over that time period is shown in the upper right corner for L = large salmon and S = small salmon. The data for 2017 are preliminary.

Adult salmon abundance for the Margaree River is derived with a model that uses estimates of exploitation rates in the recreational fishery, mark and recapture experiments conducted between 1988 and 1996, corresponding recreational fishery catch and effort data recorded in volunteer angler logbooks, and licence stub returns (Breau and Chaput 2012). Estimates for 2017 are based on catch and effort data from volunteer angler logbook returns and licence stubs processed as of February 16, 2018.

The estimated returns of large salmon to the Margaree River in 2017 were 1,513 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range of 1,160 to 1,940), well below the long term average of 2,750 fish, and at 146% of the conservation requirement of 1,036 large salmon (Fig. 10). Conservation requirements have been exceeded every year since 1987. The returns of large salmon in 2017 are the second lowest estimate of the time series, after those of 2012. The preliminary estimated returns of small salmon to the Margaree River in 2017 were 371 fish (median; 5th to 95th percentile range of 250 to 550) (Fig. 10), below the long term average of 885 fish. The 2017 season was marked by low water levels, with very few rain events between June and end of August. For the 31-year time series (1987 to 2017), the three lowest returns of large salmon occurred in the past six years, and for small salmon, the five lowest values of the time series were in the last six years. For the Margaree River, trends over the recent 12 year period show a decline of 30% for large salmon and a decline of 57% for small salmon.

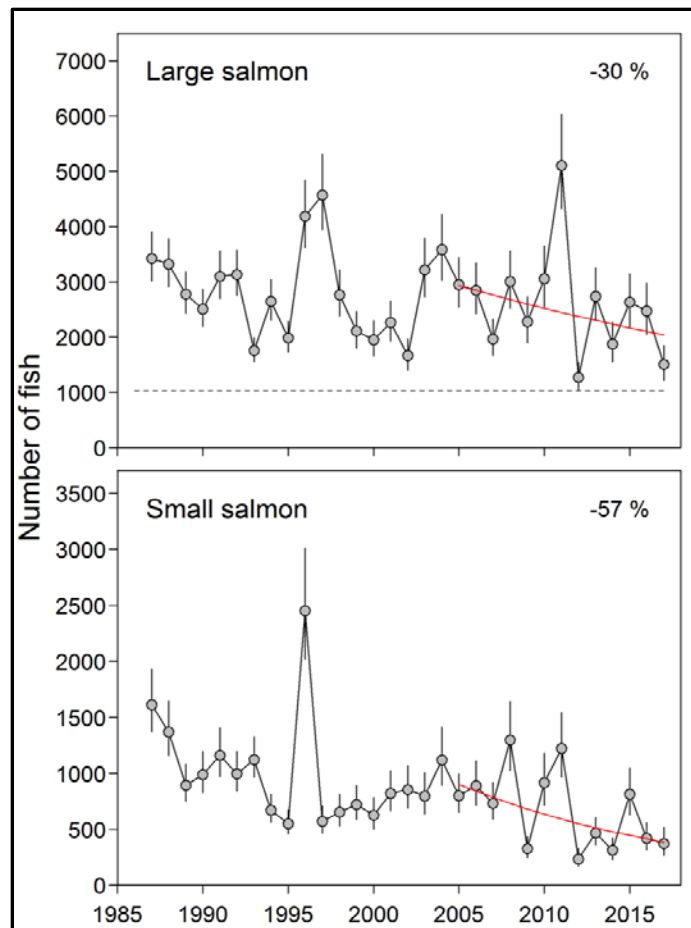


Figure 10. Posterior distributions (medians; 5th to 95th percentile range) of estimated returns of large salmon (upper panel) and small salmon (lower panel) to the Margaree River, 1987 to 2017. Values for 2017 are preliminary. The dashed line in the upper panel indicates the large salmon conservation requirement of 1,036 spawners. The solid red lines in the panels are the exponential regression over the recent twelve years, 2005 to 2017 and the corresponding percent change over that time period is also shown in each panel.

Gulf Region

Estimates of total returns of small salmon and large salmon are developed for each SFA and overall for Gulf Region based on estimates from monitored rivers (DFO 2014).

Returns of large salmon to Gulf Region in 2017 were estimated at 27,000 fish (5th to 95th percentile range of 21,600 to 32,400 fish), 61% of the long-term average (44,200 fish) of the 1970 to 2017 time series (Fig. 11). Small salmon returns to Gulf Region were estimated at 22,600 fish (5th to 95th percentile range of 18,600 to 26,600 fish), only 32% of the average abundance (70,700 fish) of the time series from 1970 to 2017 (Fig. 11).

Over the recent 12 years, approximately two generations, the estimated abundances of large salmon have increased in SFA 17 (+41%) but decreased in SFA 5 (-12%), SFA 16 (-20%), and SFA 18 (-28%) (Fig. 11). Overall in Gulf Region rivers, large salmon abundance has declined by 19% over the period 2005 to 2017. For small salmon, abundances have declined by 39% to 65% in the four Gulf Region SFAs with a decline in estimated small salmon abundance of 60% to Gulf Region rivers overall (Fig. 11).

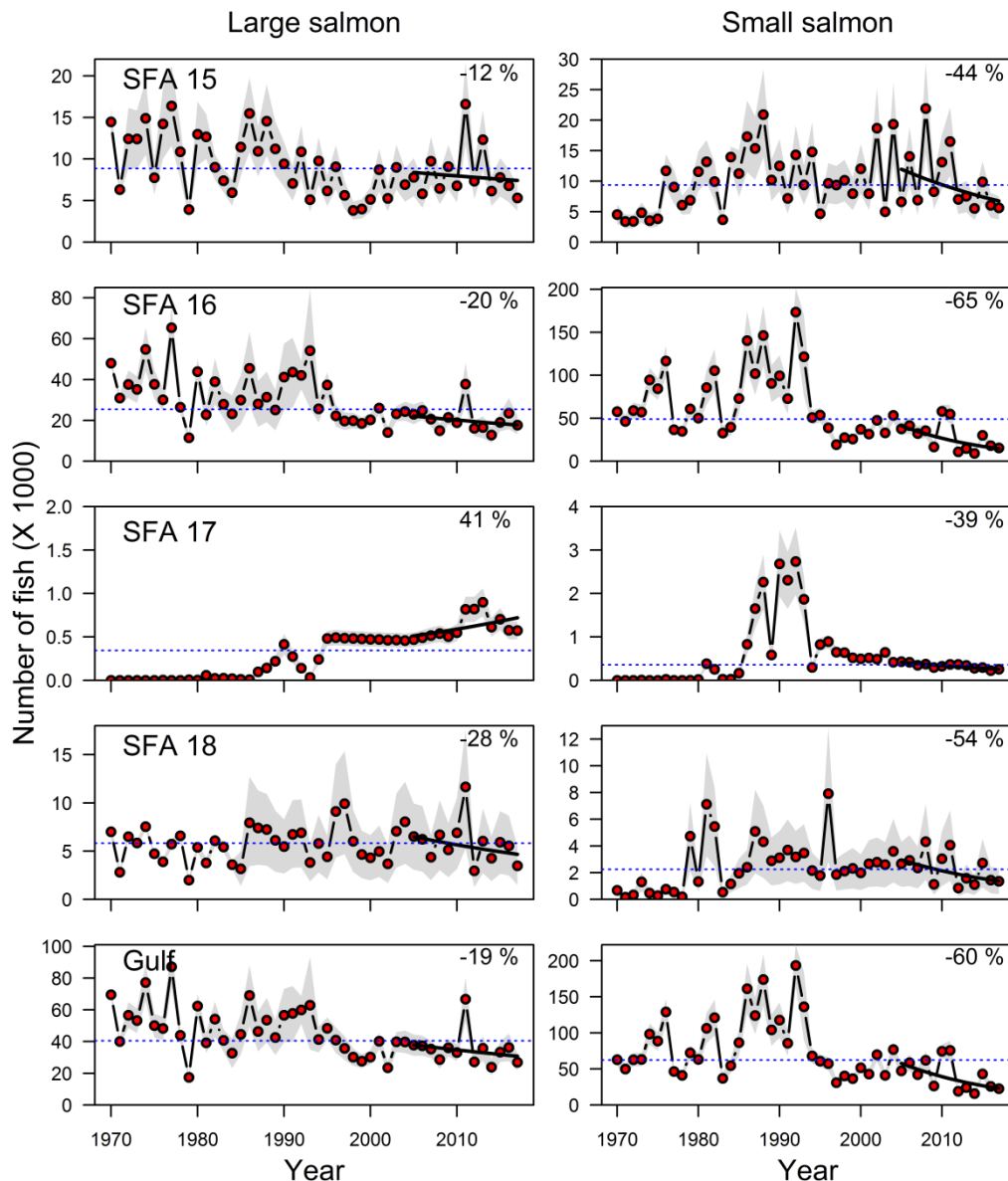


Figure 11. Estimates (medians are coloured symbols, shaded contours are the 5th to 95th percentile ranges) of total returns of large salmon (left panels) and small salmon (right panels) to each of SFA 15, 16, 17, and 18, and to Gulf Region rivers overall, 1970 to 2017. The solid black line in each panel is the exponential change prediction over the recent twelve years, 2005 to 2017. The percent change over that time period is also shown in the upper right corner of each panel. The light horizontal dashed line in each panel is the time series median abundance for 1970 to 2017.

Abundance indices of juvenile salmon

Indices of freshwater production are derived from electrofishing surveys. Fixed site sampling for juvenile salmon has been conducted most consistently since the early 1970s in the Restigouche (SFA 15) and Miramichi (SFA 16) rivers, and since the mid-1980s for SFA 18 rivers.

Abundances at sites, in terms of number of fish per habitat area sampled by age or size group (densities), are obtained using successive removal sampling or catch per unit effort sampling calibrated to densities. Sampling intensities vary among years and among rivers. When

information is available, annual densities are referenced to averages for two time periods, prior to 1984 and post-1984 (or later depending upon the age group) corresponding to the year (1984) when commercial fisheries were closed and the introduction of mandatory catch-and-release for large salmon in the recreational fishery.

SFA 15A Restigouche River

In 2017, two to three cohorts (fry, small parr, large parr) were captured at most sampling sites ($n = 85$) indicating that there had been multiple years of spawning success. Three sites had no salmon juveniles, three sites had fry only, and two sites had only parr. Salmon juveniles are broadly distributed in the river with the exception of some small streams which are prone to periodic blockages to spawners by beaver dams. Densities of Atlantic salmon fry, small parr (mostly one-year old), and large parr (mostly two-year and older) all increased post-1984 and remain at moderate levels (Fig. 12). Over the past twelve years, the abundances of juvenile salmon have increased by 15% for fry, while decreasing by 22% for small parr and 21% for large parr (Fig. 12). Results from juvenile salmon surveys in 2008 and 2011, which showed decreased abundance of some age classes, could be biased due to difficult sampling conditions (extremely high water) rather than an indicator of actual lower abundance.

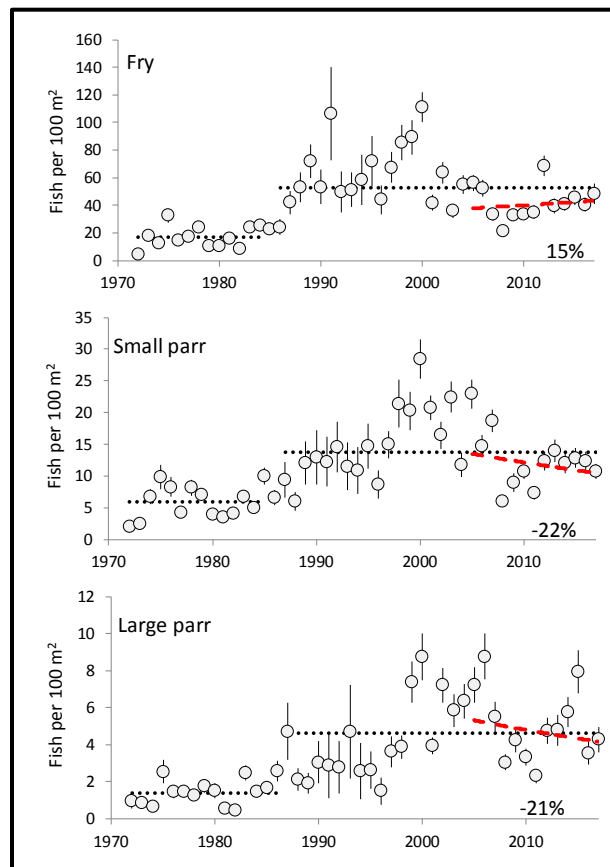


Figure 12. Mean juvenile densities (fish per 100 m²) for fry (upper panel), small parr (middle panel) and large parr (lower panel) for the sites sampled in the Restigouche River (NB waters only, excluding Matapedia and Patapedia rivers), 1972 to 2017. The horizontal solid line and the horizontal dashed line in each panel are the average densities corresponding to periods before and after, respectively, the significant management changes were implemented to the commercial and recreational salmon fisheries in 1984. The exponential regression (solid line) over the recent 12 years (2005 to 2017) and the percent change over that time period are also shown in each panel. Vertical bars are one standard error.

SFA 16A Miramichi River

Densities of Atlantic Salmon fry, small parr, and large parr in the Miramichi watershed were summarized according to the four major tributaries (Southwest Miramichi [SW], Renous, Northwest Miramichi [NW], and Little Southwest Miramichi [LSW] rivers). Average juvenile densities were calculated only when four or more sites per large river system were surveyed in a given year.

Electrofishing surveys were carried out at six sites in the LSW, at 18 sites in the NW, at ten sites in the Renous and at 22 sites in the SW for a total of 56 sites throughout the Miramichi watershed in 2017. Salmon fry were captured at all but one site (LSW) and salmon parr at all but two sites (NW, SW) in 2017 which indicates that adult salmon continue to spawn throughout the Miramichi watershed.

In 2017, average fry densities in all rivers decreased from levels observed in 2016 and remained below the average post-1984 fry densities in those rivers (Fig. 13). Average small parr densities in 2017 decreased from levels observed in 2016 and were the lowest for each tributary since 1985 and well below the long term (1986 to 2015) average for this life stage in each river (Fig. 13). In 2017, the average small parr densities ranged from 5 (LSW) to 11 (NW) fish per 100 m². The average large parr densities in 2017 ranged from 6 (LSW) to 11 (NW) fish per 100 m² and they were higher than levels observed in 2016 and among the highest levels of the time series for each tributary (Fig. 13). Low small parr abundance in 2016 appears not to have translated into low large parr abundance in 2017 (Fig. 13).

Overall, juvenile salmon abundances in the Miramichi watershed have varied and remained at higher average levels since the 1984 closure of the commercial fishery and the mandatory release of large salmon in the recreational fishery. Average fry and small parr abundances in 2017 have decreased from higher levels of the 1990s while large parr abundances have increased.

While the average abundance of fry in the Southwest Miramichi has remained relatively stable over the last 12 years, fry abundance in the other monitored rivers has declined between 19% and 36% (Fig. 13). Small parr abundance has decreased in all monitored rivers over the last 12 years and by >50% in three of the four tributaries (Fig. 13). The abundance of large parr has increased significantly in the SW, remained stable in the LSW, and decreased by more than 20% in the NW and Renous over the recent 12 year period (Fig. 13).

SFA 16B Buctouche River

In 2017, six sites were surveyed on the Buctouche River in SFA 16B; fry were captured at five sites and parr at six sites. The average densities of salmon fry and parr in 2017 were improved over levels in 2016 but below the average values for both life stages since the recreational and aboriginal fisheries were closed in 1998 (Fig. 14). Salmon fry densities of over 40 per 100 m² were observed in the Buctouche River in 2000 following an adult salmon assessment the previous year that determined that the conservation requirement had been met. Similar levels of fry have only been observed once since then, in 2005, suggesting that spawning requirements may have been achieved in 2004. The abundances of fry and parr have decreased substantially by more than 60% over the recent twelve years (Fig. 14).

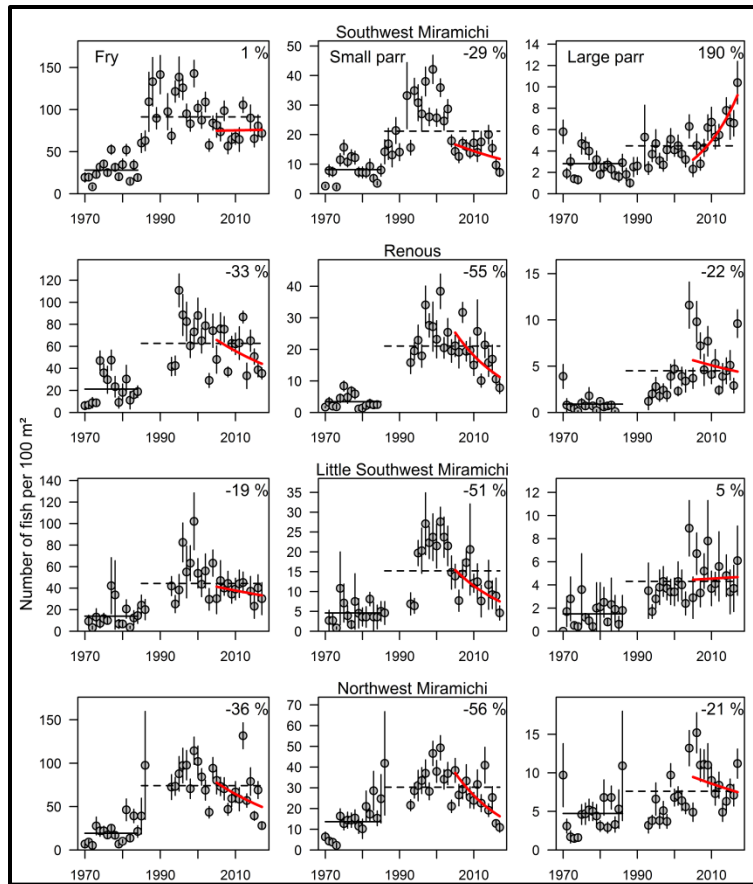


Figure 13. Annual average densities, expressed as fish per 100 m² of sampled area, for fry (left column), small parr (middle column), and large parr (right column) at sampled sites in the four major rivers of the Miramichi watershed: Southwest Miramichi (upper row), Renous River (second row), Little Southwest Miramichi (third row), and Northwest Miramichi (bottom row) for 1970 to 2017. Vertical bars are one standard error. The horizontal solid and dashed lines in each panel are the average densities corresponding to periods before and after, respectively, significant management changes were implemented to the commercial and recreational salmon fisheries in 1984. The trend (exponential regression) over the recent 12 years (2005 to 2017) and the percent change over that time period are also shown in each panel.

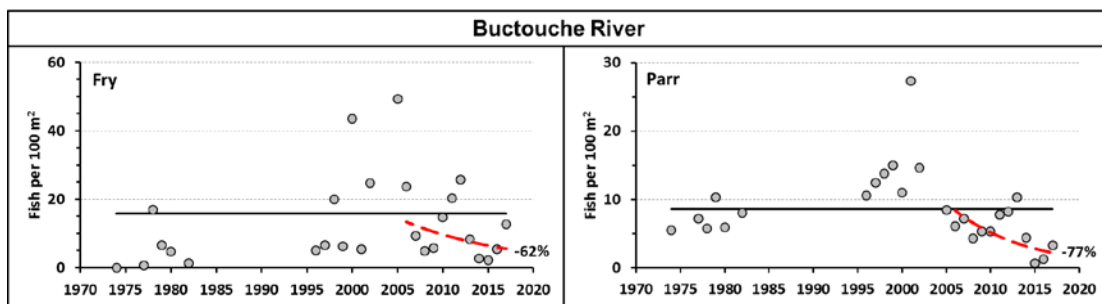


Figure 14. Average densities, expressed as fish per 100 m² of sampled area, for fry (left panel) and parr (size groups combined, right panel) from sampled sites in the Buctouche River 1974 to 2017 sampling years. The horizontal lines represent average fry and parr abundance for the years after the closure of the aboriginal and recreational fisheries in 1998. The red trend lines (exponential regressions) over the recent 12 years (2005 to 2017) and the percent change over that time period are also shown in each panel.

SFA 18A Mainland Gulf Nova Scotia

Juvenile salmon surveys have been conducted in three index rivers in SFA 18A: West River (Antigonish), East River (Pictou), and River Philip. Results are presented for years with at least three sites sampled per river. Since 2012, six sites have been sampled per river. All sites sampled in 2017 were occupied by juveniles. Two to three size groups (fry, small parr, large parr; proxy for cohorts) were captured at all sampling sites in 2017 except for two sites on West River (Antigonish) (one site had only fry and another site had only large parr), indicating that there had been multiple years of spawning success.

Fry abundances have been at moderate to high levels (≥ 50 fry per 100 m^2) in all three rivers with a notable decline over the past 12 years in East River (Pictou) and River Philip (33% and 47% respectively) (Fig. 15). In 2017, parr abundances (small and large combined) were lower on West River (Antigonish) and River Philip than in 2016, and similar to 2016 for East River (Pictou). Parr abundances reflect the same pattern of annual abundances as fry, at moderate to high levels (≥ 20 fish per 100 m^2) for most years, except for River Philip with 16 fry per 100 m^2 . Over the recent 12 year period, all three rivers have a decreasing trend in the abundance of parr, with West River (Antigonish) and River Philip having the highest declines at 57% and 55% respectively, followed by East River (Pictou) at 3% (Fig. 15).

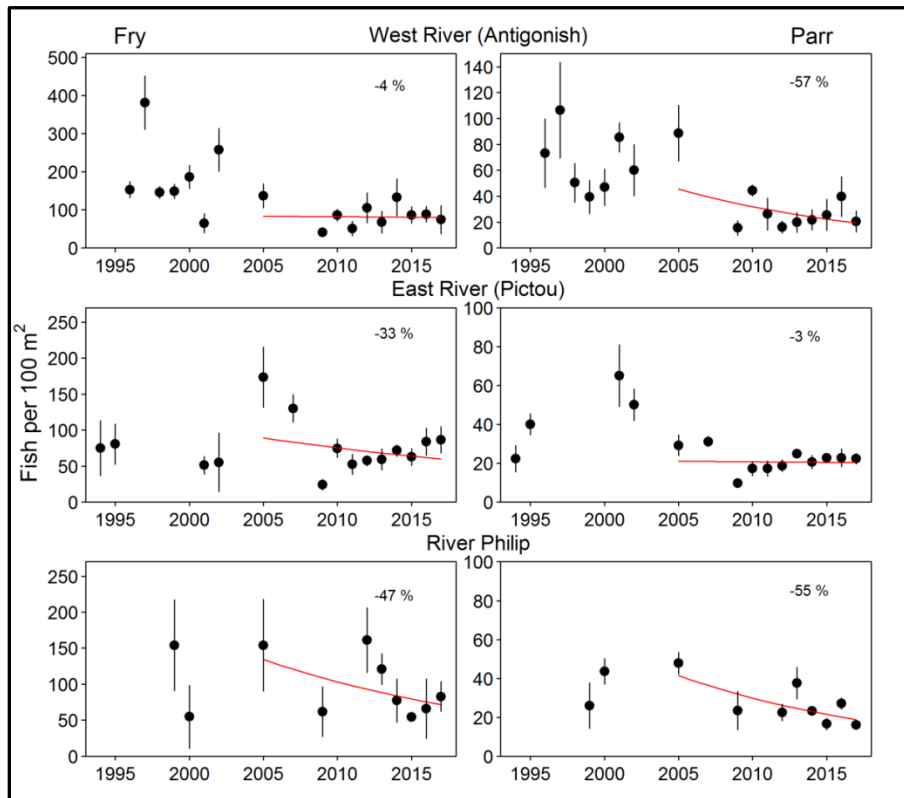


Figure 15. Mean juvenile Atlantic Salmon densities (fish per 100 m^2) for fry (left panels) and parr (right panels; small and large size groups combined) for sites sampled in the West River (Antigonish), East River (Pictou) and River Philip, 1994 to 2017. Only years for which at least three sites per river were sampled are presented. Vertical bars are one standard error. The red trend lines (exponential regressions) over the recent 12 years (2005 to 2017) and the percent change over that time period are shown in the top right corner of each panel. Note different range in y-axes.

SFA 18B Margaree River

Thirteen sites were surveyed in the Margaree River during 2017. Two to three size groups (proxy for cohorts) were captured at all sampling sites except for one site on the main branch of the Southwest Margaree River that had only large parr, indicating that there had been multiple years of spawning success. Fry abundance in 2017 was lower than in 2016 and similar to recent years of lower abundance. Parr (small and large parr combined) abundance in 2017 was slightly higher than 2016 but similar to recent years of lower abundance (Fig. 16). Fry and parr abundances have declined greatly over the recent 12 year period, with declines of 59% for fry and 72% for parr (Fig. 16). The lowest abundance of fry in 2011 was related to a 100-year flood event in December 2010.

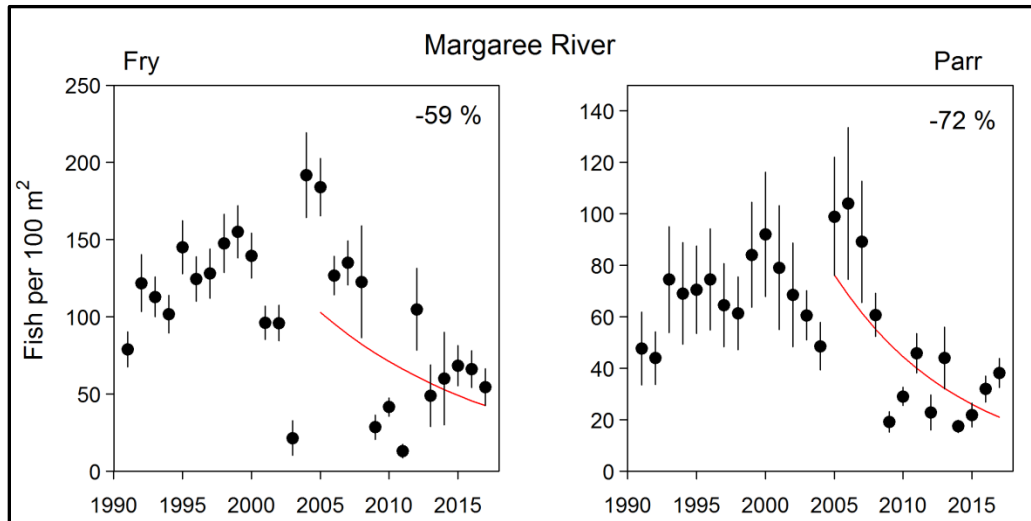


Figure 16. Mean juvenile densities (fish per 100 m² ± one standard error) for fry (left panel) and parr (right panel) for all sites sampled each year in the Margaree River, 1991 to 2017. Vertical bars are one standard error. The red trend lines (exponential regressions) over the recent 12 years (2005 to 2017) and the percent change over that time period are shown in each panel.

Sources of Uncertainty

A number of indicators of Atlantic Salmon adult abundance (Restigouche River partially, SFA 18 rivers of mainland Gulf Nova Scotia) are based on catches, and catch per unit effort data reported from the recreational fishery. Conditions for recreational fishing can be quite variable and success can be dependent upon water levels and water temperatures. In 2017, low water conditions in the summer that continued into the fall likely impacted both the August fishing effort in the Restigouche River and possibly the availability of salmon to the fishery in SFA 18 rivers resulting in a potentially biased view of abundance based on these indicators.

In the Margaree River model, catch rates and a derived catchability value (per rod day) from the early 1990s are used to estimate returns. The applicability of this value in the recent years is uncertain given the changes in fisheries management measures that have occurred over the past two decades, including mandatory catch and release measures for all size groups of the past three years.

The declines in the indices of small parr in the four major tributaries of the Miramichi were not expected in 2017, at least based on the increased abundances of fry in 2016 relative to the previous years. Equally unexpected were the increased indices of abundance of the large parr in 2017 throughout the Miramichi since small parr abundances in 2016 had declined from the

previous year. The freshwater life history dynamics in the Gulf Region rivers show variable patterns among rivers and over time and the juvenile population dynamics linked with environmental variables such as summer water temperatures and water levels and hydrological conditions during the winter should be examined for their potential consequences on future adult recruitment and abundance.

Conclusions

In three of the four monitored river systems of Gulf Region (Restigouche NB, Southwest Miramichi, and Margaree) estimated returns of small salmon in 2017 were lower than those of 2016. With exception of the Restigouche, returns of large salmon in 2017 were lower than in 2016. Over the recent 12 years, approximately two generations, the estimated abundances of large salmon have increased in SFA 17 (+41%) but decreased in SFAs 15 (-12%), 16 (-20%), and 18 (-28%). For small salmon, abundances have declined by 39% to 65% in the four Gulf Region SFAs.

Estimated eggs in the combined returns of small and large salmon in 2017 exceeded the conservation requirement for the Margaree River (SFA 18B; 146%). For the Restigouche River (NB portion), large salmon spawning escapement estimates based on end of season spawner counts were higher than the estimate based on catches in the recreational fishery and the former estimate exceeded (135%) the spawning requirements in 2017. The estimated number of eggs in the returns of large salmon and small salmon combined were insufficient to meet the conservation requirements of the Miramichi River overall or its two main branches. Combined eggs of large salmon and small salmon spawners attained 76%, 83%, and 60% of the conservation requirement for the Miramichi, Southwest Miramichi, and Northwest Miramichi rivers, respectively.

For SFA 17, the near-complete coverage of redd surveys in 2017 (24 of 25 rivers) confirmed the precarious status of salmon in several small rivers, especially those in which spawning appears to occur only in intermittent years. Estimated spawners were below 50% of conservation requirements in 17 of 24 rivers. The five rivers that exceeded conservation requirements in 2017 were Cains Brook and Carruthers Brook (part of the Mill River system, western PEI) and in three rivers of the northeast extremity of PEI.

Juvenile abundance indices in 2017 were generally below the post 1984 period average in all monitored areas. Juvenile abundance indices generally show a declining trend over the past 12 years from peak values observed during the mid-1990s to mid-2000s, but on average they remain above the levels of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Returns of large salmon to Gulf Region overall in 2017 were estimated at 27,000 fish (5th to 95th percentile range of 21,600 to 32,400 fish), 61% of the long-term average (44,200 fish) of the 1970 to 2017 time series. Small salmon returns to Gulf Region were estimated at 22,600 fish (5th to 95th percentile range of 18,600 to 26,600 fish), only 32% of the average abundance (70,700 fish) of the time series from 1970 to 2017. Overall in Gulf Region rivers, large salmon abundances have declined by 19% over the period 2005 to 2017. Estimated small salmon abundances in Gulf Region rivers have declined by 60% over the period 2005 to 2017. Abundances of adult salmon in Gulf Region rivers are constrained by low marine survival, which begins from the point of assessment in freshwater near the head of tide and ends with adult returns back to the river one and two or more years later. The phenomenon of reduced marine survival is widespread for Atlantic Salmon stocks from eastern North America (ICES 2017).

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February 27, 2018

Sources of information

This Science Response Report results from the Science Response Process of February 20, 2018 on update of indicators of Atlantic Salmon for Salmon Fishing Areas 15 to 18, DFO Gulf Region. No additional publications from this process are anticipated.

Breau, C., and Chaput, G. 2012. [Analysis of catch options for aboriginal and recreational fisheries for Atlantic salmon from the Margaree River \(Nova Scotia\) for 2012](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2012/093. iv + 49 p.

Cairns, D.K., and MacFarlane, R.E. 2015. [The status of Atlantic salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) on Prince Edward Island \(SFA 17\) in 2013](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Res. Doc. 2015/019. iv + 25 p.

DFO. 2014. [Stock status of Atlantic salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) in DFO Gulf Region \(Salmon Fishing Areas 15 to 18\) to 2013](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Advis. Rep. 2014/057.

DFO. 2015a. [Update of stock status of Atlantic Salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) in DFO Gulf Region \(New Brunswick Salmon Fishing Areas 15 and 16\) for 2014](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Resp. 2015/008.

DFO. 2015b. [Indicators of Atlantic Salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) stock status for Prince Edward Island \(SFA 17\) and Gulf Nova Scotia \(SFA 18\) in DFO Gulf Region for 2014](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Resp. 2015/016.

DFO. 2016. [Update of stock status of Atlantic Salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) in DFO Gulf Region \(Salmon Fishing Areas 15 to 18\) for 2015](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Resp. 2016/018.

- DFO. 2017. [Update of indicators of Atlantic Salmon \(*Salmo salar*\) in DFO Gulf Region Salmon Fishing Areas 15 - 18 for 2016](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Resp. 2017/013.
- DFO. 2018. [Update of indicators to 2017 of adult Atlantic Salmon for the Miramichi River \(NB\), Salmon Fishing Area 16, DFO Gulf Region](#). DFO Can. Sci. Advis. Sec. Sci. Resp. 2017/043.
- ICES. 2017. Report of the Working Group on North Atlantic Salmon (WGNAS), 29 March–7 April 2017, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2017/ACOM:20. 296 pp.

This Report is Available from the :

Center for Science Advice (CSA)
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Aussi disponible en français :

*MPO. 2018. Mise à jour en 2017 des indicateurs pour le saumon atlantique (*Salmo salar*) dans les zones de pêche du saumon 15 à 18 de la région du Golfe du MPO. Secr. can. de consult. sci. du MPO, Rép. des Sci. 2018/017.*

NSARB-2022-WRT-096

From: [Nicole Cameron](#) [REDACTED]
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444
Date: April 3, 2023 11:25:54 AM

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Dear review board,

My name is Nicole, and I am writing this letter in support of the proposed Town Point Consulting Oyster Farm. I first met the Porter family two years ago and it was immediately obvious how enthusiastic and knowledgeable they were about oyster aquaculture. Ernie happily offered a tour of the property and outlined what they were hoping they could accomplish. I am an MSc candidate in biology at St.FX and study the ecology of a related bivalve, the mussel, so within the first few minutes of the tour I was excited about the prospective operation. Over the past two years, as I have gotten to know the Porter family, I am continuously impressed with the care and effort they invest in this potential development. Despite oysters specifically being outside my realm of research, I wanted to briefly outline the general, well-known benefits bivalves like oysters bring to their ecosystems and why I think the Porter family is well-equipped to foster those benefits. I will mainly focus on factor (d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation and lightly touch on factor (e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation.

Oysters are filter-feeding shellfish that provide beneficial ecosystem services to the environment they inhabit. They mitigate eutrophication and hypoxia, cycle nutrients, and farms can reduce the impact of disease on wild oysters^{i, ii}. The Antigonish Harbour, given its proximity to the Town of Antigonish and current boat traffic, is at risk of anthropomorphic pollution. The three rivers that feed the harbour collect water runoff from farmland, forestry operations, the former Antigonish County Landfill site, the town of Antigonish, and a sewage treatment plant. After collecting all the excess nutrients from the fertilizer used on farmland and contaminants from the streets of Antigonish, the harbour could likely benefit from the natural filtering by oysters. Oysters can also act as foundation species, hosting a high diversity of small associated species and are, therefore,

important to the ecosystems in which they are found. Farmed oysters, particularly in off-bottom aquaculture operations, have been shown to host animal assemblages similar to the assemblages that inhabit natural reefs ^{iii, iv}. Furthermore, the aquaculture gear itself can also provide a habitat that maintains the diversity of the ecosystem. Concerns about the impact of shellfish farming on charismatic species, particularly seabirds, seem to be mitigated in the case of Town Point Consulting. A study on Seabird behaviour around intertidal oyster aquaculture found seabirds to be only marginally impacted in the case of human-tended farming and not statistically impacted by untended operations ^v. Given the decreased human involvement required with their BOBR technology, Town Point will likely operate more similarly to the untended farms than other commercial oyster operations. Additionally, when acting as foundation species, and increasing the diversity of the fish and invertebrate prey of seabirds these operations could even positively impact the Antigonish harbour seabirds. Overall, oyster farms are low greenhouse emission sources of protein that have the potential to increase the ecosystem functioning in the environment they occupy.

Clean water and high biodiversity in the estuary would ensure that the public could keep using the harbour in ways they currently love. Boating, fishing, swimming and birdwatching are all activities that could benefit from the ecosystem services oysters provide. I am confident the Porter family if given the opportunity, will treat the estuary with care and respect as they are a direct part of the community that also participates in these activities. Even their actions so far, (i.e. the continuous communication with their neighbours, installation of solar panels, and interaction with the university) are above and beyond and highlight the good faith in which they bring forward their application. For these reasons, I think Town Point Consulting's oyster farm would be a wonderful addition to Antigonish Harbour.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my submission.

Sincerely,

Nicole Cameron



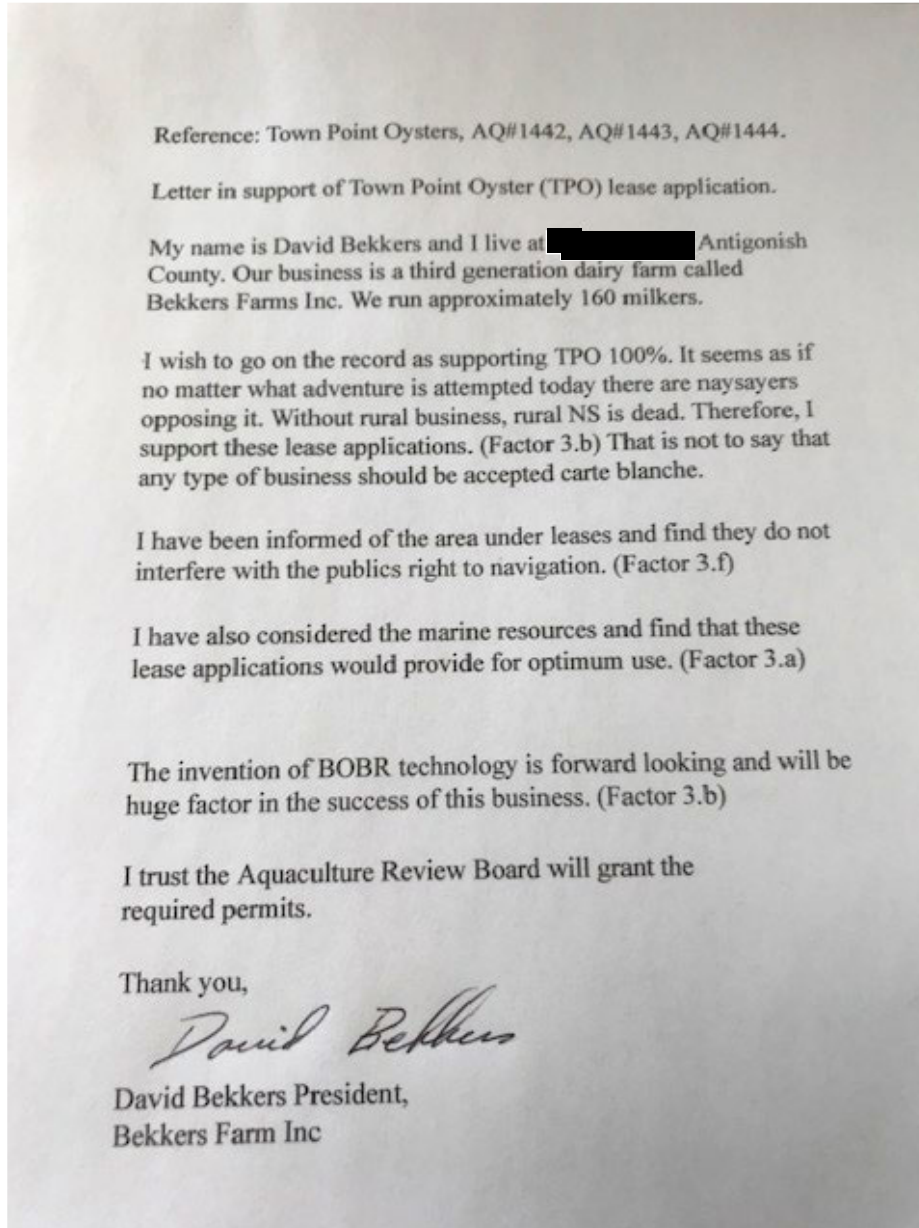
- [i] Yu, L., & Gan, J. (2021). Mitigation of Eutrophication and Hypoxia through Oyster Aquaculture: An Ecosystem Model Evaluation off the Pearl River Estuary. *Environmental Science and Technology*, 55(8), 5506–5514. <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.0c06616>
- [ii] Ben-Horin, T., Burge, C., Bushek, D., Groner, M., Proestou, D., Huey, L., Bidegain, G., & Carnegie, R. (2018). Intensive oyster aquaculture can reduce disease impacts on sympatric wild oysters. *Aquaculture Environment Interactions*, 10, 557–567. <https://doi.org/10.3354/aei00290>
- [iii] Mercaldo-Allen, R., Clark, P., Liu, Y., Meseck, S., Milke, L., & Redman, D. (2020). Macrofaunal Assemblages on Oyster Aquaculture and Rock Reef Habitat in Long Island Sound. *North American Journal of Aquaculture*, 82(1), 92–100. <https://doi.org/10.1002/naaq.10127>
- [iv] Martínez-Baena, F., Lanham, B. S., McLeod, I., Taylor, M. D., McOrrie, S., & Bishop, M. J. (2022). De novo reefs: Fish habitat provision by oyster aquaculture varies with farming method. *Aquaculture Environment Interactions*, 71–84. <https://doi.org/10.3354/aei00431>
- [v] Maslo, B., Burkhalter, J. C., Bushek, D., Yuhas, T., Schumm, B., Burger, J., & Lockwood, J. L. (2020). Assessing conservation conflict: Does intertidal oyster aquaculture inhibit foraging behavior of migratory shorebirds? *Ecosphere*, 11(5). <https://doi.org/10.1002/ecs2.3097>

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By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 10:43 am, Apr 04, 2023

From: [David bekkers](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Letter in support of Town Point Oyster
Date: April 3, 2023 12:06:43 PM

NSARB-2022-WRT-097



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By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 10:49 am, Apr 04, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax NS, B3J 3C4

NSARB-2022-WRT-098

Attention: Mr. Stacy Burke, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

April 3, 2023

Paul MacIsaac

██████████ (seasonal residence)

Ballentyne's Cove, Antigonish County, NS, ██████████

██████████ (permanent residence)

Greenfield, Colchester County, NS, ██████████

Dear Mr. Burke,

I'm writing today in support of the cited application to culture American oysters in Antigonish Harbour. I have been involved in the aquaculture industry for over 25 years, building a comprehensive knowledge of the opportunities and constraints affecting proposed ventures such that submitted by Town Point Consulting Inc.

My vested interest in this application is rooted in my family's roots in Antigonish county. I would like to see aquaculture development in the area, but I want it to succeed and be sustainable. Only a well justified and carefully developed plan will gain my support. This application by Town Point Consulting Inc. is one such application. Please accept the below statements as true to the best of my knowledge and current understanding of existing information.

a) The optimum use of marine resource.

Antigonish Harbour represents a critical estuarine habitat. Culture methods with oyster positively enhance the diversity of aquatic flora and fauna by filtering nutrient available in the water in the form of microalgae. The shallow water depth of the harbour can be a hindrance for much use of the available resources yet the production of oyster for commercial development elevates the potential of an under-utilized space.

b) The contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development.

The Dohle-Lahey report advocates for the economic development of rural coastal communities. Aquaculture development is an ideal form of enterprise due not only to the direct employment on the farm site but the indirect, spin-off, employment within the community to support the business plan. This proposal will be a net benefit for the community of Antigonish.

c) Fish activities in the public water surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.

The physical location of the 3 leases falls outside of the shipping lanes of the sole fishery activity in the harbour. The mutual understanding of both parties to these locations was among the outcomes of the Community Liaison Committee efforts.

d) The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.

The hydrography of Antigonish Harbour is such that there is minimal fetch (less than 1 m) which is within the tolerances of the intended gear. Culture of oysters will only improve the biophysical characteristics of the harbour, not burden it.

e) The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.

My opinions here are solely based upon my perception of the use of public waters in the harbour. I am not a direct user of the water body. However, I am satisfied that there is sufficient room surrounding each lease not to interrupt individually-operated watercraft (kayaks or canoes) and access to the boating channels remains free of obstruction.

f) The public right of navigation.

Again, my perception of the use of the harbour by the public is primarily recreational in use. Therefore, I believe that the proposed lease sites do not pose any threat to public right of navigation.

g) The sustainability of wild salmon

The proposed species of production, American oyster, poses no threat to populations of wild Atlantic salmon. Likewise, the proposed lease sites do not impact the migratory routes of out-migrating parr or returning grilse.

h) The number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.

As of 2023, no other aquaculture operations exist within Antigonish Harbor. Farther inland, the NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Fraser's Mills Hatchery, discharges effluent that drains to the harbour but I see no negative impact of one operation upon the other.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my position in this application review process. Past aquaculture operations have struggled in Nova Scotia. As such, I'm grateful to the Aquaculture Review Board to carefully consider the dynamics of new applications. I wish to see the aquaculture industry succeed in this province as a positive economic driver and sustained environmental and ecological footprint along our coastlines. My participation on the Community Liaison Committee provided me the opportunity to scrutinize the proposed operation first-hand and be engaged in the process. The process was collaborative and transparent, despite some very strong opinions on either side of the debate. I remain satisfied that the proposed application is a positive development for Antigonish county.

Sincerely,

Paul MacIsaac

NSARB-2022-WRT-099

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444.

Letter in support of Town Point Oyster (TPO) lease application.

My name is Duncan MacDonald and I live at [REDACTED], Antigonish County. I am a retired teacher and run a Christmas production business.

I wish to go on the record as supporting Town Point Consulting Inc in its lease applications. We know that Dr Ivany some years ago advised government on innovation and development in order for rural Nova Scotia to survive. This proposal is the kind of thinking he had in mind. Therefore, I support these lease applications. (Factor 3.b)

The invention of BOBR technology is an amazing advancement in oyster operations on a very large scale, and will be huge factor in the success of this business. (Factor 3.b)

I have seen the area under proposed leases and find they do not interfere with the publics right to navigation. (Factor 3.f)

The proposed oyster operation to a large degree fits with my idea of forward and innovating thinking in marine economic development. (Factor 3.a)

There is no evidence that wild salmon will be affected in any way except they will find cleaner water.

I would like for the Aquaculture Review to grant the lease applications.

Thank you,

Duncan MacDonald

NSARB-2022-WRT-100

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

April 3, 2023

P.O. Box 2223

Halifax, Nova Scotia

B3J 3C4

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 & AQ#1444

I would like to add my observations to the proposed application on the following factors:

- a) The optimum use of marine resources,
- b) The contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development,
- e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.

This proposal would use a small percentage of harbour water and convert it into a sustainable local seafood source. Adding to Nova Scotia seafood supply which we are famous for (factor a).

The project would benefit the community economic development by creating new jobs and adding moneys to the GDP (factor b)

As an avid paddler of fresh water and coastal waters, I would think this project would add curiosity and interest to paddling in the harbour, which appears from my occasional paddling there, to be under-enjoyed. The owners have devised the BOBR technology for growing oysters a better way. Having this oyster farm approved, would allow the owners to showcase this BOBR technology. This could spark paddlers' interest, as well as other boaters and possibly

help promote this technology, benefitting Antigonish through adding further jobs and GDP (factor b & e)

Sincerely

Bernard Levy

Bernard Levy

[REDACTED]

Middle Sackville, Nova Scotia

[REDACTED]

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 11:34 am, Apr 04, 2023

From: [Garrett Sears](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point Aq#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444
Date: April 3, 2023 3:58:01 PM

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Garrett Sears

[REDACTED]
South Side Harbour
Antigonish Co NS

Good People:

You certainly have a polarizing situation to ponder. I'm a long time boater who is has extensive knowledge of the harbour. I sometimes joke that I've run aground more times in the harbour than many people

weighing in on this subject, have been in the harbour.

I own a 24ft speedboat, so the areas that are proposed oyster locations are areas I would avoid. I'm sure that is subject

will dealt with extensively in your hearings.

As a fourth generation small family business owner I consider these operations to be the heartbeat of the Canadian economy. I've met with the Porters and have been impressed with their passion and their new invention

for the industry.

I support this application.

Regards,

Garrett Sears

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By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 11:52 am, Apr 04, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-101

Caitlin Shimosawa

Antigonish, N.S.

March 30, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture and Review Board

Re: application numbers – AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of the application for Town Point Oysters Farm. As a local restaurant owner I see an abundance of positives this would contribute to our community and economy.

Oysters are a sustainable protein and in our current climate food sustainability is becoming increasingly important. The oyster farm allows development of an underutilized resource in our area. Oyster farming at worst is environmentally neutral but is most likely to help improve the water quality of Antigonish Harbour.

Town Point Oysters farm would allow us at The Townhouse to sell oysters from our community! Oysters are a beloved item at our restaurant. We source from all over the maritimes. Being able to showcase products from our community is very much in line with how our business operates. We are fortunate to work closely with many talented local farmers, growers and producers. Not only would Town Point Oysters be served in Antigonish, but other restaurants and oyster festivals in the province and country. It would also create needed jobs for our community. The reach of Town Point Oysters would go beyond our community and be another thing to put Antigonish on the map.

Yours sincerely, Caitlin Shimosawa

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By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 3:35 pm, Apr 04, 2023

From: [Tony Secco](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Support for Town Point Oysters
Date: April 3, 2023 4:18:43 PM

NSARB-2022-WRT-103

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April 3;2023

aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Dear Members of the ARB,

My name is Dr Tony Secco, I live at [REDACTED] in Antigonish county. My residence has a view overlooking Antigonish Harbour.

I am a retired PhD in Chemistry. I was a full professor in chemistry at the University of Manitoba for 20 years and then Vice-President Academic at Cape Breton University before becoming the Vice President of the Fredericton Campus of the University of New Brunswick.

I am writing in support of Town Point Incorporated's application for oyster leases #'s 1442,1443,1444.

I am very supportive of application for the significant community economic development offering upwards of ten or more jobs available to local citizens. This relates to factor b). The opportunity to add to the economy of the Antigonish area arises from the newer technology, known as BOBR, being centered here in the community.

Having an oyster farm in the harbour, has so many benefits in terms of climate and environment - carbon sequestration and filtering of the harbour water. This relates to factor d).

While I am familiar with boat traffic on the harbour, I cannot see how the farm would impede or restrict boat traffic, commercial or pleasure. In fact, it may attract curious boaters to view the farm, as there few such farms boaters could see in the area. This relates to factor e).

When I used to boat on the harbour, we always had to be careful of the shallow areas and the farm takes advantage of these shallow areas without interfering with boat traffic.

I am a strong supporter of the application and hope to see it approved as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Tony Secco

RECEIVED

NSARB-2022-WRT-105

APR 3 2023

NS Aquaculture
Review Board

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Date: March 23 2023

Re: Town Point Consulting Incorporated and licenses/leases for AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour (NSARB 2022-001)

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Dale Cook. I own operate Corkums Island Mussel Farm which is licensed to farm American Oysters in Lunenburg Bay at [REDACTED] Lunenburg, NS [REDACTED].

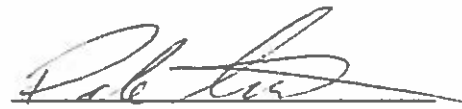
As an active aquaculturist, I am aware of the Town Point applications and wish to express my views for consideration by the ARB.

Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia has been stagnant for many years. Our production lags far behind that of our neighbouring provinces and, as a result, our ability to compete in the marketplace is hindered. Supporting services in manufacturing, supply, consulting and distribution have not developed to the extent they have in New Brunswick and PEI here because the demand is insufficient due to our negligible growth. Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia needs to grow and we see the Town Point applications as a test case for our future; the outcome of these applications will, to a large degree, show us where we are headed as a "low impact high value" industry.

I know, from my experience in oyster farming, that such operations more than satisfy the requirements of factors a), b) and g). Oyster farms make optimal use of marine resources, make positive and impactful contributions to the communities in which they are located and have no impact on wild salmon sustainability.

I am not very familiar with Antigonish Harbour so cannot comment on the five other factors. However, I do know that, before an application reaches the ARB, there has been an exhaustive review of all eight factors by many government departments. Please consider the merits of these applications and discount opposing views that are not based on valid science or economic necessity.

Thank you,



Dale Cook

From: [Aida Arnold](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Delay)
Date: April 5, 2023 8:28:28 AM
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NSARB-2022-WT-16

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By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 1:24 pm, Apr 06, 2023

Date: Mon, 3 Apr 2023 14:33:23 -0300

Subject: Reference:Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

ATTN: MR. STACY BRUCE, ARB Clerk

Concerning:

The Proposed Oyster Farm Development, Antigonish Harbour

Over the past 4-5 years I have attended the several community forums that were always professional and inclusive on the above development.

As a person who was in business for 24 years in Antigonish from 1988 to 2012, I give special consideration to this project from the economic contribution it will make to the local communities & to the provincial economic development.

In addition to the many new jobs that will be created in the growing, harvesting & distribution of product. There is also opportunity for new jobs in the manufacture of the new B.O.B.R. (Benefits of Being Round) growing system. This represents a new industry in N.S. with worldwide sales implications. The B.O.B.R. system is more efficient than the current method. This new technology is climate change positive, it helps cleanse the toxicity (due to agricultural runoffs) from the harbour water.

In time, I believe this innovative growing system will be of great benefit to the health of Antigonish Harbour & to those who sail & play in its waters.

I strongly endorse the Town Point Oyster Farm Development Project & look forward to its many economic & ecological benefits to Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,

Aida Arnold

██████████.
Antigonish, N.S. ██████████

██████████
[@gmail.com](#)

NSARB-2022-WRT-107

From: [Brian MacNeil](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish Harbour Oyster Aquaculture.
Date: April 3, 2023 6:10:42 PM

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To the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Board.

I wish to express my opposition to the Town Point Consulting Incorporated application for three marine aquaculture licences and leases AQ#1042, AQ#1043 and AQ#1044. While I agree with many of the objections raised by Friends of Antigonish Harbour there are several points which appear particularly compelling. First, the nutrients required to grow the millions of oysters in TPCI cages will necessarily not be available to the rest of the natural food chain from the smallest shrimp to larger fish like trout, salmon, bass and lobster which, in turn, sustain predators like the osprey, bald eagle, blue heron, seals, otters et cetera. As the oyster biomass grows, the rest will be diminished. Secondly, the installation and maintenance of the thousands of oyster cages and thousands of meters of rope, as well as the noise involved in servicing the gear, will interfere with the feeding, nesting and migration of most of the birds which rely on the outer harbour. Thirdly, there is good evidence to suspect that the floating oyster cages will adversely impact the growth of eelgrass. Certainly the propellers of the work boats will cut the grass in the relatively shallow water. The vital role of the eelgrass in providing a sort of nursery for many species is clear from the research, but the destruction of eelgrass from the recent infestation of green crabs also demonstrated its usefulness in preventing or, at least, mitigating erosion. The Crown was wise in 1975 in legislating the Beaches Act to prevent the removal of sand and gravel from Mahoney's and Dunn's Beaches and to prevent vehicular traffic from harming the marram grass which knits the sand together. Just as the beach grass inhibits erosion, the eelgrass appears to have a protective effect against waves and currents. Fourthly, several of the biologists involved in these issues have referred to the "precautionary principle" which has become part of fishery and environmental policy. It would appear prudent to resist TPCI's approach to oyster harvesting if it might jeopardize the environment including the plants, animals and people who live in it. Fifthly, while it is likely that Town Point Consulting Incorporated will make a considerable profit if granted the leases and licenses it seeks, the company's plan appears to minimize employment: that is the whole point of the "BOBR" system and the mechanized service barge. Traditional oyster picking and even the usual oyster aquaculture methods entail greater labour therefor greater employment than the TPCI plan. Further, TPC Incorporated would pay tax to the Province at the low corporate rate rather than the higher income tax rate paid by traditional oyster fishermen. Taken together, I believe that the disadvantages outweigh the benefits of the TPCI proposal. I urge the Aquaculture Board to reject the proposal.

Brian MacNeil, [REDACTED], Mahoney's Beach, Antigonish County. April 3, [REDACTED].

RECEIVED April 3, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

NSARB-2022-WRT-108

Attention: Stacy Bruce
Reference: AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

To the members of the Aquaculture Review board,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed development by Town Point Consulting Incorporated (TPCI) in Antigonish Harbour. Specifically, I believe that this is not a good use of marine resources given the importance of residential coastal communities to Nova Scotia's changing economy.

I am particularly unconvinced by the economic arguments offered in support of this development. TPCI has frequently cited the Ivany Report to defend its proposed use of marine resources. The Ivany Report attempted to address economic issues caused by Nova Scotia's dwindling population. The report's main recommendation is to foster immigration through aggressive job creation. TPCI claims that it will meet this recommendation.

My main concern, however, is that the Ivany report is now out of date. The report was commissioned in 2013 and, a decade later, Nova Scotia is facing a very different set of economic circumstances. Nova Scotia no longer deals with a dwindling population. Rather, the province is in serious need of highly skilled workers—such as doctors, nurses, and teachers—to provide the services necessary to support this growing population.

The question, then, is not whether this TPCI development will create jobs, but whether this kind of development will hinder or foster the kind of highly skilled immigration Nova Scotia needs. I worry that these developments in largely residential neighborhoods will hinder it. Nova Scotia has been competitive in attracting work-from-home migrants precisely because of the natural beauty of many of its coastal communities. If we allow these public spaces and waterways to be industrialized we risk deterring immigration, and especially highly skilled migrants. I hope the board recognizes that bodies of water that are largely residential or recreational are not valueless; these are precisely the kinds of features that are growing Nova Scotia's economy today.

Anecdotally, I happen to be one of these workers who can now move back to my hometown of Antigonish because my Toronto company has opted for a work-from-home model. Several of my friends and my sister-in-law have either moved, or are preparing to move to Antigonish because of remote work. Developments like these, however, give us pause about settling permanently in a province where public waterways and coastal spaces can be so easily privatized.

Sincerely,

Sam Gillis

[REDACTED]

Toronto, ON

[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-109

April 21, 2023

RE: Applications AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444.

Dear members of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board,

This submission addresses two factors under consideration with respect to the above three aquaculture applications:

- e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.
- f) the public right of navigation.

For the past 6 years I have been an active user of the outer areas of Antigonish Harbour. My primary use is sailing, and my secondary use is kayaking. I am a director of the Antigonish Boat Club and so I have a stake in the use of harbour waters and their preservation. However, this letter reflects my personal opinion only and should not be used to infer opinions of other boat club members or the club as a whole.

In my opinion, and based on my experience navigating the harbour, the proposed applications do not present a hindrance to the public right of navigation.

Sailboats are the least maneuverable vessels; direction of travel is dictated partly by wind direction and the ability to overcome tidal currents depends on uncertain wind strength. Despite this, I have little to no concern about navigating my sailboat in the presence of the proposed aquaculture operations. The two larger sites (1443 and 1444) occupy waters where I would not normally navigate. A majority of the mapped harbour area is remarkably shallow, and most boating occurs in and around the deep sections that follow the main tidal currents. The smaller site (1442) does infringe slightly on one of these areas, but *slightly* is the operative word for two reasons: i) this area of the channel harbour is narrow and is already subject to careful navigation, and ii) the deepest water, and main navigation route, follows the opposing shoreline. Furthermore, the harbour is not busy: on most occasions I would see less than 10 other harbour users, whether in boats or paddling, over the course of a 2-hour outing. Often, I see none. Thus, I see no scope for the proposed operations to lead to congestion.

In my opinion, and based on my experience using the harbour, the proposed applications will not have a meaningfully negative effect on others' use of surrounding public waters.

The harbour, while beautiful, is not untouched wilderness and to characterize it as such would be disingenuous. Many homes and docks are visible along the shoreline, channel

floats can be found in various locations, the harbour collects runoff from adjacent farm fields (cattle even enter the water on summer days), and the harbour is fed by rivers which receive (treated) wastewater from the municipality. In light of this, neither the occasional operation of oyster harvesting vessels nor the floats and gear themselves would seem out of place. Some fishing vessels and other motorized pleasure crafts are already present in the harbour from time to time and the equipment to be used has minimal aesthetic impact. Finally, the possible safety *benefit* of experienced vessel operators with local knowledge of the harbour conditions should not be overlooked. The nearest coast guard operates from Pictou. Any emergency in the harbour waters must be handled by good Samaritans in the vicinity and the harbour, at present, has few regular users.

I hope that you find these comments informative in your decision process.

Fraser Summerfield

[REDACTED]

Antigonish NS

[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-110

From: [Probst, Jürgen](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#); Sean.Fraser@parl.gc.ca; [Premier](#); [REDACTED]@gmail.com; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; owen.mccarron@antigonishcounty.ca
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour, Applications 1442, 1443, 1444
Date: April 21, 2023 1:11:12 PM

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To whom in may concern:

You asked about any potential effects an oyster farm would have on property values of nearby land owners and households. My opinion is that of course the effect would be negative, particularly in a rural residential waterfront area that is attractive to buyers for its views and environmental opportunities for swimming, fishing and boating. I can't put a figure on such a negative effect. It would depend on the site. I imagine the effect would be less, if at all, obvious in an already built up/industrial area, for example waterfront close to an urban area. But I do know that as a property developer I would not pay as much for rural properties close to a large off bottom shellfish farm. It's a heavy negative optical issue from my point of view, what always has a big impact of the feeling from people in rural private area.

I am writing as a property developer in Antigonish and a user of Antigonish Harbour to advise of my opposition to any approval of applications 1442, 1443 and 1444 for a very large oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. I own a house on the shores of the harbour, opposite Long Island, which my family and I use for about 5 months of the year, during both winter and summer months. I do not believe that the proposed oyster farm is an appropriate use of harbour resources. I understand that the oyster farm may bring some benefits to some businesses but do not believe these will be large enough to make up for the potential social and economic losses – in enjoyment, sailing/fishing, boat traffic to the George Bay, property values, tourist income, residential services etc. – to so many others, including myself and my family. It also seems to me that the biggest business benefits will come from TPCI's plans to manufacture and market the technology they have developed, benefits that do not need a large oyster farm in the outer harbour because TPCI has installed their technology in other nearby oyster operations which could equally serve as demonstrations.

Thanks for your attention.

Kind regards

Juergen W. Probst

[REDACTED] Antigonish, NS

[REDACTED] phone



<https://compensaid.com/>, please let's fly CO² neutral

NSARB-2022-WRT-111

To: The Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
Re: TPCI Applications 1442, 1443, 1444

Dear Members of the NS Aquaculture Review Board,

We are writing to oppose the applications (1442, 1443, 1444) by Town Point Consulting (TPC) for a license to farm oysters in Antigonish Harbour. We have owned our home on Monks Head Road since 2004. We are active users of the harbour and believe that there are a number of problems with the application.

The proposed sites are environmentally sensitive and the beaches, Mahoney's and Dunn's, that protect the harbour are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The shallow water depth and the presence of eel grass, especially at the #1443 site, make the locations questionable for intense oyster farming. Also, the scale of the proposed operation may have a serious adverse effect on the migration of aquatic species, including salmon.

The locations of the proposed sites are in the busiest part of the harbour. Not only will the sites affect the natural beauty of the harbour but they will encroach on navigable waterways and will impede use of the area by numerous power boaters, sailors, kayakers, canoeists, fishermen, etc.. These activities are an important part of how we have used the harbour for decades. A commercial oyster operation as proposed would be a gross misappropriation of this resource for the benefit of one family.

The proposed sites are very close to the mouth of the harbour and subject to storm damage as evidenced by the recent Hurricane Fiona in September 2022. During the storm, neighbours on Southside Harbour, who are on the downwind side east of the sites, suffered tree and property damage; they lost their dock and had a beach covered with waste from the harbour. They worry about the potential damage if thousands of oyster cages had been subject to the storm.

The Porters' property on historic Town Point has always been a residential area. If TPC operates its oyster farm from their property, which seems likely, since they currently operate their spat hatchery from their property, Town Point will be industrialized. The road servicing Town Point is approximately 2.7 kilometers long, all of which is gravel and much of which is one lane wide. This industrialization would affect the residents on Town Point and others along the road servicing Town Point. The scale of TPC's operation will create noise and disruptions on the water and traffic, noise and commercial disruptions on the Porter property. This type of industrialization is foreign to the harbour and unacceptable to many residents along the harbour shore.

Harvesting oysters from Antigonish Harbour is a good idea. We support the existing wild oyster fishery, which has unobtrusively and sustainably fished wild oysters for many years. We are opposed to the TPC proposal for many reasons: environmental, limitations to our use of the harbour, the potential jeopardy from storms, the industrialization of Town Point, destroying the

beauty and function of our harbour, and the misappropriation of a common resource for the benefit of one family. We request that you, without reservation, decline the TPC application.

Yours truly,
Leslie Pierpont
Richard (Dick) Pierpont
[REDACTED]
Pomquet, NS [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-112

From: [Doug Crook](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [Debbie Smith](#)
Subject: New Marine Aquaculture Licence/Lease - Locations 1442, 1443, 1444,
Date: April 22, 2023 3:45:27 PM

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We are writing with reference to the application by Town Point Consulting Inc (TPCI) to develop a new aquaculture operation at the above locations and are concerned with the negative impact it will have on the community.

We built our home at Cape George, Nova Scotia in 2013 and while currently using it as a seasonal residence (we generally live there from mid May to mid October of each year) we intend to become full-time residents within the next one to two years. Our home is a short distance up the highway from the proposed project and Deborah was a long time resident of the Town of Antigonish until she graduated from St. Francis Xavier University and had to move to Western Canada to find employment. As such, we are very familiar with the Antigonish Harbour area and its numerous amenities, and are disturbed by the development plan proposed by TPCI. Our concerns can be categorized under the following factors:

E. The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

There are a large number of full-time and seasonal residences all around Antigonish Harbour and that number has grown considerably over the last several years. People are attracted to build by the natural beauty of the harbour and surrounding landscape as well as the recreational opportunities that abound there, all just a short drive from the Town of Antigonish. Many have sunk their life savings into their homes with the expectation of continued peaceful enjoyment of their land. The proposed development would be both an eyesore and a source of disturbance of that peace and will limit the recreational use of the water by sport fisherman, kayakers, canoeists, sailors, and owners of other small craft. It will also impede local commercial fishers who reside there as they need to be able to navigate safely through the confines of Antigonish Harbour to access their fishing areas.

The above considerations impact not only the residents' peaceful enjoyment of their properties but almost certainly would have a negative impact on the resale values of their properties. No doubt many would have elected to locate elsewhere had they known this type of development was a possibility.

C. Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

F. The public right of navigation

As stated under factor E above, a number of the residents around the harbour are commercial fishers who must be able to navigate the harbour safely in order to reach the fishing areas that they depend upon for their livelihood. The sheer number of cages, ropes, cables and buoys required by the operation would be hazardous to them, particularly if disturbed by the kind of violent storms we have experienced in the Antigonish area in recent years.

As current residents of the established and thriving fishing community at Cape George, we know the importance of safe navigation to the fishing industry.

B. The contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development

Antigonish Harbour has proven to be a natural attraction to people moving into the area owing to its beauty and many recreational uses. For example, a number of medical and other professionals have recently built homes around the Harbour as it allows them to be in a beautiful natural landscape while still living close to the Town of Antigonish where their services are in demand. It is important for both the Town and County of Antigonish to have such areas available to assist in the attraction of new residents who will be major contributors to the community and to the Provincial economy.

D. The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

We understand that a significant portion of the proposed development is currently designated as a protected area and would now be converted to commercial use. It seems clear that this step and indeed the entire project in such a sensitive natural area would further endanger many of the species that inhabit it. Those would include species currently identified as endangered species such as eelgrass, piping plovers and American eel, as well as restricted fishing species such as salmon, trout, bass and smelt.

Given all of the above, it is our view that the proposal from TPCI is not in the best interests of the community, and should be declined.

Deborah Smith
Douglas Crook
[REDACTED]
Cape George Point
Antigonish, NS
[REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-113

Gabrieau's

██████████
Antigonish, N.S.

██████████
Gabrieaus.com

April 20th, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 3C4

Dear Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Cleak

I am writing this letter today in support of Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 & AQ#1444.

I am the Chef/Owner of Gabrieleau's Bistro, Main St Antigonish, N.S.. We have been in business for 24 years this spring and over that time we have always done our best to use local products as much as possible.

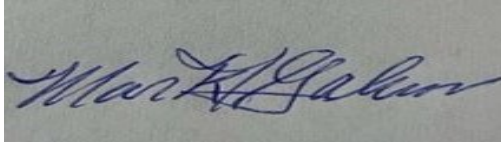
When we started the business, the only oysters that were available to us were from PEI, but over time there became the availability of Nova Scotia Farmed Product. These farms were not close to us but they were from N.S so we were very happy to use and promote proudly NS oysters on our menu. Over time the product that was available became closer to us, IE Northumberland Strait then as close as Merrigomish, which is what we are using now. The thought of having a product available to us right here in Antigonish is fantastic, so I cannot wait to use these oysters and promote this very local product.

The demand for oysters from the Maritimes is so much greater than the production, let me give you one example. The Great Little Harbour Seafood Company, which is not a farm but a processor, which is located in New Brunswick sold 17,000,000 oysters last year and could have sold an additional 15,000,000. I am sure this is the same for the other processors of oysters in the Maritimes. The Great Little Harbour Seafood Company ships all over Canada, the US and Europe. So not only would this be great for our local economy but also provincially. My feeling in this is that we should be encouraging more farming of this product in our province, this is a great use of our coastal waters.

There are already several farms set up in Nova Scotia and in the Maritimes to my knowledge there have been no negative impacts on the environment. The process of granting of this license is not a new thing for your department.

Enclosing I would strongly encourage the granting of this request for the license to farm oysters in the Antigonish Harbour by Town Point Oysters.

Sincerely;

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in blue ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read "Mark Gabriau".

Chef Mark Gabriau

NSARB-2022-WRT-114

Presentation to ARB in support of Town Point Oysters

Reference: Town Point Oysters AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

My name is Tara Bekkers and I live on highway [REDACTED]. I am a Registered Nurse at our local Regional Hospital, promoting/advocating Health and Well Being.

I am writing in support to the lease applications of Town Point Oysters. TPO has proven dedication to innovation and knowledge sharing through not only the development of BOBR but sharing their product to others in the Industry. (Factor 3.b). Such forward thinking, in my opinion, should be embraced and encouraged by the Aquaculture Review Board.

I use the Antigonish Landing walking trail daily as my resource for outdoor exercise which is hugged by the Antigonish Harbour. As I run, I enjoy seeing others kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding etc as means of their exercise or leisure. I have been informed that there would be no hindrance of public right of navigation in the use of public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation. (Factor 3.e, 3.f)

Having resources/production like that of TPO “right in our backyard” sort of speak, is or should be considered an asset that we as neighbors, community and I trust the ARB need to support as TPO have proceeded using evidence based scientific research in their field. (Factor 3.a, 3.b, 3.c, 3.d, 3.e, 3.f)

Thank you

Tara Bekkers BScN, RN

NSARB-2022-WRT-115

From: [jason.macdonald](mailto:jason.macdonald@aquaculture-review-board.ca)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](mailto:Town point oysters@aquaculture-review-board.ca)
Subject: Town point oysters
Date: Apr 12, 2023 3:47:47 PM
Attachments: [image0.png](#)

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Sent from my iPhone

J MacDonald Mechanical & Welding

[REDACTED]
Antigonish N.S. [REDACTED]

April 20, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223 Halifax NS B3J 3C4

Att: Mr Stacy Bruce, ABB Clerk

Ref: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#144

- a) The optimum use of marine resources
- b) The contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed Oyster farm at Town point, in the County of Antigonish. I live in the county and have seen first hand the benefits of having local businesses and employment in the aquatic industry in the area. I have done work for Town Point Consulting and had the opportunity to look at the technology (BOBR) as well as the equipment that he intends to use in the production of the oysters, Mr Porter has shown a lot of interest in using local suppliers to manufacture this equipment. He is very knowledgeable and answered any and all questions I had, he is very open to explaining the studies and results as well.

If approved it will create jobs, and help the economy. More needs to be done to keep the work local.

I love fishing and boating and have done both around mussels and oyster farms and have seen no problems with them coexisting.

Sincerely,

Jason MacDonald

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. MacDonald', written in a cursive style.

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 8:34 am, Apr 27, 2023

From: Philip Connolly
To: Aquaculture Review Board
Subject: Town Point Oysters
Date: April 26, 2023 6:10:41 PM

NSARB-2022-WRT-116

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Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444.

Presentation to ARB in support of Town Point Oysters

My name is Philip Connolly, retired school teacher and administrator, and I grew up in Guysborough Intervale, Guysborough County, Nova Scotia.

I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Ernie Porter and spent over two hours with him discussing his application for establishing an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. He showed me maps of the harbour and the area of his lease applications, only 2% of the harbour, which will create a great economic benefit, new jobs to the area and additional GDP (Factor 3b).

In our discussion of pollution, Mr. Porter explained how oysters are filter feeders. They eat by pumping large volumes of water through their bodies. They remove algae and nutrients, making the water clearer and cleaner for sea grasses and other marine life as well as improving water quality. (Factors 3a,3d)

Mr. Porter also went on to discuss the new improved BOBR technology aspect, which would add further jobs and Gross Domestic Product within Antigonish if the farm is approved (Factor 3b).

Finally, his already established nursery will work greatly with his whole concept of oyster farming.

I anxiously await the Aquaculture Review Board decision to grant the leases required for such a well-thought-out plan for oyster farming in Antigonish Harbour.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip Connolly

[REDACTED]
North Intervale, NS [REDACTED]

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 1:04 pm, May 04, 2023

From: [craig MacDonald](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish harbour Oyster farm
Date: May 4, 2023 11:03:22 AM

NSARB-2022-WRT-117

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To whom it may concern

I would like to address the applications by Town Point Consulting inc. For lease # 1442,1443 and 1444 to start oyster farming in the Antigonish harbour.

I oppose the approval on these lease applications as I feel the benefits of having an oyster farm in Antigonish harbour does not outweigh the negative impacts it will have on the surrounding community.

Boating, swimming and fishing are some activities to suffer undesirable consequences if these applications are approved. I have done all these activities with my parents, siblings, friends, wife and our three children while camping on the shores of the harbour at my parent's residence.

I also believe having an oyster farm in the harbour will negatively impact surrounding land value as well as future tourism to the area.

Regards,
Craig MacDonald
Shortt's lake, N.S.

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NSARB-2022-WRT-118

From: [Dr.Thomas.Ems](#) [REDACTED]
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [Ems, Thomas](#)
Date: May 9, 2023 10:29:49 AM

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To whom it may concern:

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen.

You asked about any potential effects that an oyster farm would have on property values of nearby land owners and households. My opinion is that of course the effect would be negative, particularly in a rural residential waterfront area that is attractive to buyers for its views and environmental opportunities for swimming, fishing and boating. I can't put a figure on such a negative effect. It would depend on the site. I imagine the effect would be less, if at all, obvious in an already built up/industrial area, for example waterfront close to an urban area. But I do know that as a property developer I would not pay as much for rural properties close to a large off bottom shellfish farm. It's a heavy negative optical issue from my point of view, what always has a big impact of the feeling from people in rural private area.

I am writing this as a property developer in South Side Harbour (Antigonish County) and a user of Antigonish Harbour/Home and Land owner since 2006 to advise of my opposition to any approval of applications 1442, 1443 and 1444 for a very large oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. I do not believe that the proposed oyster farm is an appropriate use of harbour resources. I understand that the oyster farm may bring some benefits to some businesses, but do not believe these will be large enough to make up for the potential social and economic losses – in enjoyment, sailing/fishing, boat traffic to the George Bay, property values, tourist income, residential services etc. – to so many others, including myself and my family. It also seems to me that the biggest business benefits will come from TPCI's plans to manufacture and market the technology they have developed, benefits that do not need a large oyster farm in the outer harbour because TPCI has installed their technology in other nearby oyster operations which could equally serve as demonstrations.

Thanks for your attention.

Best and kindly regards,

Thomas Ems

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 12:46 pm, May 15, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-119

Objection to Town Point Consulting Inc's application for Marine
Aquaculture Leases (AQ#s 1442, 14423, 1444)
in Antigonish Harbour

I share FOAH's concerns and am opposed to TPCI's plan to build and operate an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour and urge the Aquaculture Review Board to reject TPCI's application for marine leases in this shallow, environmentally sensitive harbour.

Name: _____ Kate Thomson _____

Signature: _____  _____

Date: _____ May 15, 2023 _____

Address: _____
Antigonish, NS _____

Phone: _____  _____

I am concerned about the development of the Harbour because I enjoy sailing in the area with friends that live on the harbour, and I previously had a boat at the Boat Club that is located on the harbour. I do not want to loose this area for recreation. I am also concerned about the loss of nesting grounds for the endangered Piping Plover, as well as many other animals that live and breed in the Harbour and along the shoreline.

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 12:42 pm, May 17, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-120

From: [Mary MacLellan](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Oyster Farm,
Date: May 17, 2023 8:13:05 AM

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I would like to register my concern about the proposed oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. I do not support TPCI's plan for this Oyster Farm. The residents have strongly voiced their opinions why this project is not in their best interest for local use of the waterway, they also have concerns about the environment, the five fishermen who fish from those waters have clearly expressed concerns against the project. Many others who have researched reasons why a commercial oyster farm in this area is not practical also oppose the commercial enterprise in the harbour. Please give careful consideration to the residents of the area and the many others who have expressed well documented research clearly indicating a large commercial oyster farm is not practical in Antigonish Harbour.

Mary Mac Lellan, Councillor Antigonish

County

NSARB-2022-WRT-122

From: [Joe MacDonald](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]@gmail.com; Premier
Subject: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444
Date: May 17, 2023 11:59:45 AM

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May 17, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4
Attention: Mr. Bruce, ARB Clerk

Email: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Re: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce;

We are writing in support of this proposal. It is an excellent example of free enterprise and economic development, something that is often lacking in Nova Scotia. We need entrepreneurs to grow our economy. The proposal will contribute to necessary community and provincial economic development through 10 new jobs that will enhance Nova Scotia's GDP, a strong recommendation of the Ivany Report. Factor b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development.

MJ and I do not know the Porters but we took the time to visit Ernie and Jane's home and learn specifics about the planned operation. We were very impressed with the business model, the science and the care taken by Ernie to explain how the oyster farm would operate. We now realize how the operation optimizes marine resources while allowing continued normal 'other' fishery activities and recreational use in the harbor. Factor a) the optimum use of marine resources.

While we are aware that the Antigonish Harbor struggles with excess nutrient inputs which degrade the healthy function of the estuary, we also know the addition of millions more filter feeding oysters will mitigate some of the negative effects of the excess nutrients and thereby

improve habitat for all associated marine species including salmon and trout. Many marine biologists have confirmed these facts. Factor d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation. This is important to me as an avid angler of the many species of fish that inhabit the harbor where I 'fish' within the harbor and as well the West and South Rivers. Our ordinary travel by boat in the harbor follows the normal channels within and we note that these pathways for our navigational purposes will not be impeded by the placement of the oyster beds. Factor e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation and Factor f) the public right of navigation.

In conclusion, the Ivany Report is clear on building economy. This proposal builds economy that moves the harbor from fallow to farm. The oyster farm is a primary production economic activity. It optimizes the use of marine resources with no impact on other fisheries. For these reasons MJ and I are in support of this proposal as we are very concerned about the future wellbeing of our community and our province.

Mary Jane and I live at [REDACTED], Antigonish where we recently moved from St Joseph's Lake. For many many years I have utilized Mahoney's and South Side Harbor beaches for windsurfing and the Antigonish Harbor for kayaking, boating for fishing and recreational purposes. I recently retired from a 44 year career as an academic and senior administrator at St. Francis Xavier University where for a 5 year period I taught kayaking to Bachelor of Education pre-service teachers. MJ has had a successful career in financial administration and management.

In closing, please count our voices as one of the many supporters of this proposal. We are confident you will judge the proposal on its merits and determine the benefits far outweigh any potential risks. Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe MacDonald and Mary Jane McDonald

Joe MacDonald
Antigonish, NS

NSARB-2022-WRT-122

From: [Ed Watson](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish Harbour oyster farm
Date: May 17, 2023 5:06:32 PM

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Though I am not heavily involved in the issue of the proposed oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour, I am monitoring this issue. It has been brought to my attention that part of the farm is proposed to be within the protected area set aside for the piping plovers of Dunns Beach. Since the whole proposal is set in two sections the larger of the two being outside the protected area I would suggest that approval not be given to the part within the protected area. As far as protected areas go I would ask rhetorically what is the point of having a protected area if it can be set aside in favour of the interest of a business proposal.

I have stayed out of this discussion until now because in my view it has been a discussion between wealthy interests. Now though this is stepping into the vicinity of a project that we as a society have seen fit to undertake; why would we violate an endangered species for the sake of this farm?

If the issue is job creation I would suggest that there are better ways to create jobs than this. It seems that jobs already in existence in the commercial fishing sector would conflict with this proposed farm, so I wonder why we need to change anything. I wonder whether the commercial fishing interests are allowed to enter the protected area to fish for oysters? As far as jobs go I don't think that there is a shortage in the area, several businesses locally are begging for employees.

I ask that you examine this issue carefully.

Thanks

Ed Watson

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 1:51 pm, May 18, 2023

From: [Sara Parks](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]@gmail.com
Subject: Attention: Stacy Bruce, Re: Town Point Oysters AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444
Date: May 17, 2023 7:26:06 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

NSARB-2022-WRT-123

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May 17, 2023

NS Aquaculture Review Board
Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

Dear folks at ARB:

I am writing in opposition (at least in its current iteration) to Town Point Consulting Inc's application for Oyster aquaculture licences for Antigonish Harbour.

In a nutshell, my reasons have to do with concerns about three aspects of the application:

- 1) The science cited
- 2) The consultation process

...and one thing I noticed was missing from other letters of support/opposition:

- 3) Hidden public costs.

I will address these three points in turn.¹

- 1) The science cited

The applicant claims that environmental impacts would be "positive or at worst benign" while citing only vague and over-generalised studies, rather than studies pertinent to Antigonish county or the harbour in question. I therefore worry that the science cited is irrelevant at best and disingenuous/selective at worst. I feel we are left with no pertinent evidence that this large-scale farm would not wreak ecological havoc, for example:

- a) Negative impact on salmon. Claims from the NSDFA that there are no salmon in the area are patently false.² The use of the statement that there are no salmon in the area as a

reason to grant the licenses may imply a knowledge that the Oyster Farm would negatively impact salmon. I would like to see a pertinent, site-specific reassurance that salmon habitat would be safe and numbers would not decline.

b) Negative impact on endangered species. The province of N.S. is in the process of its "Recovery Plan" for the piping plover (*Charadrius Melodus Melodus*) as a threatened/endangered species. If I understand correctly, this farm would mean disturbing plover habitat for a private large-scale aquaculture operation. It seems to me that this is in violation of the provincial plover mandate and again I would like to see pertinent, robust, evidence-based assurance that plover habitat would be safe and numbers would not decline.

2) The consultation process.

The applicant claims that community consultation showed wide-spread support in numerous ways, but various claims about the consultation process show a lack of transparency and a fudging/selectivity of the evidence in this regard.³

But in addition to the dubious nature of claims about widespread support and transparent consultation, I have a much deeper concern: according to the Peace and Friendship Treaties that govern this part of the world, the most important stakeholder in any large-scale endeavour, public or private, ESPECIALLY any endeavour having to do with waters and Land, is the First Nation on which the endeavour takes place. Before approving this proposal, I would like to hear what Mi'kmaq elders and Paqtnkek First Nation think about the Oyster Farm. If they approve, my disapproval is moot. But have they been adequately, meaningfully consulted?

3) Hidden costs.

I find that private enterprises often tout their proposals as having positive economic impact by the same old "job creation" and "tax flow" rhetoric. But what they don't factor in are the public costs that their private for-profit enterprises will bring about. Claims about "job creation" and "tax flow" are short-term. Such gains are often countered by the hidden fact that environmental destruction negatively impacts the economy in the long term. Environmental losses of species, clean water, biological diversity, and natural ecosystems are costly to taxpayers and governments. And the private businesses that cause the destruction never seem to be on the hook to pay for their damages. Government bailouts when business bail on their responsibilities are costly to us all.

For this proposal to gain my approval, I would need to see more solid evidence. I would need to see pertinent scientific evidence that there would not be costs to the ecosystem and species down the road. I would also like to see impact studies on how the operation would withstand another Fiona-style hurricane. For that matter, it would be good to know the expected impact on the gravel/dirt access road to the proposed Town Point site. How will this small road hold up when its use increases, and who will pay more for its upkeep, and for all the above points mentioned? The private company? Or once again the taxpayers and public purse?

It seems short-sighted to factor in only economic benefits but not hidden costs that may require government/public bailouts down the road, from potholes, to species loss, to climate emergencies.

Maybe the site would not harm salmon, plovers, roadways, ecosystems, First Nations sovereignty, etc.

But the application as it stands is incomplete on these counts.

Sincerely,
Dr. Sara Parks

██████████ Pomquet Antigonish ██████████

¹ Note that my three points incorporate all the areas where community input is now being sought: a) “the optimum use of marine resources,” b) “the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development,” c) “fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation,” d) “the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation,” e) “the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation,” g) “the sustainability of wild salmon,” and h) “the number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation.”

² See Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat, “Update of Indicators of Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo Salar*) in DFO Gulf Region Salmon Fishing Areas 15 – 18 FOR 2020 AND 2021,” 2022.

³ See evidence from letter by Susan Ross.

SARA PARKS (she/they)

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR RELIGIOUS STUDIES

St. Francis Xavier University

Antigonish, Nova Scotia - Canada

sparks@stfx.ca

Books:

[Jewish and Christian Women in the Ancient Mediterranean](#) (Routledge 2022)

[Gender in the Rhetoric of Jesus](#) (Lexington/Fortress 2019)



St FX is located in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

NSARB-2022-WRT-124

From: [Bob Bancroft](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: TPCI - AQ#1442, AQ# 1443, AQ#1444
Date: May 18, 2023 9:42:12 AM

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Re: Town Pt Consulting Inc. – AQ#1442, AQ#1443 & AQ#1444

May 18, 2023

I became the eastern mainland regional biologist for the Department of Lands and & Forests beginning in 1972, until 1990. In that position I conducted osprey research with an observation platform at the head of the Antigonish Harbour for a decade. Winter flounder research was undertaken in the harbour. I installed and operated a fish fence on the South River in the 1980's for several years, conducted winter waterfowl banding and undertook many black duck observations with Professor Norm Seymour of the St. F.X. Biology Department. Tern and gull nesting sites were monitored, and aerial bald eagle and osprey aerial nest surveys were conducted annually.

Riparian zones along the West & South Rivers that drain into Antigonish harbour are flanked with fields. Some banks are eroding at a rate of 1 metre/year. This erosion has been taking place over 300 years. In the 1970's elder residents of Antigonish still remembered wagon loads of speckled trout being caught in late May on the rivers in the 1920's and sailing ships arriving at the Antigonish Landing. It's far too shallow now.

Piping Plover signage and research at Mahoney's and Dunn's Beach was undertaken with many students hired beginning in the 1970's. Volunteer Guardians and a successful prosecution under the Migratory Bird Convention Act followed.

As a biologist, I consider the more northerly proposed lease #AQ1444 to be very close to Dunn's Beach where Piping plovers normally forage between high tides.

Another biological concern is how the existing food chain in the harbour copes with the oyster excrement from approximately 23,000 cages over the 90 acres, 440 large anchors in the harbour bottom and the effects on the eelgrass beds under the cages from shading and excrement accumulation. The food chain in this estuary is already established. This proposal will divert nutrients that are already being consumed by other organisms and the shade of the cages may affect the ability of eelgrass beds to sequester carbon.

Climate change issues, particularly extreme weather events such as heat waves and violent storms will add to its vulnerability if this project proceeds.

What happened to the precautionary principle? How many more human chemical and terrestrial inputs can enter this harbour before its capacity is overwhelmed, the ecological scales start to tip and Antigonish Harbour becomes no longer ecologically-healthy?

Well-informed residents of Antigonish Harbour will deal with other concerns regarding this proposal.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Bob Bancroft

President, Nature Nova Scotia,

██████████,

Pomquet, NS ██████████

From: [Florence Allen](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: ARB
Date: May 18, 2023 1:34:55 PM

NSARB-2022-WRT-125

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Sent from my iPad

Subject: ARB

May 18, 2023

Letter of support for Town Point Oysters Antigonish Harbour.

Attention Mr Stacy Bruce

Reference AQ1042, AQ1043, AQ1044

My name is Andrew Allen. I have lived in Antigonish County for 47 years and am familiar with Antigonish Harbour. I ran and owned a building supply business in Antigonish for those 40 years, the last 20 years with the Home Hardware franchise. I retired in 2016 and currently work my farm in New Brunswick and with my son's automotive repair business in Antigonish.

I was invited to Mr Ernie Porter's home on May 17, 2023. I was very impressed with the proposal for an oyster farm, both the growth area and the breakthrough technology they have developed. That is, and well be, a gamechanger in the oyster growing industry. I quote from the Globe of Mail May 16, 2023 a piece by George

Athanassakos: "Increasing productivity is the only way to add wealth and create value at the national level. To fuel productivity growth, we need policies that encourage and reward entrepreneurship and risk taking. We need employment growth in productive sectors of the economy". (Factor 3.b , the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development)

I also see it as an appropriate use of marine resources, recognizing the fact that the harbour is a shared resource (Factor 3.a)

It is my opinion, having seen the map of the proposed lease area, there will be

little
or no obstruction to other users of the public waters surrounding the sites.(Factor
3.c,e)

I encourage the ARB to grant in the a timely manner the three leases applied for.

Sincerely,

Andrew Allen

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 8:22 am, May 23, 2023



NSARB-2022-WRT-126

ANTIGONISH BR
236 MAIN ST

ANTIGONISH
NS B2G 2C2
Tel.: (902) 863-4411
Fax: (902) 863-0008
00333

May 19 2023

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Town Point Consulting Inc
AQ#1442,AQ#1443,AQ#1444
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223 Halifax,
B3J 3C4 NS

In reference to Town Point Consulting, I am submitting a letter of recognition under the statement B) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic Development.

With Town Point Consulting being a valued contributing member of the Antigonish area we appreciate their continued investment in the community and support business growth. RBC's collective ambition is to help clients thrive and communities prosper.

RBC supports the fishing and aqua culture industry with having specific guidelines for lending in this industry and are considered a leader amongst Canadian Financial Institution for lending in this space. Town Points Consulting initiative in this area can help boost economic impact to the Antigonish area which aligns to our collective ambition.

Regarding the operators and principals in Town Point Consulting we can speak to the character in knowing them personally and professionally. They uphold the highest standards and have included diversity and inclusion in their operation, sustainable industry practices and have educated themselves thought countless hours of research and development in the industry.

Regards,

Michael MacInnis



RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 10:59 am, May 23, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-127

From: [Matthew Anderson](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#); [REDACTED]@gmail.com
Subject: Attention: Stacy Bruce, Re: Town Point Oysters AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444
Date: May 19, 2023 4:27:42 PM

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NS Aquaculture Review Board
Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

19 May 2023

Dear Aquaculture Review Board,

My letter is in response to Town Point Consulting Inc's application for Oyster aquaculture licenses for Antigonish Harbour. Briefly, my concern (and this letter) is focused on the consultation process and First Nation sovereignty.

Was Paqtnkek First Nation consulted in any formal and comprehensive way concerning this application?

Whatever decision is taken, I would like to register my opinion that it must be preceded by substantive consultation with the Paqtnkek Nation and with Mi'kmaw Elders, who must agree with the project going ahead, for it to do so.

If such consultations have been undertaken (I did not see formal discussions referred to in the letters I read) then I would happily second the position of the local Mi'kmaq people. If it has not been done, then I urge you to make such consultation a formal part of the process before a decision is reached on the Oyster farm at Town Point.

Our recognition of First Nation sovereignty must not be only lip-service. It is precisely moments like these where the rhetoric of public bodies must be tested against their actions.

I would stand by the position of the people and council of Paqtnkek on this project. If that has not been determined, then in my opinion, the application is still incomplete.


Best,
Dr. Matthew Anderson

[REDACTED], Pomquet Antigonish [REDACTED]

--

Matthew Anderson, Ph.D.

Director: [REDACTED]



Books: *Prophets of Love: The Unlikely Kinship of Leonard Cohen and the Apostle Paul* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023), *Our Home and Treaty Land (with Ray Aldred, Wood Lake, 2022)*, *Pairings: The Bible and Booze* (Novalis 2021) and *Apocalypse et gin tonic* (Éditions Novalis 2022)

Podcast: *Pilgrimage Stories from Up and Down the Staircase*

Adjunct faculty: Dept of Religious Studies, St FX University, Antigonish NS
Affiliate Professor, Dept of Theological Studies, Concordia University Montreal
<http://www.concordia.ca/faculty/matthew-anderson>

NSARB-2022-WRT-128

From: [REDACTED]@ns.sympatico.ca [REDACTED]@ns.sympatico.ca
To: Aquaculture Review Board
Subject: Town Point Oyster Farm
Date: May 20, 2023 9:01:24 PM

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Regarding the Town Point Oyster Farm, I am writing to advise that I am STRONGLY opposed to the proposed Oyster Farm at Town Point. I do not reside at Town Point; however, I am privileged to have access to this area for swimming and just strolling along the beautiful beach. I have seen Oyster Farms and it is my opinion that these are extremely unsightly, or in simple terms just "ugly". They destroy the beauty of the natural coastline. It has also come to my attention that this proposal is from a Town Point resident who openly admitted (after having been approached by an interested Investor), that "no, this is a family business". It seems to me that this is a "money grabbing" resident who believes that he/she/they can become extremely wealthy with profits from this entity. I also care deeply for the other residents of Town Point who have worked hard all of their lives and spent many \$\$ to retire to such a quiet and peaceful community. If you think this is a viable and employable business, then maybe re-think a location where it would not infringe on the lives of hard working/peace seeking individuals who came to retire to a beautiful Oceanfront property.

Sincerely, I am concerned!

Mary Dianne Young

Antigonish, NS

[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-129

From: [Manfred Goring](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Fwd: ARB Letter - Regarding TPC AQ #1442, #1443 and #1444
Date: May 22, 2023 7:38:13 AM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Manfred Goring <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, May 21, 2023 at 2:41 PM
Subject: Fwd: ARB Letter - Regarding TPC AQ #1442, #1443 and #1444
To: [REDACTED]@nl.rogers.com <[REDACTED]nl.rogers.com>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Colleen Bowler <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, May 21, 2023 at 2:16 PM
Subject: ARB Letter - Regarding TPC AQ #1442, #1443 and #1444
To: seagardenretreatinc <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

To Whom it May Concern -

This letter references Section D, E, F

My parents originally bought 40 acres (the back half of Town Point) in the late 1970's. There was no access to the property until my parents paid to have a road built from Martha's Lane into Town Point. They also had the electric power lines run to what were the first residences on the point after the site had been abandoned to form the present location of Antigonish.

The 20 acres I have owned since 2010 became my full time residence in 2021 and about 600 feet of my shoreline would be impacted by the size and proximity of the proposed site #1443. The view from my home directly looks onto this same site and also myself, my family, and guests use the canoes, kayaks, motorboats, and sailboats in that same area. #1443 is a prime recreational harbour area used by many boaters. We also fish there as well. Sites of #1442 and #1444 are of less concern to me because of their smaller footprint and they are farther in the distance from my property.

Many of the concerns that I posed in the questionnaire Ernie Porter gave me to fill out have not been answered to my satisfaction. From the 1970's when Antigonish built its wastewater treatment plant, the quality of the harbour ecosystem has improved but it has taken decades to do so. Wild oysters, which weren't present back in the '80's, are now populating many shorelines in the harbour.

It is of concern to me that the thick forest of eelgrass present in much of this part of the harbour may be impacted negatively by #1443 development. The area is too shallow. For use with our sailboat there is a small area to use to get out from our beach, #1443 would impact our right of navigation.

Also, I have renters through Sea Garden Retreat Property, who are attracted to our properties because of the fishing, water accessibility and natural recreation. This past week they took the week off work

to fish in the harbour. Also, I have a nurse who will be renting a cottage, working at St. Martha's, that is coming from BC and was looking for a rural, quiet property close to the water. This is important to the community and I have grave concern that my income will decrease from my rental properties with a large oyster farm in the harbour.

I am opposed to the existence of #1443 of the proposal. The concept of the BOBRs that Mr. Porter proposes for oyster aquaculture systems has potential but I believe Antigonish Harbour should be left for everyone.

Manfred Goring

[REDACTED]

Town Point

Antigonish, Nova Scotia [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-130

From: [Gillian Seale](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Re: Town Point Oyster Proposal AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444
Date: May 22, 2023 12:07:27 PM

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From: Gillian Seale [REDACTED]@gmail.co

Subject: Town Point Oyster Proposal AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

My name is Gillian Seale and I am writing in reference to the Town Point Oyster Proposal (see above).

I am writing to express my opposition to the industrialization of Antigonish Harbor particularly with respect to a) optimum use of marine resources, b) the contribution of the proposed aquacultural operation to community and Provincial development; d) the oceanographic and biophysical characteristics characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation; e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation; e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural navigation; f) the public right to navigation; g) the sustainability of wild salmon. I am a regular visitor and hope to retire in the area. While I understand the attraction of establishing a business from the economic perspective, I believe the short term benefits of this commercialization will mean long term negative consequences to the whole geographical area.

At first glance this project seems to include a small area, but in fact it includes 95 acres of harbour, and in the water 9 million oysters, plus 52 kilometres of ropes and cables. Therefore it will have a huge effect on everything around. The waterways will be for the exclusive use of this commercial enterprise. The access routes of this enterprise will transform what is now a quiet rural area into an industrial development.

The Board needs to examine the impact of this industrialization on tourism which has significant economic value. People are drawn to this particular area because it is beautiful and unspoiled. With the great variety of wildlife in its waterways, Antigonish harbour should be protected, not industrialized.

Moreover, the long term effects of this oyster farm on the ecological balance in Antigonish Harbour are not known. There is enough concern especially now with the impacts of erosion and rising water levels from climate change to warrant a prudent approach to exploitation of water resources.

As well as the biological and environmental impacts, the social impacts must be taken into account. Not only are many local residents strongly opposed because this project will change their lives, indigenous residents are voicing their concerns. The board should not ignore these voices.

In conclusion, although I am not a resident of the Antigonish Harbour area, I was thinking of retiring there. For this reason and general concerns about the environment, I hope that the Aquaculture Board has the wisdom not to approve this project.

Gillian Seale

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By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 11:36 am, May 23, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-131
NSARB-2022-INT-017

[REDACTED]
Harbour Center
Nova Scotia
[REDACTED]

May 21, 2023
Aquaculture Review Board
Halifax, Nova Scotia
EMAIL: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

RE: TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. LICENSE
NUMBERS AQ 1442/1443/1444 APPLICATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am officially requesting to be released as an intervenor at the above noted hearings on June 7,8,9 and 10 and exercising the option to submit a written statement instead.

I grew up in Antigonish, Richard first came here when he was 17 and then considered Antigonish home. In the early 1800s, my Great, Great, Great Grandfather, Neil MacPherson landed at Dorchester, now known as Town Point. Today I live and walk in their footsteps. While working in Fort McMurray in 2016, we were burnt out in the fire, we decided since we had a home and cottage in Antigonish County, N.S., we would retire to Antigonish. It

was a decision that took some serious thought. In considering our age and finances, we sold our home and followed our heart, to our small cottage on Antigonish Harbour. It was where we wanted to spend our senior years. We enjoy 5 acres of land directly on Antigonish Harbour. Unfortunately, now, after spending our time and money on what we thought would be, as our deed had promised, quiet and peaceful enjoyment of our property we find this might not be the case.

THE PROCESS

Clearly the system is not set up to deal with the number of intervenors and applicants for this hearing. This number of concerned citizens stems from the fact that the process set out for this application does not appear to be monitored by any independent body to assure the public that the process is fair. The following quotation from Section 4.2.3 of NSDFA's Regulatory Review: Final Report and Recommendations, issued on March 15, 2023 reaches the same conclusion:

“The public respondents and stakeholders identified a lack of inclusion and meaningful engagement of the public as a key contributor to the misinformation, mistrust, reduced confidence and limited social license of the sector”.

To begin with, at the public consultation process at the first meeting, questions from the public were cherry picked to provide a slanted picture of the proposed oyster farm. The official public meeting, which the Applicant was required to conduct, was called with very short notice given and was at a distant location for the meeting place. Questions were simply not answered until those in attendance demanded that Mr. Porter answer pointed specific questions, rather than simply look at displays and listen to canned mini speeches.

Many statements made in the application have no basis in fact, just made to push for approval, i.e., the number of recreational fishers in the Antigonish Harbour, his numbers are definitely wrong. Along with that, his number of recreational boaters on the Harbour, is definitely wrong. These numbers are given to slant the application in favour of the leases. I live on the Harbour full time, so I can see what goes on, on a daily basis. I can see the two largest lease areas from multiple windows of my home. This is a residential area, not an industrial area.

You will see all kinds of claims about the Harbour area usage and percentage of usage. This does not tell the whole or even part of the story. There is no mention of

fish or seabirds that make the Harbour home. They simply do not count in this application, because most are not on any protected list. In this day and age of supposed environmental awareness, this is unconscionable. The parameters in which the Board is required to consider are too narrow to get a complete overview of the consequences of this oyster farm, thus asking the Board to make a decision on incomplete information.

This proposal has split the community with major distrust on both sides which should never have been allowed to happen. Other considerations, i.e., road access, noise, added traffic in a small residential area must be taken into consideration for a more complete picture of this proposal. I will try to explain my opposition to this proposal under the factors that are set by the ARB in the list below:

A. The optimum use of marine resources;

The Harbour is used by fish and birds as a home, feeding ground, nesting sites etc.. Recreational fishers, boaters, licensed wild oyster harvesters, all use the Harbour. Because of its shallow depth, I consider this optimal use. There is no need to industrialize one of the few relatively untouched Harbours of Antigonish County.

As a marine resource, the Harbour is presently at its best use.

B. The contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development;

As stated previously, the proposal has split the Community. Most of us who live here came for the peace and privacy of the Harbour. With this proposal, all this will be gone and so will prospective investors in land and housing around the Harbour. This will result in a drop in tax revenue to the Municipality. Land values for resale directly adjacent to the lease sites will drop due to noise and privacy considerations. If you are looking for quiet and privacy this will not be the place to buy.

Provincial Economic Development is minimal as traditionally oyster operations are seasonal and even part-time at minimum wage. With the labour shortage now and predicted to get worse as the years go by, this will result in increased competition for labour with established businesses. Difficult to see much benefit there. If the business of selling proposed oyster cages ever really happens, they will be made in China as Mr. Porter stated with possible assembly in Canada. Again, difficult to see meaningful local benefits there.

C. Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;

The commercial fishermen and licensed oyster gatherers, would be much better informed than I am on this. There are recreational fishers in and around these areas on a regular basis, as I see from my front windows. I would be remiss not to mention the seabirds who fish in the Harbour continuously. Human activity is not the only use that counts. We do not want a repeat of Suncor/Syncrude duck and water fowl killings that resulted in fines and massive inquiries due to tailing ponds not properly monitored as per regulations. With the increasing ferocity of storms, a large concern of ours is that these cages, ropes and cables will drift in the Harbour and be on shore, with no apparent plan for clean up or liability Insurance. Another unanswered question, with 52 kms of ropes and cables, entanglements are unavoidable. There are no answers on how this will be resolved. Are we going to have to clean cables, ropes, cages and dead birds off the beach so we and our grandchildren can use it. At present we all have to use water shoes now so we don't cut our feet on oyster shells, it will be worse with the inevitable increase of dead oysters that will be on the shore as a result of the prospect of this venture.

The proposal is for 9 million oysters, at a 5 to 10 % mortality rate, this makes approximately 750,000 dead oysters returned to the Harbour. How can this be good for the Harbour. The Lease proposal states that dead oysters will be returned to where they came from, this means the Harbour.

There is no mention of Oyster Disease and or disease mitigation. With a proposal of this size, if there does happen to be an infection or disease, what happens to the native oysters and other aquatic life in the Harbour.

D. The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;

I am not a scientist, nor do I have the resources to apply to this other than personal observation. As stated previously, I live here full time, all the time. The Harbour is constantly changing with weather, tides, etc.. Today as I write this, the wind conditions would make going out in the Harbour in a small boat, suicidal at best. In the aftermath of the wind, there will be manmade debris on the beach, some seaweed and the sea floor will be changed. How this affects the parameters in this I do not

know, nor do I think anyone else knows, as this takes observation, samples, etc., over time to establish base lines for comparison purposes. I have seen no activity in this regard.

Eel grass is certainly present in the two large proposed sites, AQ1443 and AQ1444. Common sense tells me that the shading effect of 23,000 oyster cages, full of oysters resting in very shallow water will be detrimental to eel grass growth. 23,000 Oyster cages with 9 million oysters competing for a limited food source tells me that part of the ecosystem will be short on food. 9 Million oysters will defecate. It is my belief, that this will be harmful to eelgrass, fish habitat and the shoreline.

E. The other uses of public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;

That would be recreational fishers, boaters, etc., the mere fact that an area of restricted access in this part of the Harbour is problematic. It is after all, a public space, as stated so often in your factors of consideration. Based on my observation of water depth, sandbars, seaweeds, this proposal where it is located makes these larger areas of the Harbour off limits to all but kayaks and canoeists

who will be navigating through lots of oyster gear at their own risk.

F. The public right of navigation;

We have been using the Harbour for many years, sailing, power boating, canoes, paddle boards, etc. without restriction, aside from natural restrictions, sand bars etc. We have a registered dock and mooring in Graham's Cove. When Mr. Porter brought his expanded proposal to our attention, it included Graham's Cove and our dock and mooring of which he was fully aware of. When we strongly objected to this, based on our usage and shallow depths, he proposed that he would remove the Graham's Cove part of his proposal if we didn't object to the rest of the application. These are public waters, not for he or I or anyone else to try and bargain away.

Navigation will be definitely restricted by, at the very least the sheer size of the proposal. On Lease proposal AQ1444, the Commercial fishermen who use this area to access their wharfs and the open ocean are better persons to address this.

AQ1443 is directly off our property where we launch and recover our boats. With this proposed lease site,

using our boat launch area may become more hazardous as the only water access to the rest of the Harbour will be directly in front of our property. The proposed lease area will direct all boat traffic much closer to shore with increased chances of grounding on shore. The space between the shore line and the lease site will be approximately 250 meters. When you take into account the shallow water at the shore, this 250 meters will be considerably reduced for safe navigation.

G. The sustainability of wild salmon;

I am not sure that anyone can accurately comment on this, as one needs some long-term base line studies in the area for a comparison to any proposed changes in the environment. All I see at present are arm chair comments which cannot and do not make an accurate representation. Remember we live here and see what happens in the front yard of our house. We realize that several of the rivers that feed into Antigonish Harbour do have annual salmon runs. It would be logical to assume there are salmon in the Harbour and that they go where they wish. The notion that Mr. Porter proposes to know that salmon travel only in the channel is another example of unsupported “facts”.

H. The number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;

We have several licensed wild oyster gatherers and one small lease site for wild oysters. There are no major farm(s) in the public waters, all in keeping with the current use of the Harbour and its surroundings.

In conclusion, the proposed farm is not a good fit for the existing use of the Harbour. Those individuals supporting the Oyster Farm for the most part, have no interest for the well-being of the Harbour. Some do not live in the vicinity or are in the oyster business themselves in other parts of the Province and elsewhere. If this was an all land based proposal for an existing residential area, it would not even be considered. There are too many unanswered questions, too great a potential for long lasting environmental damage to warrant approval for the benefit of one family's gain. This proposal has already garnered Provincial and/or Federal Grant monies which in my opinion was very premature and misguided.

It appears to us that the Government is fighting to have this application approved by sending Legal Counsel to argue the merits of such a venture, and thus putting

credence to their rush to finance and support TPCI in their application.

I respectfully submit that in my opinion the application and many of the actions by the applicant and NSDFA are critically flawed and the application should be rejected. Here are a few more examples:

- Ongoing revisions to the Application, expanding the number of oysters to be raised in AQ1443 and AQ1444 to 10,000,000;
- NSDFAs failure to provide information requested in FOIPOP's;
- Multiple times of asking for forgiveness rather than permission for laying piping in the Harbour, to dredging without a permit;
- Blocking a public road;
- Stopping people on the Harbour and in restaurants to request signatures on a form indicating support (as evidenced by those who wrote to the Board requesting their names be withdrawn from the support list as they never indicated they gave their support);
- Developing the CLC wherein people had to apply to be a member and vetted before being allowed to join;

- Misleading neighbours with a pitch “it’s only a hobby”;
- The applicant can have 3 years plus to tweak the application and resubmit or add to it and the respondents have approximately 3 months to rebut it.

Another note worth mentioning is that The Municipality of the County of Antigonish rejected a motion to support TPCI’s Oyster Farm. You will notice that at page 215 in the original application, TPCI used the Official Crest of The Municipality of the County of Antigonish to give the appearance that this venture was sanctioned or approved by the County when he stated potential community benefits. This is another example of misleading the public and this Board. He does not have the support of the Municipality as indicated by the defeat of the motion for support. This is public record.

Respectfully submitted,

Alena C. Wilgenhof

[REDACTED] Harbour Center
Antigonish County, Nova Scotia [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@auracom.com

From: [Colleen Bowler](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Fwd:
Date: May 22, 2023 8:48:50 PM

NSARB-2022-INT-007
NSARB-2022-WRT-132

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May 15, 2023

To the Aquaculture Review Board -

I am officially requesting to be released as an intervenor at the ARB hearing regarding TPCI's application for marine aquaculture leases in Antigonish Harbour and am exercising my right to submit a written statement.

I am writing to share my deep concerns regarding the adverse consequences that may arise if Town Point Consulting Inc. (TPCI's) application for marine aquaculture leases in Antigonish Harbour are approved. AQ #1442, #1443, #1444. While not opposed to aquaculture, I believe it must be done in the right place, with the right process, and by qualified companies and/or individuals committed to complying to relevant regulations.

This letter addresses B -the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development, E - The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation), F - The public right of navigation.

Although neither my husband or I are from Antigonish, my husband, Peter, attended St.F.X. in the 1970s, and has maintained close ties with the community, returning frequently to visit friends and serving on the St.F.X.'s board of governors. Since 2008, when we built our home on residential Seabright Rd., we've considered ourselves fortunate to be able to enjoy the beauty of Antigonish, its people and its magnificent harbour from spring through fall. We have many friends here and actively participate in various activities like fishing, golfing, yoga, farmers market, St. FX, Highland Games, volunteering and contributing to many of the non-profits in the community. Our children and grandchildren join us here every summer from across Canada and the US to spend quality time together, relax, and enjoy Nana and Pops camp. They have grown to love Antigonish as much as we do.

Our home has also been used by family (for example, a niece that did her nursing residency at St. Marthas and recently a niece that was here for a month) and at the request of the university for visiting alum or speakers. From the very beginning our home was built with the thought of it being used for generations of families, much like many others around the harbour.

We were supportive of our neighbors, Mr. & Mrs. Porter, when they planned to start a haskap farm on their property, which is adjacent to ours. Although those plans did not come to fruition, we remained supportive when Mr. & Mrs. Porter expressed their intentions to start an enterprise building homes. In fact, we connected them to Peter's brother, Mark, who later had a cottage built by Mr. Porter at Malignant Cove. That plan also ended. We did not object to the Porter's building a 20ft lighthouse adjacent to the property line with our home, a large barn/equipment building or a second home on their property. Furthermore, we wished them well when they said they planned to start a small oyster nursery they would operate as a hobby/part time job.

However, once Mr. & Mrs. Porter's ambitions for a large-scale oyster enterprise became clear and as they dismissed all the concerns we raised (refusing to meet with our neighbours as a group to discuss this topic) we knew we had to do something. Many neighbours and Antigonish residents had similar concerns and together, we began to try to understand the potential implications of their plans.

Contrary to the claims made in TPCI's application that there are limited numbers of boaters and only 15 recreational fishermen who use the harbour, I find this not to be the case. Throughout the summer and even during the year when boats can be on the water, we see a wide range of watercraft including kayaks, canoes, power boats, skiers, many small fishing boats (normally with two fishermen), sea-doo's, paddle boards and wind surfers. Swimmers and fishermen on the shore are also a common site (especially since Covid). Peter regularly fishes in the harbour in a kayak or our small outboard fishing boat, as do members of our family and friends (that should account for more than 10!). I kayak, canoe, paddle and walk the beach. Our children and grandchildren, during their summer stays, love being on and in the water almost daily.

Having spent much of the last three years researching and learning about the potential adverse effects on the environment, the limitations it would impose on the community's ability to use and enjoy the harbour as they have for centuries, the impact on the safety of navigation for both commercial and recreational boaters, and various other factors, I am more convinced than ever that the costs of this project will far outweigh any benefits. I was also surprised and disappointed that NSDFA explicitly refused to release information which FOAH requested in a [2021 FOIPOP](#) and the NS Privacy Commissioner agreed it should be released/provided. NSDFA's Deputy Minister's February 16, 2023 letter to the NS's Privacy Commissioner explained her refusal to release the requested information as follows:

"The Aquaculture Review Board (ARB) creates an independent process for review of proposed aquaculture projects. It sets procedural rules that ensure transparency and full participation for all interested parties. Premature disclosure of the full details of the project in advance of the ARB's independent review would create the risks of undue financial loss or gain to third parties that FOIPOP S.17(1)(d) guards against."

NS Privacy Commissioner disagreed with NSDFA. I would think the ARB, and all concerned, would want full access to all the relevant facts prior to making an important decision on a complicated topic.

Moreover, there are numerous other hidden losses that will affect the community. We, along with others, have halted additional property improvements, including potentially building a rental home, until a decision has been made on this matter. The presence of a 90-acre industrial oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour will inevitably decrease property values. We already experience regular noise disturbances from the Porter's property with heavy equipment starting as early as 7 am, even occurring on Sundays as it did this past week. The increased traffic on the Porter's driveway which runs along our property line, audible conversations, and other activities will create increasing disturbances. Introducing an industrial operation with daily equipment usage in the harbour will magnify noise pollution and traffic in and around Town Point, adversely affecting the quality of life for families and wildlife. As well, many come from all over the community to walk Seabright Road. The traffic and increase in activity associated with an industrial operation will pose safety risks to both the pedestrians and drivers.

Contrary to TPCI claims in its application that "Presently, other than basic oyster harvesting operations, Antigonish Harbour provides no commercial output."; I am aware that Antigonish Harbour is home to many successful commercial fishers. It serves as a magnet for residential development and attracts individuals such as physicians, health care workers, academics, and young families who have recently returned to the area. The harbour is a hub for recreational use by local residents and visitors alike.

I firmly believe that Antigonish Harbour is an invaluable and unique natural resource for Antigonish Town and County. It plays a central role in the region's economic prosperity, and, from my personal perspective, an irreplaceable asset for our family and friends for generations to come.

Please do not allow a large-scale oyster farm to be approved in Antigonish.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and hope you will carefully consider the long-term implications of this decision on Antigonish Harbour, the community, the environment, and the well-being of future generations.

Colleen Bowler

[REDACTED]). Antigonish, NS [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-133

Laurie Archibald. [REDACTED] Antigonish, NS

To: The Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board Re: Town Point Oysters, Leases
AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

Dear Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing this letter in support of Town Point Oysters (TPO). I was born and raised in Antigonish County and have seen this situation countless times when it comes to business development in this community. Some locals can be less than supportive of new things regardless of how good it could be for the community as a whole.

When I moved back to Antigonish a few years ago, I was with an old high school friend who told me stories of what horrible people the Porters are and how they are going to ruin our community with the Oyster farm. I put this thought to the back of my mind and forgot about it, until a year after when the Porter family walked into the new business I was working for to support us on our opening day. Not knowing who they were or that they had anything to do with the farm, I got to know each one of them on a personal level before taking a tour of their oyster nursery myself.

Since then, I have been on countless tours with many different community members who show up skeptical of the project and leave with optimistic thoughts, such as I did. In each meeting, the Porters encourage everyone to do their own research, including checking out the Friends of Antigonish Harbour (FOAH) webpage and Facebook page, before coming to their own conclusion. While on the other hand, the opposing side, is discouraging people from taking tours, fearmongering the public to think oyster farming and the Porter family is bad, and hiding many positive comments about the farm on their FaceBook (FB) posts. This leads to people having an emotionally fueled, uneducated and biased opinion of the farm before having the opportunity to do their own research or take a tour for themselves. By trying to harm our trust in the Porters and cherry-picking FB comments, they are distorting the true sentiment of our community and presenting a biased narrative, which is misleading and manipulative. This makes me wonder how many people of the FOAH group have taken the tour themselves or gained any first-hand education on the matter they are opposing.

I could continue to go on about how-FOAH has been using unethical tactics, including trying to make supporters retract their names, but I think my time is better spent touching on some of the positive things the Town Point Oysters farm will do for the community.

- Oysters are known to be ocean filters, with cleaner waters they are creating a healthier ecosystem and allowing habitat for other species. They help control

harmful algal blooms, they also help minimize the impact of climate change.
(Factors A, D)

- The farm will also provide new and unique job opportunities to Antigonish town and county. Not to mention a fresh local product that presents beneficial opportunities for local restaurants, consumers, and tourism. (Factor B)

- They are creating new, more environmentally and economically safe ways of farming through their DockPort BOBR technology which will not only help their farm but countless other oyster farms, which presents an economic opportunity to our local, provincial, and national economy. I've also been told that their farm would be a demonstration site for this new technology and oyster farmers from around the world would be invited to see it. This is a tourism opportunity for Antigonish. As someone that works at a local brewery, I know well the economic benefit of tourism. (Factor A, B)

- They are taking a green approach and trying to leave very little negative environmental impact, by the use of solar panels and with a plan to go completely green. (Factor A)

In conclusion, I fully support the Porters with their new family-run business and encourage anyone and everyone to go take a tour.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Laurie Archibald

NSARB-2022-WRT-134

From: [REDACTED]@ns.sympatico.ca [REDACTED]@ns.sympatico.ca
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point Oyster Farm
Date: May 23, 2023 11:01:18 AM

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I would like to put on record that I am strongly against the development of an Oyster Farm in Town Point, Nova Scotia. I use this particular area for recreational fishing from May to October every year and this would not be possible if the oyster farm is put in. Town Point is a beautiful coastal shore and beach area and should be kept that way. There are several cottage properties in this area and, if I lived in that area, I would be devastated if the proposed Oyster Farm is approved. Please take into consideration our natural shorelines and their beauty. It is so peaceful and quiet in the Town Point location and should remain that way. Maybe another location should be considered in an area that is not used by the residents of Antigonish Town and County.

Thank you for your consideration to my concern.

Thomas B. Young

[REDACTED], Antigonish, Nova Scotia

From: [Sheilagh Hudon](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: TPCI applications 1442, 1443, 1444
Date: May 23, 2023 11:48:31 AM
Attachments: [New ARB letter, draft 2.docx](#)

NSARB-2022-INT-008
NSARB-2022-WRT-135

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To: The Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

Re: TPCI Applications 1442, 1443, and 1444

May 23, 2023

Dear Members of the NS Aquaculture Review Board:

Although you have accepted us as Intervenors for the hearing starting on June 7th on the application by Town Point Consulting (“TPC”) for a license to farm oysters in Antigonish Harbour, we are withdrawing that status to help streamline the hearing process. We had also submitted a letter on February 16th before knowing that we had been accepted as intervenors; we request that you also remove that letter and we submit the following in their stead.

We are writing to oppose the applications of Town Point Consulting. Our points of opposition refer to most of your factors but particularly to #s 3, fishery activities; 4, characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed operation; 5, other users of the public waters surrounding; 6, public right of navigation.

Our two properties including our residence, which we have owned since 1999, are directly across from the Porters’ residential property and two of the proposed aquaculture sites (#1442 and #1443). Our direct family ties go back over 100 years on the Mahoney’s Beach side of the harbour and our extended family has lived in Antigonish and Antigonish County for over 200 years, currently with homes in town, Jimtown, Mahoney’s Beach, Terra Tory Drive, Southside Harbour, St. Andrew’s and Bayfield. Generations of our family members have used the harbour and continue to do so today.

We are active users of the harbour- boating, boarding, kayaking, waterskiing, fishing, swimming and using the beaches. After many years of staying at grandparents’ and parents’ homes at Mahoney’s Beach, we purchased our own property because of the pristine beauty of the harbour, and the natural wildlife and quiet country setting which we, like many residents on the harbour, treasure. Antigonish Harbour has been a low impact site for farming, fishing and recreational use for centuries. TPC’s proposed oyster farm would endanger the qualities which are unique to living on Antigonish Harbour. In addition, we believe that there are a number of substantive problems with the application.

Adverse effects on the environment certainly worry and concern us and these will be addressed in the upcoming hearings but as residents of the harbour, our objections are based more on personal experience. While our harbour is a large body of water, the portion which receives the most use is fairly small. The northern part of the harbour is a shallow estuary with

a narrow channel to St. George's Bay. While TPC claims they will use only a small portion of the entire harbour, they have chosen the busiest, most frequently used portion. The proposed leases will curtail an important part of the harbour for current users.

Antigonish Harbour is technically an estuary and therefore is relatively shallow with a low flushing capacity, as evidenced by the muddy opaque waters after major rain storms. This capacity is incompatible to large fish farming operations. The estuary has not been extensively studied and there is limited baseline data available for its biophysical characteristics. It cannot be assumed that TPC's proposed farm would have negligible impact on the harbour. When blue crabs were introduced, their effect on eel grass was profound, proving that the estuary has a delicate biophysical balance. Historically there have been other examples of human activity adversely affecting the harbour. Allowing a single user to change the established patterns and potentially threaten this fragile ecosystem for personal gain is unconscionable.

Our residence is vulnerable to large storms from the west and north. The proposed lease sites #1442 and #1443, are directly in the path of prevailing winds from these directions. From Hurricane Fiona last fall, we had substantial shoreline damage from north and west bearing winds. The potential damage could have been much worse if there had been additional floating waste from thousands of disabled oyster cages. The idea that cages will be sunk at every threat of a major storm is impractical, if not impossible.

One of the attractions of living on the outer portions of the harbour, in addition to its natural beauty, is the calm undisturbed environment. The servicing of the proposed leases and the commercial activity created on-shore at the Porter property will industrialize what is today a residential neighbourhood. The scale of TPC's operation will create noise and disruption on the water and traffic, noise and commercial disruptions on the Porter property and all along Seabright Road. This change is antithetical to why we live on the harbour and financially may well have a negative effect on our property values. The commercial activity from a large oyster farming operation is completely contrary to the use and practices prevalent on the harbour and frankly unacceptable to most residents along the harbour shore.

Harvesting oysters from Antigonish Harbour is a good idea. We support the existing wild oyster fishery which has unobtrusively and sustainably fished wild oysters for many years. We are opposed to the TPC proposal for many reasons: environmental, limitations to common use of the harbour, the potential jeopardy from storms, the industrialization of Town Point, destroying the beauty and serenity of the harbour, and the misappropriation of a public resource for the benefit of one family. We request that the Board, without reservation, decline the TPC application.

Respectfully,

Sheilagh MacKinnon Hudon

William R. Hudon

[REDACTED]

Southside Harbour, NS [REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-136

From: [Karen Lightstone](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Town Point Consulting Project concerns
Date: May 23, 2023 1:34:43 PM

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I would like to express my concerns about the proposed oyster project in Antigonish Harbour. I am a frequent visitor to the area and can't imagine the dramatic change that will occur if this project is allowed to proceed. What is now a quiet community with many homes will become an industrial park with one prominent house expanding to include a processing plant, distribution centre and potentially staff housing.

I realize the potential benefits to the economy should all the promises of employment be fulfilled. But are these promises anything more than promises? This one homeowner, who is not a fisher person and has little knowledge, from what I know, about this industry, is going to convert his primary residence into a commercial venture? Really?

The harbour, which is home to many species of birds, is going to be disrupted by the noise created by the additional machinery and infrastructure required to operate an oyster farm. A government publication expressed concern about the number of birds, mostly cormorants attracted by oyster cages as well as the health risk to humans from the faecal matter. (L.A. Comeau, R. Chiasson, A. Chiasson, F. Pernet, and T. Landry. 2006. Birds perching on oyster culture gear in eastern New Brunswick, Canada. Can. Tech. Rep. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 2681). Although the study was conducted in southeastern New Brunswick it could be applicable to Antigonish Harbour since both are situated along the Northumberland Strait. The study found that birds were present on all types of equipment, submerged and floating. Antigonish Harbour could become overwhelmed by an increase in the bird population as a result of the proposed farm. The harbour is not open water and therefore the ability to flush faecal matter is limited.

There is also the possibility that new birds, attracted by the 23,000 cages, will displace existing bird species.

Please do not be swayed by the potential, and yet unproven, economic benefits of this oyster farm. There is a lot more at stake.

Thank you for your time,

Karen Lightstone, CPA CA, PhD
Retired Saint Mary's University professor
Halifax, NS

(Contact information: [REDACTED], Halifax, NS, [REDACTED])

NSARB-2022-WRT-137

From: Dean Perry
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Support Letter for AQ#s 1042,1043 and 1044
Date: May 23, 2023 2:31:50 PM

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Dear Clerk of the Board, the following is a letter pertaining to the Upcoming Review for Town Point Consulting, Antigonish:

Dean Perry [REDACTED] Antigonish, NS, [REDACTED] May 16, 2023

Clerk of the Aquaculture Review Board P.O. Box 2223 Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 3C4

Subject Letter of Support for Marine Aquaculture Licences and Leases (AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044) in Antigonish Harbour

Dear Clerk of the Aquaculture Review Board,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the proposed marine aquaculture licences and leases (AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044) for the suspended cultivation of American Oysters in Antigonish Harbour, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia. I believe that Town Point Consulting Inc. is well-suited to carry out this venture responsibly, adhering to the highest standards of sustainability and environmental stewardship.

I would like to draw your attention to several key factors outlined in the Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations, specifically Section 3, which highlight the importance of this proposed operation.

Optimum Use of Marine Resources (Subsection A) The suspended cultivation of American Oysters by Town Point Consulting Inc. appears to represent an efficient and sustainable use of our valuable marine resources. This cultivation method minimizes habitat alteration and maintains the ecological balance of Antigonish Harbour. Based on information provided, it allows for the cultivation of oysters in a controlled and environmentally friendly manner, without causing harm to the surrounding ecosystem.

Contribution to Community and Provincial Economic Development (Subsection B) The proposed operation will have a positive impact on both the local community and the provincial economy. By establishing these aquaculture licences and leases, Town Point Consulting Inc. will hopefully create employment opportunities, stimulate economic growth, and contribute to the prosperity of Antigonish County. Moreover, the company's commitment to sourcing local labor and materials further enhances the economic benefits for our region.

Public Right of Navigation (Subsection F) Based on information presented, the operation of marine aquaculture in Antigonish Harbour will not impede the public right of navigation. Town Point Consulting Inc. is expected to work in close collaboration with local authorities and stakeholders to ensure that the placement of cultivation equipment and infrastructure does not interfere with the safe and unobstructed movement of vessels within the harbour. The company's dedication to maintaining navigational access demonstrates their commitment to responsible aquaculture practices.

In conclusion, I support the granting of the proposed marine aquaculture licences and leases (AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044) to Town Point Consulting Inc. for the suspended cultivation of American Oysters in Antigonish Harbour. I am confident that the company will uphold the highest standards of environmental sustainability, contribute to local economic development, and ensure the unimpeded public right of navigation.

Thank you for considering my views on this matter. I trust that the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board will carefully evaluate all the relevant factors and make a decision that promotes the long-term well-being of our community and the sustainable use of our marine resources.

Yours sincerely,

Dean Perry

NSARB-2022-WRT-138

May 23, 2023

From: Allan MacAulay, Antigonish Landing, NS

To: N.S. Aquaculture Review Board via email (aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca)

Cc: Mr. Ernie Porter [REDACTED]@gmail.com)

Re: Application of Town Point Consulting Inc. for Three Marine Aquaculture Licenses and Leases- AQ#1042, AQ#1043, AQ#1044.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with the proponent (Mr. Ernie Porter) and tour his facilities. I found the proponent's presentation, his business plan, and already constructed facilities to be very professional in nature. I wish to give my support as a member of the local community to the proponent's application and wish to discuss the following factors to be considered in decisions related to marine aquaculture sites:

the optimum use of marine resources;

My understanding is that Antigonish Harbour is used for is almost entirely recreational purposes. I do not feel that dedicating the harbour solely for one type of use is "optimum" by any means. "Optimum use" comes from diversification. The proponent indicated the area of the lease represents approximately 2% of the harbour surface. I have reviewed mapping showing the proposed lease locations and I feel that these areas represent an insignificant area in comparison to the overall area remaining for other uses.

the contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development;

I feel that rural Nova Scotia needs further economic development to make these communities sustainable in the face of increased metropolitanization of the Halifax Regional Municipality. The proponent estimates that up to ten (10) people would be directly employed by the operation not to mention other sectors which would be supported by providing direct services the oyster operation would need (i.e. supplies, transportation, etc.). This could translate into employment which could support dozens of Nova Scotia families. It would represent an excellent investment in our area's future. Economic stimulus within our area should not be significantly burdened for the sake of maintaining the *status quo*. Change is the only real certainty in life.

The proponent appears to have thorough understanding of what is required to run oyster aquaculture. I feel confident that this individual has the interests of the community in mind with the development of this oyster farm. The term "NIMBY" (Not In My Back Yard) is sometimes used to describe individuals who may be against a certain development in close relation to where they live or frequent. Others certainly have the right to voice their opinions in opposition to the development as they feel it may negatively affect their own lives and properties. It would

appear that the proponent's residence will be one of the closest to the proposed site- almost literally in his own back yard. I do not think the proponent would intend to negatively affect Antigonish Harbour as his property, and he himself, would directly reap the negative consequences.

Allan MacAulay
Antigonish Landing, NS

NSARB-2022-WRT-139

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Att: Mr Stacy Bruce, ABB clerk

Ref: Town Point Oysters, AQ #1442, AQ #1443 and AQ #1444

I am writing to express my support for the oyster farm proposed by Town Point Oysters for the Antigonish Harbour. I have a degree in environmental engineering, work in the environmental remediation field, and in 2021 I lived in Antigonish while completing an 8-month work term as an Engineering Assistant for the Town of Antigonish Engineering Department.

During my time in Antigonish, I had the privilege of meeting Ernie and the rest of the Porter Family. Ernie gave me a tour of the oyster nursery, showed me how his innovative BOBR technology works, and brought me out on the water to show me exactly where the lease sites are located. Ernie discussed his plans for the oyster operation as well as his knowledge and research into the potential for positive environmental impacts that this oyster farm may have on the harbour.

I spent a considerable amount of time kayaking and paddle boarding within the harbour during my time in Antigonish. Having become familiar with the harbour, I can confidently say that the lease sites in question would not impede the use of the harbour for kayakers or anyone operating any other small leisure craft in any way (factor e,f). I can also say that the Porters had no issues navigating the harbour in their boat to show me the locations of the lease sites without the need to cross through those sites. I don't believe navigating around these sites would be a problem for any other boat users either, given that the sites will be appropriately marked (factor e,f).

It is well studied and agreed upon that water bodies downstream from agriculture, septic systems, and other anthropogenic pollution sources are often at risk of eutrophication due to the addition of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus to the water. The Antigonish Harbour and the rivers that feed it collect run-off from local farms, discharge from the Town's wastewater treatment facility, and likely collect leakage from the many ageing home septic systems in the area. All of these sources have the potential to provide excessive nutrient loading to the harbour.

Aside from resulting in a noticeably dark/opaque, green, overall unsightly and potentially smelly body of water, eutrophication can lead to toxic blue-green algal blooms, which are a very real and growing problem in our province. As someone who has been snorkling both within the harbour and just outside of it, I can tell you that the water within the harbour is not exactly pristine. This oyster farm provides an opportunity to employ a proven method (filter feeding shellfish) to reduce nutrient loading in the harbour, lowering this risk of eutrophication (factor d).

I firmly believe that this oyster farm will not hinder anyone's use of the harbour. However, the improvement in water quality that may result from the additional oysters has the potential to benefit all users of the Antigonish Harbour.

Sincerely,

Kirklan Huntley


Centreville, NS

NSARB-2022-WRT-140

From: [valerie george](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Subject: Antigonish Harbour
Date: May 23, 2023 8:51:02 PM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

[REDACTED], Antigonish.

I am officially requesting to be a intervenor at the above hearings on June 7,8,9 and 10 , 2023 and exercising to submit a letter instead.

I grew up in Antigonish , on the Antigonish Harbour, with our large family, and still live here looking and visiting the harbour all the time. We enjoy the harbour and all it offers, watching the birds, nature, boats and shoreline.

I feel the public has a lack of inclusion and meanful engagement of the public's information due to the misinformation.

I am apposed to the oyster farm without clear questions and answers and the ruining of the Antigonish Harbour, our shallow harbour with be destroyed. The overview of this oyster farm is too narrow and the board should make a decision of incomplete information.

It will destroy our Antigonish Harbour that we as a community, would hate to lose, our quiet, shallow harbour will not be a home to birds, fish, nests, it will all be destroyed.

Pierre and Valerie Boucher

Sent from my Galaxy

Written Comment / Submission

Re: Town Point Oysters, Antigonish County, NS

* all measurements and property lines are approximate, based on measurements from website <https://gis8.nsgc.gov.ns.ca/NSCRS/>

My property ([REDACTED] see maps) is inherited from my father who died in Feb. 2021 (probate in process). The only way I could have (afford !) this part of the property on Town Point peninsula is because my parents bought it decades ago. I helped plant the pine trees there in 1976 when the peninsula was mostly a cutover with a couple of small areas of softwoods. Over those decades I have watched the land regrow. I have enjoyed the natural surroundings there and the peaceful, quiet location. A place to reduce stress, restore the soul. I have spent much time there with my parents - now both dead. Over the last many years I have spent more and more summer time there and plan to do major renovations to my late fathers' residence before moving there permanently from my temporary residence just over the Antigonish / Pictou County line.

These oyster lease locations will affect me directly, my property is adjacent to it. I believe that people or organizations etc that are not adjacent to these leases should have the least credence given to them. They will not directly experience it ! The local adjacent people/properties concerns should carry the most weight.

These oyster aquaculture sites will affect my property directly because it is in front (NE) over open water. Site # 2 (AQ # 1443) is proposed to be +- 984 ft/ 300m/ 0.3 km away from the shore of the property. So it would be easily within sight and hearing. AQ # 1444 is proposed to be +- 4878 ft / 1529.8 m / 1.5 km away. That site is also within sight and hearing of the property. These distances are generally much closer (especially Site 2) than the oyster farm in Merigomish Harbour that the applicant is associated with. The Antigonish Harbour site is closer to many more residences. The closest houses I see from the shore of my property are across to Archibald Point to the west. And those are 1583 ft / 483 m / 0.48 km away. And I can clearly see and hear activity from that area. Site # 2 is much closer and will be noisier all the time and will have more activity than residences. The activity and noise on Archibald Point is sporadic – not all day. It is one thing to decide to live in a spot where an “economic activity / industry” already exists - you know it is there and decide to live there anyway if you so choose. It is another thing to live where most/all you see and hear nearby is nature (waves, open water, wind, birds...) and then something that affects you directly is imposed on you ! How would you like it if a testing area for airboats (the ones commonly used in the Florida Everglades that have noisy motors with propellers where everyone on board wears hearing protectors) was created in front of your house or up and down Antigonish Harbour, or have a testing facility created for personal water craft right in front of your cottage, or a trail bike track beside /near your house in the countryside ? And these operations go on for hours every weekday and maybe on the weekends too ? But that might be okay because there might be 8 to 10 jobs created !? I suspect the noise etc would affect your enjoyment of your property. I recall that someone actually did have an airboat in Antigonish Harbour (I saw and heard it nearby in Ogdens Pond) and that boat was not operated very long at all due to objections.

AQ # 1444 Site # 3 lease location is farthest from any residences but is still visible and within hearing from my property. I suppose that this location would be preferable over Site 2 that is more in the middle of the water area. At low tide there is an exposed sandbar to the west of Site 3 where various seabirds hangout. I suspect that the birds will be skittish with the activities of the oyster farm a little distance to the east. And there is the issue of Piping Plovers.

This site might also be protected a bit better from nor'easter storms due to Dunns Beach (although there are low areas where it looks like waves have washed over) on that side and some protection from the small island to the south. See Map # 2.

These proposed lease sites are being introduced to an area that has many existing residences. It is not the situation that an aquaculture operation was present and then residences were established afterwards knowing that the operation was there. The residences were built in the area because of the location of waterfront, natural views, privacy, no industrial / commercial establishments nearby or to look at, etc. The attraction was the natural undisturbed location – the peace and quiet.

Currently I see open water, waves, birds etc, sand bars, Captains's and Gooseberry Islands, the opposite shore of South Side Harbour, the back of Mahoney's and Dunn's Beaches, St. Georges' Bay, and distant Cape Breton. There is nothing "man made" except in the distance the harbour bouy in the bay, a private fishing wharf (lobster boat) off to one side on South Side Harbour, and a couple small buoys put out by the few commercial fisherman based in the harbour. It has been this view for decades.

Heavy water traffic is fairly infrequent, a couple commercial lobster boats that go in an out which takes maybe 10 minutes a trip (in the mornings) during the lobster season and other occasional trips during the summer. A few motor boats during summer (mostly on weekends) – just passing by – not quickly or roaring. Only occasional periodic noise. Personal watercraft ("Seadoos") seem to come from Southside Harbour – near the back of Dunn's Beach and go out into the bay. There are too many shallow areas (eel grass beds etc) for a lot of intense boating. Small shallow keel sailboats go back and forth in that open area of the harbour. Canoes and kayaks too. There is one deep channel. Sports fishing (us included) goes on but that is main channel, the harbour mouth, and the bay. There is a lone "wild" oyster gatherer that comes along the Town Point shore occasionally. He uses a small boat with a small outboard that he puts on shore temporarily with an anchor. The engine is off and from there he swims out to gather oysters and then comes back to the boat to unload them (just the sound of them clattering into a bucket). He might be there half an hour to an hour. And then he moves on.

So the current situation is pretty natural and quiet. There is occasional periodic noise – not too loud. But noise can travel well over water. And having the proposed oyster location right in front of the property would certainly change that. There will be the sounds of a bigger boat (or a couple ? Really don't know how many) going back and forth from the site and moving between the rows etc. There will be some type of other motor going all the time to move the oyster lines thru/over the boat for cleaning etc. See a separate page for calculations of the time needed for cleaning for the number of oysters. That noise will be all day five days a week over the summer/warmer months for both proposed sites. And I suspect that the outboard might have to be used more than expected on windy days. And then there is the boat/motor (and voices !) time needed to prepare for potential storms. People working on a boat that is noisy etc tend to have to yell to be heard. And that can all be heard on shore. There will/might be some times where maybe the wind will be strong enough in the "correct" direction to carry the noise away from the property. But that site is pretty close to the property.

And I do not want to see all of that. Oyster cages, lines, buoys, etc in front of the property all the time. And between April and October there will be a boat or boats and related activities in addition. And the warmer summer months are the times when I want to be outside a lot – in the peace and quiet ! And to keep healthy we try to be very active outdoors and really appreciate quiet times outside for relaxing. And that will be taken away if the oyster farm(s) are located in this area of the harbour. I really value quiet/ noiseless places to live. And the only way to realize that is the experience of living in a quiet place and then experience living in a place that was relatively quiet and then a "noise" moves in nearby/next door. It is hell ! The stress and anger. Always being on edge to have to listen to a noise that is imposed on you. The negative effects of noise pollution are well known. And then the stress and anger of the local "laws", supposedly available to deal with it, not being enforced. Why establish an oyster farm in a "restricted/closed" harbour ?

Recreational use. I / we use it in terms of looking at it and hearing/listening to the area. The surrounding area is close to my property and shoreline. I/we look at it and are within earshot.

I/we occasionally canoe, kayak, and use a small boat in the area. It is the largest open area in that end of the harbour. We occasionally travel over the harbour water to go fishing in or inland from the harbour entrance. We use it as a quiet refuge away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. A place for restoration of mind and spirit. A necessary part of a healthy stress free life.

We certainly do a lot of looking and listening to the natural environment over/around the proposed site. The natural beauty and quiet. It is so relaxing with few disturbances. The proposed aquaculture sites would certainly change that. Boating would be impacted. Certainly having to look at the site would be quite different than seeing just waves, winds, and wildlife in a relatively unspoiled natural setting.

We currently temporarily live 35 km from a town. We're retired and getting older – my late father's property is going to be a place for us to live close to town for easier access to services, hospital, home care etc. as we age. Those services are not available where we currently are. And we can't afford to buy and build another place to live. It will be enough work and money etc just to prepare this property (especially after storm Fiona !).

Heavy storms are becoming more of an issue due to global warming. We saw this in Fiona in Sept. 2022. That storm water level seemed to be at least 6' higher than average high tide level. There was a lot of shore erosion on my property. How can an aquaculture operation adjust for these water levels? Wouldn't this allowance of extra line allow the whole operation move around a lot? Maybe into the channel etc. And these Oyster leases are in a very exposed part of the harbour – especially for Nor'easters (no high -ie forest- protection in that direction) which seem to be our most damaging storms. And due to this I envision damage to the oyster farming system. Lines, buoys, and cages breaking free in a storm and washing up on my shore – above the high water mark most likely. And that part of the shore is private property. So what happens to that debris on private property – does it become my responsibility? Will I have to pay to remove it and put it in a dump? If the oyster farm is responsible for the gathering and disposal of those items – will they have to contact me, arrange a time to do it, and how will it be removed? Maybe they want to remove it in a way I don't like – re damage to "my" property, or the shoreline etc. This will be a direct impact on my property. And there will certainly be a lot of material to potentially break away and wash up on shore or float lose around the harbour etc. (endanger boats etc). The strength of wind, waves, tides etc is amazing. Aquaculture /shellfish sites should be situated in more protected areas to lessen storm issues. See additional information on storms and aquaculture operations in later pages.

Lease AQ # 1443 is over an eel grass bed. And these eel grass beds are vital for storm protection. And they are directly in front of my property. That certainly concerns me. I need that natural protection to mitigate storm erosion on my property. I am not convinced that a fluctuating up and down oyster farm will not harm that eel grass bed. And in winter the cages are to be submerged. It is fairly shallow there and with the tide and storm fluctuations I see the eel grass beds being torn up, abraded etc. Ice cover is a good wave mitigator and this potentially reduces shore erosion. And I see ice forming later in the year on the harbour. This makes the shore more vulnerable to storms and erosion. I wonder how ice will react to the oyster cages – will it form later, will it be thinner, will they break up the ice sooner, easier.....?

The road / driveway into the property at Town Point has a section that is public but privately maintained and plowed. And the Town Point Oyster property is at the end of this section of road. This would be a commercial operation with more traffic (employees, trucks, supplies, etc). Currently the road is mostly used by the few local residents living at the end of it. These residents are responsible for maintaining it. So it sounds like we will be paying more for road maintenance – and more will be needed to repair the increased use by the aquaculture operation. That is not fair. Maybe the government can take over the maintenance of the public road so the residents don't have to pay for a commercial business use of the road.

There are surprisingly few existing shellfish/aquaculture sites in more affluent areas of Nova Scotia. Areas such as Chester and Lunenburg where there are very expensive waterfront properties. The current shellfish operations in that area are much smaller than the ones proposed for Antigonish Harbour. Maybe shellfish operations should be developed in areas much closer to the market – lower transportation costs, fewer greenhouse gases released, etc. These locations probably have more residents that can afford oysters.

And it would be ironic that I as the property owner that is directly affected by the oyster farm can't afford to buy expensive oysters !

Other issues of concern:

Lease 1444 (O1444 on Map # 1) (Dunns Bch)

Piping plovers on Dunns Beach (a protected beach). This is an endangered bird. Dunns Beach is a long relatively difficult beach to use/access. Bad road to get to it and no parking. So it is perfect for plovers because of this minimal use/difficulty. One of the few around like this. I was involved in the first Piping Plover Guardian Program set up for Pomquet Beach. This was a challenging beach because it is a provincial park with good access, lots of parking, changing rooms, outhouses, board walks/trails, etc. That meant a lot of people (and dogs). This was a high use beach which made it challenging for the Piping Plover. So it is a good thing to have a beach like Dunns Beach with relatively little use and disturbance to give the plovers somewhat of a chance of surviving. Do we really want to test this by allowing an oyster farm adjacent to it ? Terns used to nest on a sand bar on the harbour side at the end of Dunns Beach. ATVs and erosion took care of that nesting site.

In the application a study is referred to that says piping plovers are less disturbed by “passing terrestrial motorized vehicles” than by pets and humans. This seems to imply that the oyster farm will not have an impact ? The oyster farm site behind Dunns' Beach is not passing (temporary) or terrestrial – it is there all spring, summer, fall (and winter – but probably covered with ice) and there will be activity of all types there most of the time. How would activity (human and motor) on nearby water affect them ? There was reference to aquaculture sites and a wharf near a park in PEI. Despite “passing fishing vessels and aquaculture related activities” a pair of Piping Plover successfully hatched 3 young in 2019.

That really doesn't tell me much -

- were there other pairs that were unsuccessful ?
- how many plovers were there before any of those “activities” ?
- where (how far) were the aquaculture sites, wharf, and passing fishing vessels in relation to the nesting site ?

Antigonish Harbour has about 5 fishing boats going out of and into the harbour – the boats take about 5 minutes to go past the beach area - that seems more “passing” compared to an oyster farm that is in a fixed spot with the related cage “cleaning” activity going on a lot of the time

See other issues/comments below and on the following pages.

The original questionnaires given by Town Point Oysters to nearby residents should be redone at this point and compared to the first responses.

I believe that a study of the harbour under and around the proposed oyster lease site should be done before anything is started. A baseline inventory of what is existing there now is the first step, it can be monitored, and any changes can then be seen.

I am concerned that the proposed lease site could affect any future recreational or other commercial use.

The half of Antigonish Harbour that is closest to the outlet/ beaches has a few areas around it that has residence pockets (about 5) due to the general distance from public roads (and power lines) from the waterfront. The areas are Seabright Rd.(including Town Point) area, Archibald Point, Terra Tory Dr., and Aveline Dr (South Side Harbour) and the odd single house. The proposed aquaculture areas are close to most of these. There are not that many more residential areas along the harbour closer to Antigonish. Is there no other place on the harbour that it could be established ? How about adjacent to the gravel / limestone pit on South Side Harbour ? Occasional noise there already. There are many harbours in Nova Scotia that have little or no residential development. Maybe there is an inventory of harbours that are suitable for oyster farm development.

I asked the applicant, Mr. Ernie Porter, why he chose the locations in Antigonish Harbour. He said because he lives there. It is nice to have that convenience but at what cost to others ? Maybe there is another location that would be less convenient for him but better for all the others that live there.

The daily activity would mean having to listen to various motor noises, equipment noises, and human noises for many hours. Just the effect of the cleaning process would be continuous. A motor would have to run all the time for that process. What about the effect of noise on the other water and land animals ?

Propulsion along the rows of oyster cages will be “provided by on board rope haulers” - that means another motor (in a cabinet ?) has to be running to do that and I was told it would be the sound of a lawnmower. That, at first, was not too alarming – then I realized that a lawnmower is only used occasionally (once a week ?) for maybe up to an hour ! Most local noises are that occasional.

It looks like we will be subjected to lawnmower noise etc for about 8-12 hrs a day. Each oyster growth unit/container will be dipped (using the rope haulers) in a warm water cleaning basin for 10-15 seconds once every 2 weeks. Site 2 (the one closest to residences) will have 14100 units x 15 seconds = 211500 seconds = 3525 minutes = 58.75 hrs (11.75 hrs /day). So it will take more than a week to “wash” the oyster growth units in one site and then the cleaning will move to the other site and then back to Site 2. So there will be no break from the “lawnmower” noise on any workday. And this will go on from April to end of Oct. probably. And this is the time of year when we want to be outside in the quiet ! Enjoying the surroundings. Do you want to listen to lawnmowers for that length of time ? Maybe there is equipment in place to mitigate noise – but will it be enough ? And we will only really know once the farm is up and running. Then it is too late !

Many people in the area are retired or close to it – so they are home all day and have to listen to that. That is quite an infringement. These people have worked their whole lives and I suspect they just want some peace and quiet at this point ! A home is a place of refuge where people go to get away from the stresses etc of work and then at home they have to deal with the effects and activities of a shellfish farm ? Doesn't sound restful and restorative to me.

And this will be occurring during the summer months when I want to enjoy the outdoors. I spend a lot of time outdoors, on my shore front relaxation spot, working outside, and will be enjoying a screened porch on the house – which overlooks the proposed lease sites.

In certain non wind and wind conditions I can hear boat engines and voices from the area of the harbour entrance which is about 5663 ft / 1726 m / 1.7 km away ! And the nearest proposed lease site will be only 984 ft/ 300m/ 0.3 km away from my property ! Noise travels very well over water. We have calm days, days where wind is mostly from one direction, and often days where the wind direction switches a couple times. Wind direction in that area of the harbour is not consistent, especially in the summer.

At this point the negative effect of noise pollution are well known. Can read about it in many places – like the World Health Organization (WHO). I can attest to the effect of noise on health. A previous situation of ours elsewhere of unwanted, unneeded, and illegal noise affected my sleep (lack of it), mental health (stress, tension !), and increased tension in my relationship (always on edge). We never knew for how long the noise would be – 10 minutes to an hour or more every 5-20 minutes ! Every night. Or any time we were outside. For several years. The noise was heard thru concrete block walls, 7 inches of insulation, new windows, from the opposite side of the house, and

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ear plugs ! I don't want that to happen again. And no level of authority would deal with the situation. There were many initial responses but nothing was done.

So I have a general skepticism about enforcement of any issues or laws. Or response times. It seems enforcement lets things slide / ignore concerns until there is a real uproar from concerned persons or people living nearby. For the business/operation it seems a case of easier to get forgiven than get permission !

The applicant is working closely with Shandaph oyster farm on Big Island, Pictou County. It operates in Merigomish Harbour. That farm (+- 1895 ft./ 577.6 m /0.57 km from the public road) is where Town Point Oysters is testing their equipment is far from the road (which tends to reduce residential development nearby). There are a couple islands in front that block the view and noise to the other side of the harbour where there is minimal residential or cottage development. It has very little residential/cottage development nearby – the nearest residences are about +-4897 ft/ 1492.6 m (1.5 km) and +- 9634 ft/ 2936.4 m (2.9 km) across the harbour past the islands, the nearest residences on the same shore as Shandaph is +- 5618 ft./ 1712 m (1.7 km) to the NE.

My property is 984 ft/ 300m/ 0.3 km from Site # 2 (AQ # 1443) and Site # 3 (AQ # 1444) is 4878 ft / 1529.8 m / 1.5 km away. These distances are generally much closer (especially Site 2) than the oyster farm in Merigomish Harbour is to residences and is closer to many more residences. The closest houses I see from the shore of my property are across to Archibald Point to the west. And those are 1583 ft / 483 m / 0.48 km away. And I can clearly see and hear activity from that area. Site # 2 is much closer and will be noisier all the time and have more activity. The activity and noise on Archibald Point is sporadic – not all day.

I am assuming that this constant cleaning process is to primarily clean the oyster cages. Other oyster operations turn their cages to the sun and let that kill off anything on the cages. Why not use this system ?

Eel grass Beds, wind/storms

It is most important that this area of the harbour close to the low beaches are least disturbed because the eel grass beds are another layer of protection for the rest of the harbour. The shallow areas with the prolific eel grass beds are another layer of defence against storms with higher tides and sea level rise. Nothing should endanger this protection.

This area of the harbour is the largest open water area which would leave the oyster areas pretty unprotected from storms (especially Nor'easters) – especially site # 2. Nor'easter storms come in over the large open St. Georges Bay, then over the low beaches then hit the harbour water and the islands and Town Point peninsula and Archibalds Point. Not a lot of protection against those storms except for the low beaches, narrow harbour opening (which still allows for more water driven in by wind), and the eel grass beds in the shallower water. The Shandaph farm is about 4 km from the Merigomish Harbour mouth, not in direct line of the harbour mouth, and it is in a very protected location.

I worry about the lease site effects on the eel grass beds. They are known to dampen the effects of storms. The beaches that protect Antigonish Harbour are not particularly high. Mahoneys Beach has already been breached about 12 yrs ago, which resulted in a new harbour outlet. And with the coming of ocean level water rise (and increased number of storms and it seems less ice coverage) they will become more vulnerable and the eel grass will become even more important for protection against erosion of nearby shores (and my property is vulnerable). I am currently trying to stabilize my shoreline in a natural way. And I am not convinced about the supposed non effect of oyster culture over eelgrass beds. What about the effect of propellers on eel grass at low tide ? I wonder / worry about when the oyster cages will be lowered for the winter (under the ice) and how that will affect the eel grass. The water level, especially at low tide, is not that deep in the proposed lease sites. Will the oyster cages be “scraping” the harbour bottom and eel grass plants ? And how will anyone be able to see this in action in the winter under the ice ? Ice also dampens the effect of storms on shorelines. And it seems that harbour ice

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formation happens later than before. And how will ice interact with the oyster cages at low tide and as the ice shifts (in the wind especially) as it melts.

And it is known how eel grass beds are havens of water life. What about light penetration under the oyster cages – will eel grass thin out? What about oyster deposits effects on the harbour floor and eel grass beds below the oyster cages due to the possible change in currents and wave action because of the oyster cages on the water surface? It was suggested in an eel grass study (p.404) that in water depths < 12 m where a shellfish farm overlaps an eel grass bed that the oyster “cages” be moved to a deeper water area in the winter within the lease area. I don’t think this is possible with lease 1443 or 1444.

The eel grass beds under the aquaculture sites protect shorelines and if the eel grass beds decrease, the shoreline on my property will erode etc. Lease 1443 is very open and is susceptible to nor’easter storms which often bring in higher tides and taller waves. Will that site be able to withstand that onslaught? The debris will end up on my shore.

What happens when dead oysters are found in the cages when the boat is in the lease site? Will the oyster shells be thrown in the water below? Will the accumulating shells cover the eelgrass to the point where it will be choked out?

Storm Fiona and aftermath Sept. 23,24, 2022

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/more-than-half-the-fishing-ports-in-fiona-s-path-damaged-1.6601394> Sept. 29, 2022 - mentions ShanDaph oysters on Big Island and their losses – and they were on the lee side of the winds hitting Big Island on the Northumberland Strait.

There was no mention of the effect of the storm on their unique BOBR (Benefit Of Being Round) growth units.

<https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/ottawa-gives-40m-to-atlantic-shellfish-farmers-hit-by-post-tropical-storm-fiona-1.6239131> Jan. 20, 2023 - mentions need to place shellfish farms in more protected places

<https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/some-p-e-i-fisheries-aquaculture-industries-could-take-years-to-recover-from-fiona-1.6124569> shellfish industry could take years to recover after Fiona storm.

<https://www.globalseafood.org/advocate/hurricane-fiona-was-a-historic-extreme-event-for-atlantic-canada-and-hit-the-seafood-sector-hard/> Sept. 29, 2022

PEI – lost about \$150,000 worth of gear. 30 lines broke, each with 30-50 cages. 3000 cages tangled in water, 1000 cages on shore.

“Knowing that the storm would disrupt water and ocean sediments and temporarily shut down oyster and mussel harvesting, Power harvested oyster crops in advance of the storm. A few weeks’ supply was stored in seawater tanks at their holding facility in New London. However, there wasn’t enough time to sink the 30,000-cage oyster farm, a process that would normally take about two months.”

How much time is needed before a forecast storm to “sink” / protect all the oyster cages? And then the storm changes course. How is it determined to take a storm seriously and not waste time protecting every thing and the storm changes course? How often does that have to happen before the warnings are not taken seriously enough or action is started too late?

And how deep is the water under the proposed lease areas? Deep enough to withstand those storms? – at least for the cages they were able to lower/submerge? And when the cages are over eel grass beds and lowered for a storm will the cages be sitting on top of the eel grass – what happens to the eel grass with the resulting friction due to water movement (wind, waves, storm surge), cages, eel grass etc? There is so much variability in water depths during tides and storms – can any system really deal with them all?

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After the **Fiona** storm in late Sept, 2022 I did some/various measurements at the shore of my property and figured/saw that the Fiona storm water level seemed to be an average of 6' above the average/normal high tide (as of Nov. 2022) There was a clear water line on the shore bank.

I lost quite a bit of the bank. I'd say that my stairs down to the shore were about 1/4 exposed above the bottom of the bank to now about half exposed. I also had quite a few large spruce trees that were cut along the top of the bank and the trees were cut so the tree would fall on the shore. All those trees were moved quite a distance and ended up being piled mostly in one area and some of the smaller ones were gone.

The strength of storm waters can not be underestimated. Water can easily move stuff without much effort ! Can see the effect on wharf breakwaters etc.....large rocks are moved. So how can oyster cages, ropes, buoys not be adversely affected ? What happens if the oyster cage lines etc shift a bit into the navigation channel immediately beside it ? What about unseen lines etc just under the water surface – can cause quite the fouling of boat propellers etc. I envision a lot off that stuff being washed up on the shore.

The idea should be to set up an oyster operation in the most sheltered areas available. If it is not sufficiently sheltered – don't set it up there !

Recovery costs occur, probably repeatedly – how economically viable is that for the business or the government (me and you) to keep paying each time it happens in the same spot ?

It is interesting that a Lands and Forestry response was that washed up gear and equipment was to be removed from Crown Land at the operators expense. What about private land ?!

Questionnaires from the applicant

These were filled out on a first meeting with the applicant. I was somewhat ambivalent at that time. There is much focus on these questionnaires in the application. I suspect that over time the opinions of the people who filled out the questionnaires probably changed as more information became available and “homework” was done. I think many of those questionnaires would have different responses if they would be redone at this point.

Pollution

The applicant is testing his equipment / methods in Merigomish Harbour (on another oyster lease). That area is not closed to shellfish harvesting like Antigonish Harbour is and it has no town nearby (like Antigonish) for pollution potential. It has lots of forest in the general area and a few farms on Big Island. There is certainly less development (based on Google Earth) nearby that Merigomish Harbour location than the proposed location in Antigonish Harbour.

Antigonish Harbour is closed to shell fish harvesting – so why would anyone go thru the extra steps needed in a large oyster farm to deal with this problem ? There are many harbours that are not closed. Antigonish town sewage system does empty into the harbour even though it is “treated”. Antigonish has a regional hospital and university that uses that system. Has anyone ever tested for various chemicals in the “treated” water after it has gone thru the sewage treatment system ? The hospital deals with all kinds of chemicals and drugs. And it is know that these can eventually end up in other organisms. Have the oysters or mussels ever been tested for any of these chemicals ?

What about the prospect of anticipated heavier rainfalls predicted by climate change ? Much more silt in the harbour coming down from the rivers. The harbour turns brown and there is a brown plume into the bay. How will that affect the oysters and the business.

Any use of internal combustion engines add to the climate change problem. At a time when we should be reducing their use.

I believe people are less willing to put up with these intrusions / issues. Maybe peaceful surroundings are seen as becoming more important for mental health etc. Like the fan noise that could be heard +/- 10 km away at a Cape Breton unproductive coal mine. The mine owners indicated that any solution would be too expensive. But there was enough outcry that I believe they might be doing something about it now. Or the issue of a large inflatable play park on the water for kids on a populated lake near Halifax. There was enough protest from the residents that the proposal was dropped. They now operate on a private lake and surrounding land (owned by a business I believe) near Halifax that has no residences on it. Or about a large waterfront RV park proposed near Big Pond, Cape Breton – the residents foresaw many issues with it and thru the local process it was ruled that it could not go forward.

Contentious Issues in the news

There were certain developments/initiatives that became flash points in communities. People did not want these developments imposed on them and they raised their voices in objection. People seem to be less willing to put up with things that bother them. People want peace and quiet in the places they live.

- a long established curling rink in a city that changed some systems on the exterior that were much louder than the previous ones. The neighbours had no issues with the previous ones but the new one created quite an uproar. Authorities were brought in – to figure out how to deal with it – some said nothing could be done, another engineer said that the noise could be dealt with by doing certain things. Don't know what happened in that situation. Imagine not being able to spend time outside on your deck because of the noise.

- extremely strong exterior lights focused on neighbour houses at night. They had enough and contacted authorities. Not good to have no darkness for sleeping.

Habitat

There is reference to the idea that the oyster culture equipment “ may contribute to the estuarine productivity by creating a hard substrate.....” But if various things (like mussels !) grow on the equipment (cages, ropes, buoys etc) it would start to get weighed down / sink. I suspect this would not be tolerated to any degree and therefore be cleaned off. And the oyster cages are to be regularly cleaned off anyway – so that negates that substrate for any other growth. I had this experience with a sailboat – the centreboard well had so much growing in it I couldn't lower the centreboard after a while. And the mooring line and buoy started to sink because of all the stuff (mostly mussels) growing on it.

There is always the worry of habitats being disturbed by adding anything to the mix. One thing always affects the other – in negative and sometimes positive ways. It is so multi pronged.

Disease

Very little mention of potential diseases etc that affect oysters. That would be quite a challenge and how would these diseases be treated ?

Harvesting shellfish

According to DFO “ Shellfish **must not** be harvested within 125 metres (410 feet) of a wharf, a marina, an aquaculture operation or a floating house. Shellfish **should not** be harvested in unmonitored areas.” So that distance would certainly exclude the general public from quite a large area around each lease site – if the harbour were open for harvesting.

Size of farm

Site 1443 – Site # 2 - 20.21 hectares (closest to many residences, Town Point)

Site 1444 – Site # 3 - 13.38 h. - behind Dunns Beach

Total – 33.59 h

This proposed lease area is much larger than most shell fish farms between the Canso Causeway and New Glasgow. Out of 25 leases there are 3 that are 20 h. and larger; 5 are around 13 h. (does not include the ones 20 h. and larger). The applicant proposed leases are not included in these calculations. In Merigomish Harbour there are 10 leases – one is 22.85 h, the others are much smaller.

Why does the Antigonish Harbour lease(s) have to be so big ?

Employment

The operation will not employ that many people so an economic impact on the local area will probably not be very large. The proposed oyster farm will employ about 11 people after 4 years. About half of them will be seasonal (the people who will probably be on the boat in the harbour) – so not full time employment – so lower income. And seasonal workers usually don't earn high wages. They project that by the 4th year they will spend \$350,000 / yr on wages with all facilities running – 7 people could earn \$50,000 / yr, 11 would earn about \$32,000. /yr. I suspect most people now expect to earn more. The seasonal workers would certainly earn less. I would not call that a great economic impact.

There is a local chocolate factory that employed 25 people in 2018 and at that point they were hiring 25 more people. It is in a building that does not impact the surroundings like an oyster farm would.

The application states that “newly designed technology” - which is in use in Merrigomish Harbour - will supposedly generate more economic activity than their oyster farm. Maybe then it might make sense to focus on the technology development / production for community economic contribution / impact rather than an oyster farm in Antigonish Harbour. Both Antigonish and Pictou Counties have industrial parks.

Affordability, sustainability (see more info below)

It was indicated that oysters were a good source of protein. I see oyster consumption for people with higher income – a luxury item. I suspect that there won't be many locals who can afford it generally. I find it a bit irksome to be exposed to a food production facility for food that I can't afford. Food for rich people.

The recent pandemic has shown us the vulnerability of supply systems etc. So encouraging local affordable food supply close to where people live makes sense.

Enforcement

Once an oyster farm is established and it is discovered that there are adverse effects due to its' presence – will it be forced to close down ? And how long would that take ? I can foresee lawsuits and pressures being enacted by the operation to remain open because of the arguments of economic consequences and employment etc..... The average person can't afford lawyers to deal with potential issues.

I am unsure/suspicious about effective and timely enforcement of the regulations with respect to aquaculture operations. I haven't heard much positive on this aspect.

Notification

I believe any aquaculture applicant should have the onus of informing/notifying the nearby/adjacent property owners of any public meetings with respect to the application / aquaculture operation. That is easily done with emails etc.

Ownership

The lease can be sold to anyone at anytime. Will it operated the same way as the previous owner ? One owner could have run a good conscientious operation but that does not mean the next one does. Are there any regulations regarding the way an operation was run previously that has to be carried

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on by a new owner ? That leaves the surrounding area vulnerable – people might have been okay with one way it was run and then someone else comes in and operates it in a more offensive way. There seems to be no recourse to hold an operation up to certain standards by the people who are affected by it....

Other comments made in the application:

- no adverse economic impacts – expand on that, prove it ? No negative impacts on property values – really ? - only way to prove that is to do appraisals (at the Oyster farm expense) on surrounding properties before the oyster farm is established - that will set a base line etc.

- “the farm will add activity in the harbour.....provide a dynamism and sense of purposeful activity...” this seems to only mean that making money is relevant and that is most important and that is okay? And only that can provide dynamism ? Can’t nature do that too ? There are proven benefits to being out in nature (peace and quiet) too. I think that the Covid pandemic has made people realize that being outside in nature away from “development” is important. The application seems to infer that only “work can contribute to the economic benefit of the community”. Play can also contribute – isn’t this what tourism is ? Kayaking, beach activities, swimming, hiking, personal fishing.....

- “working harbour historically” - was that in the days of sailing ships etc ? Pretty quiet.

- “working waterfronts” - I suspect these were mostly in or adjacent to towns – where noise is more concentrated and constant – not out in the country where quiet is expected. Now a wharf is a different thing – there is noise but it is more periodic generally.

- “not near private land that could be developed and are distant from views” - that ignores that there are houses on each piece of land nearby (so they are developed already) – especially for lease 1443. Lease 1444 is farther from fewer residences. I look over the harbour to the harbour entrance and the back of part of Mahoneys’ Beach and the back of Dunns’ Beach. Those beaches don’t look that far to me and both of those oyster farm sites will be between me and Dunns’ Beach. Those are not “distant” views to me and Site 2 will be really close.

Is only income producing activity of a certain area beneficial / relevant / useful ? Is unused, occasional use areas dismissed because it doesn’t produce direct income ? Maybe the pandemic has refocused some of these ideas. Money isn’t everything, other things like mental health are just as important too. It is not a negative to leave nature alone and not always focus on just any potential economic benefit in a certain area / project. There seems to be an emphasis / focus on business uses and not private / residential uses – do residents not count ?

Experience / history

My experience: assisted in nature walks / education; wildlife rehabilitation; eagle, osprey, seabird, owl, fish, moose surveys; Christmas Bird counts; migratory bird counts; owl banding; Piping plover surveys and guardian; nature tourism and committee; educating on low energy/green/ off grid building; carpentry; CRA Canadian Residential Appraiser – retired; a lifetime of nature observation and learning.

Study (St,FX)

I am glad to hear that a study is proposed by St. Francis Xavier University. It was to start in 2021 and run for 4 years. I’m assuming this will still happen but will start later of course. And the Oyster farms should not be started / established until a baseline study (to show what exists in those locations now) has been completed.

I see no mention of any lights (on buoys etc) being part of the lease site. I hope not !

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Affordability, sustainability

Recently at my local grocery there were packages of about 8 smallish oysters that cost about \$9.00 and they were reduced by 50% because no one was buying them. In Jan. 2022 in the food store I saw 2 large oysters with a price tag of \$5.00. Not a food staple I would say. Can buy a lot more other protein at that price.

Median Household Income: \$70,572 2016 (municipality-county-antigonish-municipal-profile-and-financial-condition-indicators-results-2018-en_0)

If I take the below information of 92 grams of protein intake per day – a divide that by 3 meals that would equal 30.5 grams of protein needed at each meal for a man (see <https://www.calculator.net/protein> below). So oysters seem to contain 4-6 grams of protein in 6 med. Oysters. So to get 30 grams of protein a man would have to eat 30 oysters ? Sounds like a lot, and expensive. If oysters cost \$1.50 ea. at the store it would cost \$45.00 ?!

https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/protein-in-chicken#TOC_TITLE_HDR_2

-One skinless, boneless, cooked chicken thigh (52 grams) contains 13.5 grams of protein. This is equal to 26 grams of protein per 100 grams (4).

-A skinless, cooked chicken breast (172 grams) contains 54 grams of protein. This is equal to 31 grams of protein per 100 grams (3). - ***These sources of protein sound a lot cheaper.***

In fact, a 3.5-ounce (100-gram) serving of cooked wild eastern oysters provides the following nutrients (source - [US Dept. Agriculture](#)):

Protein: 9 grams

<https://www.webmd.com/diet/oysters-good-for-you>

6 med. Oysters - - 6 grams protein

One oyster grower recommends 6 oysters for an appetizer, most places / websites say 3-4

<https://www.calculator.net/protein>

A 200 lb 6' tall 40 yr old male doing light exercise 1-3 times/wk

Based on given information, the following are the basic protein intake recommendations from multiple authoritative institutions:

American Dietetic Association (ADA): **at least 91 - 163 grams/day.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): **62 - 218 grams/day** (10-35% of daily caloric intake).

World Health Organization safe lower limit: **75 grams/day.**

A 130 lb 5'6" 40 yr old female doing light exercise 1-3 times/wk

Based on given information, the following are the basic protein intake recommendations from multiple authoritative institutions:

American Dietetic Association (ADA): at least 59 - 106 grams/day.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): **43 - 150 grams/day** (10-35% of daily caloric intake).

World Health Organization safe lower limit: **49 grams/day.**

How many/much oyster for weight, measure ?

An average "shucked" oyster of eating size (medium) is about 2 ounces (56 grams).

<https://topslseafood.com>

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“One oyster typically equals about 3 ounces. This means that if you want to eat 3 ounces of oysters, you would need to eat about 10 oysters. “

“A serving of 6 **medium oysters** (about 84 grams) contains 50 calories, 4 g protein, 1.3 g fat (0.5 g saturated), 150 mg sodium, 21 mg cholesterol, and is an excellent source of iron, zinc, copper, selenium, and vitamin B12.”

<https://www.thespruceeats.com/cooking-with-oysters-measures-and-equivalents-1807472>Oyster Equivalents

- 6 large oysters = 1 serving raw
- 12 medium oysters = 1 serving raw
- 1 quart [shucked](#) oysters = 6 servings
- 1 dozen shucked medium oysters = about 1 cup
- 1 quart medium shucked oysters = about 50 oysters
- 6 1/2 ounce can smoked oysters = about 24 oysters

<https://seafarmers.ca/oyster-pie/> no indication of serving size – for 4 ?

Oyster Pie requires amount other ingredients:

12 large oysters, or more if desired, shucked, with juices

Oyster stew requires:

2 (12 ounce) containers fresh shucked oysters, undrained - *How many oysters does that mean – sounds like a lot !*

Other interesting information from websites

Oyster health issues / problems – effects on people

<https://www.fda.gov/food/health-educators/raw-oyster-myths>

“Raw Oyster Myths

[Vibrio vulnificus Health Education Kit](#)

Raw oysters contaminated with *Vibrio vulnificus* can be life threatening, even fatal when eaten by someone with liver disease, diabetes or a weakened immune system. However, there are myths that encourage people to eat raw oysters in spite of these dangers. Some of these myths, and the true facts behind them, include:

MYTH: *Eating raw oysters are safe if you drown them in hot sauce, which kills everything.*

Fact: The active ingredients in hot sauce have no more effect on harmful bacteria than plain water. Nothing but prolonged exposure to heat at a high enough temperature will kill bacteria.

MYTH: *Avoid oysters from polluted waters and you'll be fine.*

Fact: *Vibrio vulnificus in oysters has nothing to do with pollution. Rather these bacteria thrive naturally in warm coastal areas (such as the Gulf of Mexico) where oysters live.*

MYTH: *An experienced oyster lover can tell a good oyster from a bad one.*

Fact: *Vibrio vulnificus can't be seen, smelled, or even tasted. Don't rely on your senses to determine if an oyster is safe.”*

“MYTH: *Alcohol kills harmful bacteria.*

Fact: Alcohol may impair your good judgment, but it doesn't destroy harmful bacteria.

MYTH: *Just a few oysters can't hurt you.*

Fact: Roberta Hammond, Ph.D, the Food and Waterborne Disease Coordinator for Florida, cites a case where a fatality caused by *Vibrio vulnificus* occurred after eating only three oysters. The seriousness of any case depends on many factors, including how much bacteria is ingested and the person's underlying health conditions.

MYTH: *Avoid raw oysters in months without the letter "R" and you'll be safe.*

Fact: While presence of *Vibrio vulnificus* bacteria is higher in warmer months, according to the Department of Health and Human Service's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a full 40 percent of cases occur during colder months from September through April.

MYTH: *Raw oysters are an aphrodisiac and will cure a hangover.*

Fact: There is no scientific evidence that either of these commonly held beliefs is true.”

<https://www.canada.ca/en/sr/srb.html?q=eating+oysters&wb-srch-sub=>

"Vibriosis: For health professionals

- Government of Canada

1. www.canada.ca > Food poisoning

Nov 30, 2022 - , particularly **oysters**. Species of *Vibrio* known to cause illness in humans include: *V. parahaemolyticus* *V. vulnificus* *V. alginolyticus* other *Vibrio* species, including: *V. cholera* other than O1 and O139 *V. mimicus* non-toxicogenic *V. cholera* O1 Clinical symptoms *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*
Incubation period: Usually 24 hours but can range from 4 to 96 hours.

Public Health Notice: Outbreak of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* infections linked to shellfish

- Public Health Agency of Canada

1. www.canada.ca > 2020

Dec 9, 2020 - *parahaemolyticus* infections that occurred in four provinces. The outbreak appears to be over and the investigation is winding down. Investigation findings identified exposure to shellfish as a likely source of the outbreak. The majority of the individuals who became sick reported **eating** shellfish, mainly raw **oysters**, harvested from Atlantic Canadian coastal waters

Norovirus: Prevention and risks

Government of Canada

1. www.canada.ca > Norovirus: Symptoms and treatment

Dec 2, 2022 - norovirus by following these precautions: wash your hands with soap and water: after using the washroom or changing diapers before preparing or eating food clean and disinfect surfaces after an episode of illness immediately wash clothing and linens that are soiled with vomit or diarrhea cook shellfish thoroughly before eating, especially oysters and clams – wash”

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/oysters#risks>

“May contain bacteria

Eating raw oyster meat poses a greater risk of bacterial infection

Vibrio bacteria — including *Vibrio vulnificus* and *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* — can be concentrated in filter-feeding [shellfish](#). Eating these shellfish raw can increase your risk of exposure ([25Trusted Source](#)).

Infections by these bacteria can lead to symptoms like diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and even more serious conditions such as septicemia — a serious blood infection that can lead to death ([25Trusted Source](#)).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 100 of the 80,000 people who get sick from *Vibrio* bacteria in the United States every year die from the infection ([26Trusted Source](#)).

Other contaminants

Oysters can also carry Norwalk-type viruses and enteroviruses that can pose health risks ([27](#)).

Additionally, these mollusks may contain chemical contaminants, including heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, and [mercury](#) ([28Trusted Source](#)).

Because of these potential health risks, children, people with compromised immune systems, and people who are pregnant or breastfeeding should avoid eating raw seafood .

Those who choose to eat raw oysters should be aware of these potential risks. At this time, there is no way to ensure that raw oysters are safe to consume, despite rigorous monitoring by both state and federal authorities.

This is why major health organizations like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the CDC recommend that oysters only be eaten cooked .

Other risks

Oysters contain an exceptionally high amount of zinc. While this mineral is important for health, consuming [too much](#) can be harmful.

Though zinc toxicity is most often associated with supplements, eating too many oysters too often can lead to negative health effects, such as reduced levels of the minerals [copper](#) and iron, which zinc competes with for absorption .

Additionally, those who are allergic to seafood or shellfish should avoid eating them.

Summary

Raw oysters can carry potentially harmful bacteria and viruses. Health organizations recommend eating cooked oysters rather than raw to avoid dangerous infections.”

Map # 1 Antigonish Harbour, Antigonish County, N.S.

O indicates proposed oyster leases

lease 1443 is closest to Town Point peninsula

lease 1444 is closest to beaches



Map # 2

Upper Antigonish Harbour, Antigonish County, Nova Scotia

X marks the M. Goring Property

O 1443, O 1444 areas mark the approximate proposed oyster farm lease locations



RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 11:38 am, May 24, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-142

Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk
Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Date: May 23, 2023

Re: Town Point Consulting Incorporated and licenses/leases for AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444 in Antigonish Harbour (NSARB 2022-001)

Dear Mr. Bruce,

My name is Rod Beresford. I operate Lochmore Oyster Farm which is licensed to farm American Oysters on two leases in Lochmore Harbour, Cape Breton County. I live at [REDACTED] Sydney, NS [REDACTED]. In my professional career I am a shellfish biologist and faculty member at Cape Breton University. My research focus is shellfish disease and rebuilding of the Bras d'Or Lake Oyster industry in Cape Breton while working along side oyster lease holders and government regulators.

Over the past 15 years we have collectively worked to set the stage for an exciting opportunity for the Bras d'Or Lake, its oyster farmers, and those communities that live along the shores of the Bras d'Or Lake. The oyster industry has provided an opportunity to rebuild an economy that was essentially destroyed by an invasive species over 20 years ago, but by working together with communities, lease holders, and regulators, we are hoping to see the Bras d'Or Lake with a healthy oyster population that will provide both ecological services and economic benefits. In fact, in the past five years, following significant internal and external reviews, we have been awarded millions of dollars to demonstrate new ways to increase oyster production in the Bras d'Or Lake and have recently purchased the first of its kind in Canada oyster hatchery. This speaks to the importance of oyster aquaculture from the perspective of government agencies and the communities who will benefit from this work and these assets. The Bras d'Or Lake is as special as any place on earth to the people who live near it, they would not be supportive of oyster aquaculture if they felt it was detrimental to their way of life of the waters they cherish so deeply.

Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia has been stagnant for many years and here in Cape Breton we have been working diligently to do our part to change that. Our production lags far behind that of our neighbouring provinces and, as a result, our ability to compete in the marketplace is hindered. Supporting services in manufacturing, supply, consulting and distribution have not developed to the extent they have in New Brunswick and PEI here because the demand is insufficient due to our negligible growth. Shellfish aquaculture in Nova Scotia needs to grow and we see the Town Point applications as a test case for our future; the outcome of these applications will, to a large degree, show us where we are headed as a "low impact high value" industry. Having another industry partner such as Town Point Oysters can only benefit the province and region.

I would expect that many letters of support will state the filtering capacity and economic benefits of oyster farming, but oyster farms provide much more than that. They provide ecological habitat and ecological services that allow other industries to grow and thrive. Two examples are “The Billion Oyster Project in New York Harbour (<https://www.billionoysterproject.org/>) and the reclamation of Boston Harbour (<https://www.fishermensvoice.com/archives/201512OysterRestorationSeenAsEssentialForFutureHabitat.html>). These two projects are among many that show how oyster aquaculture not only builds the oyster industry, but provides for the surrounding industries and helps to build and protect entire communities. Furthermore, and there are hundreds if not thousands of similar projects worldwide on this subject, but given our coast geography and the increasing impacts of climate change, developing healthy, sustainable oyster farms along our shorelines is critical to mitigate climate change effects for our region (<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/08/oyster-reefs-making-a-comeback-to-protect-coasts-from-climate-change.html>).

As stated above, oyster farms make optimal use of marine resources, make positive and impactful contributions to the communities in which they are located and have no impact on wild salmon sustainability.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss any of my above comments.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rod Beresford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

Rod Beresford, PhD

From: [Elsa Pinkohs](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Regarding: TPCI - AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and #AQ1444
Date: May 24, 2023 8:43:40 AM

NSARB-2022-WRT-143

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

May 24, 2023

To: Aquaculture Review Board Nova Scotia

I have been living on Antigonish Harbour for over 40 years now and I am **not** in support of an oyster farm (TPCI - AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and #AQ1444) on a delicate harbour such as Antigonish Harbour. Dunn's Beach is a nesting area for the endangered Piping Plover. Dunn's Beach runs parallel to where this proposed industrial oyster farm would be operating. I know the (NIMBY) not in my backyard argument has come up and that is a shame, because I do not know of anyone who would want to be in the midst of an industrial oyster operation in a residential area including all of the wildlife who naturally live there. I have also noticed a huge increase in the amount of people using the harbour for recreational purposes in the last 5 to 10 years. This includes kayakers, sailboats, standup paddle boarders, leisure crafts etc. The people using the harbour for recreational purposes are coming from all over town, county and beyond. The increase in people (not only NIMBYs) using the harbour also has increased the awareness of the importance of protection so future generations will be able to enjoy the fragile area. The proposed oyster operation is assisting the breakdown of the social fabric and merriment of a small community. Further it has solidified the belief that we cannot trust a system that is supposed to allow the voices and input from all who wish to share opinions, thoughts, data (anecdotal and otherwise). Great potential has been lost - the potential to listen to a wider cross section of people who have lived in the area most of their lives; the potential to listen to those who are newcomers but who may also understand the complexity of an apparent get rich quick bouncy castle plan.

I implore you to think of the Antigonish Harbour as a body of water that should be protected. It shouldn't be a place for thousands of oyster baskets, rope, and other paraphernalia when there were already oyster gatherers within the harbour. As well there are already multiple oyster operations throughout the province. When will we say enough is enough?

Sincerely,

Sharon Pinkohs

[REDACTED]
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

NSARB-2022-INT-011
NSARB-2022-WRT-144146 Seabright
Antigonish NS
B2G2L2

May 23, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax Nova Scotia
B3J3C4

Attention: Stacy Bruce

To the members of the Aquaculture Review Board,

I am officially requesting to be released as an intervenor at the ARB hearing regarding Town Point Consulting Inc.'s (TPCI) application for marine aquaculture leases in Antigonish Harbour and am instead submitting a written statement.

I am writing to express my opposition to TPCI's application for marine aquaculture leases in Antigonish Harbour: AQ #1442, #1443, #1444. This letter addresses A - the optimum use of marine resources, E - The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation, F - The public right of navigation.

I grew up in Seabright. Although I am currently a student in Ontario, Seabright remains my permanent address and I spend several months of the year at home when I am not on campus. The neighborhood is particularly lively in the summer, when many, myself included, use the harbor for various watersports. Every spring, my friends and I canoe the West River, which runs through the Town of Antigonish, and then up the harbour to Graham's cove. Kayaks and paddleboards have provided a quick way to visit Southside Harbour, a trip that would otherwise take nearly 30 minutes in a car. I have also used the Harbour for years to sail. We started on a small Topper sailboat, which my sister and I would sail mostly around the harbour, and out to Mahoney's beach to meet friends. As we got older, our family acquired more sailboats which found a mooring spot in front of our cottage near Graham's cove. These experiences have given me a deep and enduring appreciation of both the natural environment and Antigonish's history.

I am deeply worried about how this proposed development would affect the public use of the harbour. TPCIs that this development will not affect public use. They typically highlight two points: (1) they claim that experienced boaters and paddlers will have little trouble navigating the lease sites and (2) that the lease sites are actually only a small

fraction of the harbour. I find these responses unconvincing. Even if experienced paddlers find it easy to navigate the traps, I am most concerned about those who have little experience. For myself and many others, the harbour has been an ideal place to learn the basics of sailing and paddling. I remember one occasion in which my family and I went to Captain's Island for lunch on a sailboat and some canoes. On our way home, a gust came up and blew us to Southside Harbour. This adventurous detour was a feather in the caps of a few novice sailors, but would have been disastrous had we also needed to navigate nearly 90 acres of cages and ropes. As to their second point—that 90 acres is only a small portion of the harbour—this point is misleading. As anyone who uses the harbour notes, the harbour is shallow so there are few places that bigger boats can successfully navigate. Indeed, the lease site is proposed right near the channel to the bay—a place that many boaters who use the harbour, like myself, want to access.

I do not believe that TPCI takes community concerns seriously, or that they will genuinely respect the public use of Antigonish Harbour and surrounding area. My trust has been eroded steadily over several years. TPCI blocked an old public road that runs adjacent to their property with a large boulder. Growing up my mother would drive our family's mini-van down this road so we could access the beach at the old ferry point. While the boulder has been removed after much opposition from the community, it is no longer a road where one can take a large vehicle as TPCI has attempted to blur the boundaries between their land and the public road. TPCI also laid several pipes in the harbour without proper permits. While they insist this was an honest mistake, it is hard to believe that the owners of TPCI—including a former chair of Lindsey Construction—could make such an oversight before dredging up the harbor to lay pipes. If it was a genuine oversight, we should all be troubled that stewardship of such a large lease in the harbour could be put in such careless hands.

I do not believe that this is an optimum use of marine resources. I believe that we ought to encourage recreational use of the Harbour, as this is incredibly important to Nova Scotia's changing economic landscape. Nova Scotia has become an incredibly attractive destination in the advent of remote work, largely due to communities like these. My husband's office in Toronto closed during the pandemic, allowing us to move back to Nova Scotia for several months of the year (and, indeed, permanently, when I finish my degree at the University of Toronto). The Antigonish Harbour is a great draw for our community. Last summer, 2022, I invited several friends from Ontario to visit. Since our family home was full, they stayed with our late neighbor [REDACTED]. His property overlooks the proposed lease sites and he enthusiastically offered them kayak tours of the harbour. Two of my friends—a medical resident in family med and a teacher—were both so impressed with the natural beauty and recreational opportunities offered by the harbour that they are now both seriously considering moving to Nova

Scotia. In my experience, Antigonish harbour is one of our communities greatest assets and it's incredibly important that it be preserved.

All best,
Mary Jo MacDonald

NSARB-2022-WRT-145

From: [Christine Oehlke](#)
To: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: LETTER OF OPPOSITION TO APPLICATION BY TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. RE AQ1442; AQ1443 AND AQ1444
Date: May 24, 2023 11:17:02 AM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

RE: LETTER OF OPPOSITION TO APPLICATION BY TOWN POINT CONSULTING INC. RE AQ1442; AQ1443 AND AQ1444.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to express my opposition to the above lease proposals. I was born and raised in Antigonish and my family and I spent a considerable amount of time in and around Antigonish Harbour. The attraction was the peace and privacy of the waters. It was and is a good place to decompress after a stressful day at work.

I now live and work in Ottawa, but take my own children to Antigonish and The Harbour whenever time allows. This will give them an appreciation for one of the few unindustrialized waters in Nova Scotia. Like many of my friends from Antigonish, I too plan on retiring to Antigonish, but if the Antigonish Harbour loses its present status, I certainly will be revising my retirement plans. If these proposals are approved, it will make Antigonish Harbour just another industrialized space and one could have many choices of industrialized places to retire too.

My parents have lived on Antigonish Harbour for many years, it has been our go to place on our vacations when we are able to travel. I strongly object to the approval of these applications for leases on Antigonish Harbour.

Sincerely yours,

Christine Oehlke

AHWA Written Submission to ARB in Lieu of Intervenor Status

Applications 1442, 1443 and 1444

The Antigonish Harbour Watershed Association (AHWA) is a community group formally established in 2008 to advocate for the environmental health of Antigonish Harbour, to preserve the integrity of the harbour for public use and to initiate and/or participate in public environmental education events. AHWA cancelled its registration with NS Joint Stocks some years ago as there were few issues to address as a group. AHWA has subsequently been informally maintained as needed, for example with regard to the Community Aquatic Monitoring Program (CAMP, see below).

Over the past fifteen years AHWA has worked to improve sewage treatment and disposal into the harbour, served on the highway 104 twinning Community Liaison Committee, organized harbour related public (and children's) events in association with international water and earth days, served as a community resource on the harbour environment, and worked with Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to implement CAMP in Antigonish Harbour. It was AHWA that first approached the Biology Department of St. FX with a view to organizing a public meeting on the proposed oyster aquaculture project. We have spent an inordinate amount of time reviewing in detail the applications, the report on Outcomes of Consultation, and the CAMP data in order to come to conclusions about a position on the proposed project.

The undersigned jointly have MSc degrees in biology, earth sciences and adult education, and professional experience in environmental and socioeconomic impact assessment, permitting and public consultation, at provincial, federal and international levels. We are longstanding users of the harbour, and are residents of harbour properties not least because of the value we place on its comparatively unspoiled environment. We believe we have demonstrated over the years a sincere commitment to harbour conservation.

We have withdrawn our application for intervenor status in the interests of efficiency and brevity of the presentations of the consolidated intervenor group ARB has assigned us to. Instead, we take the opportunity to present the basis of our opposition in writing. We have minimized examples to demonstrate and support our points below, in the understanding that other submissions, selected witness presentations and the lawyers representing the consolidated group will provide more elaboration on many of these points. We of course are able to provide many more examples, peer reviewed studies, and data specific to Antigonish Harbour in support of what we have itemized below.

Having worked for over 15 years towards preserving the harbour, we are strongly opposed to any approval of TPCI's applications 1442, 1443 and 1444 for the development of a very large (by NS standards) oyster farm in the outer (northern) part of the harbour, on multiple grounds as noted below. In this regard, we are aligned with Friends of Antigonish Harbour (FOAH). It may seem that some of these grounds alone are not deal breakers, or fall outside the mandate of the ARB. However the sum total should give pause before having any confidence that TPCI will operate an oyster farm (and multiple associated business that are planned, but not part of the current applications) in consideration of the best interests of the surrounding community, government laws and regulations, and environmental and socioeconomic conditions. We believe that all of our points are relevant to the context of these applications and that context is critical to decision making. Our points also address the factors a), b), c), d), e) and f) that ARB is to consider in coming to a decision. We believe our points indicate that the smooth and successful operation of the proposed oyster farm is improbable, in any event will very likely benefit only a few to the detriment of the community of users, and pose significant risks to the environment.

Page numbers in what follows are from the application for 1442 unless otherwise noted.

Our opposition is based on:

- **Poor quality of application in too many respects, which does not bode well for a quality operation of the farm.**
The application:
 - is bulked up with repetitive sections and irrelevant documents to give an impression of effort and thoroughness, both of which are belied by the actual contents
 - has multiple unsupported statements, convenient to TPCI's case, and misunderstands, exaggerates

misrepresents, dismisses and/or is unaware of i) environmental data/peer reviewed papers on environmental effects of oyster farms; ii) publicly available data on the health of the harbour; iii) views of scientists and community members; and iv) any potential for negative social, economic and health and safety effects.

- **Very poor consultation practice by conventional standards.** While meeting NSDFA's very minimal regulatory requirements we would note that surely the intent of community engagement was not met. TPCI:
 - organized and held the one required information public meeting at two day's notice in a location a 45 minute drive from affected people in South Side Harbour, on a Friday night when there were multiple other events taking place in Antigonish, making it very inconvenient for many people to attend
 - refused to answer questions publicly at that meeting (until forced to after audience demands)
 - conducted “door to door public engagement” of selected individuals as private, one on one meetings, before any public disclosure of the proposed project, did not provide any documentation on the proposal at those meetings, provided no record of the information presented, and included very few residents of South Side Harbour
 - misrepresented public and one on one meeting results and individuals' positions on the proposal in its application's reporting on “results of consultation” (page 175 forward)
 - exaggerated levels of community support, repeating an incorrect figure of 87%
 - established a “Community Liaison Committee” that, with the possible exceptions of Dr. Garbary (who may represent the St. FX biology department) and two county councillors (who never attended a CLC meeting), is not at all representative of community stakeholder groups including the Chamber of Commerce, environmental groups, First Nations, Sisters of St. Martha (who own nearby property), oyster harvesters, lobster fishermen who transit lease site 1444, tourism operators, etc.
 - is not able to cite support for the application on the part of any of these community stakeholder groups as groups (although some individual members of those groups are supportive)
 - continues to repeat that the oyster farm effects will be positive (despite no evidence) and that oysters sequester carbon (without noting that oysters alone are not carbon net neutral and the project as a whole will not be carbon net neutral either) in its public relations to garner support for the application.
- **Questionable presentations** of i) very limited data on the biophysical and oceanographic characteristics of the harbour; and ii) the science on oyster farm environmental effects, including but not limited to:
 - irrelevant data, particularly non reflective of past and expected future extreme weather events that are relevant to operation resiliency (for example, average maximum wind speeds do not reflect historical maximums and the planetcalc calculator of maximum wave height does not apply to extreme conditions, page 41)
 - no reference to publicly available data (CAMP data 2008 to 2019), perhaps because these data do not support claims that Antigonish Harbour is in need of “cleaning” but rather is one of the healthiest of 36 bays/estuaries around the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with better levels of dissolved oxygen and species diversity than found elsewhere
 - absolutely no evidence of “ubiquitous” positive effects of oyster farms (page 177) in the original application nor notably in the over 550 pages of documents (page 137 of the Outcomes document for 1442) appended to TPCI's response to concerns of NS Department of Lands and Forestry (DL&F): This quite effectively seems to demonstrate that TPCI was unable to find papers to support claims of positive environmental effects in healthy water bodies. (Positive effects have been demonstrated where oysters have been used to improve degraded water bodies.)
 - cherry picking of quotes (pages 125, 128 of the Outcomes document) about positive environmental effects of oysters from meta analyses that discuss both potential negatives and positives and conclude, in general, that effects are site and operation specific
 - dismissal, or non mention, of potential for negative environmental effects (although there is lengthy and repetitive wording on piping plovers – which incidentally have indeed nested on Dunn's Beach in the recent past)
 - no reference to climate change (extreme events) and how this may affect equipment resiliency and any eventual distribution of gear across the harbour shoreline and residential properties.

- **Dismissal of not only negative environmental, but also social, economic and health and safety effects** of concern to those opposed to the proposal as trivial, including but not limited to:

Page 3 of 4

- breaking of public undertakings to not impinge on oyster harvesters collection areas and marked transit corridors for boaters
- blocking of sailboats and motor craft through what until now has been a public use area although paddlers “may continue to pass through” (page 311) oyster leases
- health and safety of lobster fishermen and paddlers (TPCI has said at their public meeting that there will be no liability insurance)
- virtually no mention of alternative economic uses of the harbour potentially affected (residential construction and services, real estate operators, tourism, subsistence fishing, protected area economic values, etc.)
- denial of potential effects on property values (“we do not see . . .”, page 34 – to see, one has to look or at least ask real estate agents/property developers, there is certainly evidence that property values in rural residential areas such as the outer harbour are negatively affected by off bottom shellfish aquaculture)
- incorrect and presumptive interpretation of views of people opposed, irrespective of what they have said or written (for example Bowlers' multiple concerns are dismissed as “. . . it is now evident that [Mr. Bowler] simply wanted no change to occur in the harbour or on Town Point.” (page 176) and “no concerns” on comment forms are claimed as “support” for the proposed oyster farm)
- **The application emphasizes the economic benefits not only of the oyster farm (subject of the application) but also of the associated businesses** (the already approved nursery, depuration plant and services, manufacture and marketing of the technology, eco tourism):
 - but does not address the cumulative negative effects, of what represents essentially an eventual industrialization of Town Point, that are of concern to residents, including road and boat traffic, noise, safety of boaters, property values, etc.
 - states employment levels (page 33) that are multiple times higher than NSDFA data on shellfish employment suggest would be normal for a farm of the proposed size, despite TPCI economies of scale and claims of labour saving technology
- **Lease area overlaps with and/or is in close proximity** to i) lobster fishermen's and others' transit routes; ii) protected area of Dunn's Beach; iii) Government of Canada recommended buffers for piping plovers and other marine bird nesting sites; iv) areas of less than 1 metre at low tide (minimum threshold for successful oyster aquaculture (page 13) – these are also oyster harvesting areas); v) areas of significant eelgrass coverage; vi) over 50 properties and 30 houses with water front on the outer harbour; vii) a newly designated provincial park at Dunn's Beach; and viii) CAMP data collection stations (see FOAH maps).
- **Proponent's history of non compliance**, including but possibly not limited to i) blocking access to a public road and water front area; and ii) laying of pipes from the nursery into the harbour without a permit.
- **We do not find that the Report on Outcomes of Consultation is adequately transparent** and therefore question why and how this application has reached the ARB in its current form insofar as:
 - TPCI's response to NSDL&F does not address their requests (pages 115-116) for “ a comprehensive wildlife management plan”, “baseline data and analysis that identifies the potential negative impacts on the ecosystem”, and “baseline data for benthic invertebrates, vegetation, water quality etc.” There are references but no information on content of meetings between NSDFA, NSDL&F and TPCI, which are then followed up by an NSDL&F pass on requests with no detail on why requests were not met but yet were set aside.
 - DFO noted that further review would be required if over a year had passed since their original comments and despite the passage of over two years, there is no information on whether this came to pass, or what any result may have been.
 - CWS commented twice that a 300 metre buffer was recommended around Dunn's Beach and Gooseberry Island and there was exchange about a meeting between NSDFA, CWS and TPCI to discuss, but again no information on if the meeting took place, or if so what the result was.
 - The comments of NS CCTH are very concise and provide no indication of whether the annual winter sinking and then lifting of oysters in 1443 and 1444 and the bottom storage of oysters in 1442 were considered in addition to their conclusion that sinking of over 400 anchors will have “minimal” effects in these areas of “elevated archaeological potential” (page 85 of the Outcomes document). This is also of interest given there

is no information on the results of consultation with the Office of L'nu Affairs in Appendix J (page 695 of the Outcomes document).

- There is no information on anything that may have occurred between NSDFA, partner departments and/or
Page 4 of 4
- TPCI over the two year period since mid 2021 (and FOAH's FOIPOP request has been stonewalled by NSDFA over that time frame).

We have three final observations:

- There have had to be enormous community resources (time and money) invested to challenge TPCI's applications. TPCI has seemed free to make unsupported and incorrect statements about everything from their i) consultation practice and results; ii) biophysical characteristics of the harbour; iii) motives of application opponents and iv) environmental, social, economic and health and safety effects. Yet opponents are expected to prove – only with expert witnesses prepared to testify – where such statements are incorrect/misrepresentations/partial truths. We believe that it should be incumbent on NSDFA – the department responsible not only for advocacy but also for regulation of shellfish aquaculture – to review at least somewhat more thoroughly and critically both applications and community context before proactively advancing shellfish aquaculture applications.
- These applications have been a source of conflict in this community, and caused a number of people to feel discomfort (for business, employment, go along/get along and other reasons) over any inclination to so publicly oppose (or support?) the applications. Divisiveness surely goes some ways to explaining why, despite TPCI's efforts to secure letters of support from the Town of Antigonish, Antigonish County, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Boat Club, no such letters have been issued. It would be very helpful we believe if some sort of transparently managed measure of community positions on such potentially controversial proposals were determined, before government departments and project proponents get “dug in” and intent on moving forward.
- We note that the dividing up of a large project into small bits permitted piecemeal is unacceptable under almost all permitting regimes in Canada and internationally. NSDFA had made it clear to concerned individuals (AHWA and FOAH meetings with Bruce Hancock in 2019) that the approval of the nursery would in no way be connected to a decision on the oyster farm.

We believe that NSDFA's intent to identify Aquaculture Development Areas (ADAs), as described on their website, would go some way to addressing the above, and increasing community confidence and trust in the transparency and fairness of the process, and in government and aquaculture project proponents.

In summary, we have no confidence that TPCI can build and operate the proposed oyster farm in the best interests of either the environment or the users of Antigonish Harbour. This is based on TPCI's substandard consultation practice, superficial understanding and appreciation of the complexity of the harbour ecosystem, dismissal of voiced and in fact real environmental and socioeconomic concerns of neighbours and harbour users and what we consider to be essentially false advertising of benefits as part of a public relations strategy to gain support. Nor do we see that any benefits (which TPCI says “may be significantly greater than the direct output of the farm”, page 277) to businesses and the economy of the manufacture and marketing of the technology require that the oyster farm go forward. We therefore are firmly in opposition and respectfully request the dismissal of TPCI's applications.

Heather Mayhew and Susan Ross

Antigonish Harbour Watershed Association
[REDACTED]

NSARB-2022-WRT-147

To: Stacy Burke, Clerk, Aquaculture Review Board (ARB)
Fr: Jeff Teasdale, Antigonish resident
Re: Support for Town Point Oysters Farm - Leases AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444
Date: May 12th, 2023

Stacy,

I would like to take this time to offer my support for the Town Point Oyster Farm in Antigonish County. I will speak to factor b "the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development". After reviewing the research and discussing the initiative with other community members I feel comfortable putting my support behind this project. Aquaculture is a key area of Economic growth for our area and currently lags behind other Maritime Provinces.

We need sustainable businesses such as Aquaculture in our community to allow young people to live and work here. It will also have a positive impact on additional taxes that will go towards our much needed infrastructure improvements.

I am not an expert in this area but have looked at the research and attended meetings on the topic. While there, there were third party professional experts in this area that spoke. I thought that was beneficial to me supporting the project.

Last, we need young leaders in our Community like the folks involved in this project. I firmly believe they will be some of the leaders in our community in the future. They are professional, intelligent and do have Antigonish best interest in mind. I am firm believer in people capital. These folks could easily take their expertise to another area at our loss.

I look forward to following the decisions in this project.

Respectfully,

Jeff Teasdale

Antigonish

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 4:15 pm, May 24, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS B3J 3C4

NSARB-2022-WRT-148

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Via Email: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443, and AQ#1444

I am writing to give my full support for the above noted reference with respect to the Town Point Consulting Inc. application for the leases noted above to farm oysters out of the Antigonish Harbour.

I am a resident of Antigonish and have been my entire life. My family dates back to the 1800's as residents of Antigonish. I am an owner of a heavy civil construction company as a third generation owner which started in the 1920's. We exist today as a family run business based out of Antigonish doing heavy civil construction throughout Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

I wish to make a few statements on how they may relate to some of the eight factors as listed in the submission format.

A) Optimum use of Marine Resources:

Throughout my career in the construction business our company has built numerous wharves in Nova Scotia. During these projects I was able to witness how the communities thrive through the use of these marine based ports and how it enables them to carry on successful independent businesses with the use of the marine resources available to them. The Town Point Consulting Inc.'s application, if successful, will be no different. Using the marine resources available to them, to carry out Oyster Farming, will economically benefit the local area.

B) Contribution of the Proposed Operation to the Community:

Antigonish is a non- industrial community which survives on independent businesses Farming, Fishing etc. However it has a large institution economic input such as STFX University, ST. Martha's Regional Hospital which has large government input to survive. The more independent business that startup in our community will only add to more economic growth in the area rather than relying on institutional and government funding.

C) Fishing Activities & The Public Water surrounding the proposed Aquaculture Operation:

To my knowledge the only fishing activities which take place in the surrounding areas of the proposed operation is the use of wharves for fishers to navigate to St. George's Bay for various catches and angle fishing. The proposed operation as I can determine from the application will in no way negatively impact the other operations.

D) Other use of public waters surrounding the proposed Aquaculture Operation:

I have been power boating out of St. George's Bay and beyond for over 20 years. It is a rarity that the pleasure power boats enter the harbour due to the fact that the waters inside can be very shallow and very hard to navigate safely. In all my years power boating I have only been into the harbour on a few occasions and it was very challenging due to the lack of navigation buoy's and the very shallow waters. You don't see much activity of power boating inside the harbour. There are three marine ports that welcome pleasure boating in the local area. Ballantynes Cove, Cribbon's Point and Bayfield which are much more accommodating then the Harbour. Non-powered boating in the harbour will have more than enough area as the proposed operation will only take up 2% of the harbour area.

It seems to me that a lot of the public opposition for the operation of an oyster farm in the Antigonish Harbor comes from locals and non-locals within the community that would rather see status quo than economic development for personal reasons. My opinion is that this only services the individual's self-interest and not the full community of Antigonish.

Again I am in full support of the Town Point Consulting Inc's application for farming Oysters in the Antigonish Harbour.

AG MacDonald

████████████████████
Antigonish, NS ██████████

Email: ██████████@ns.ca

NSARB-2022-WRT-149

NSARB-2022-ORL-007

Antigonish, Nova Scotia

May 24, 2023

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk
Email: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc., AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

I have grown up and worked in Antigonish for sixty years. I have used Antigonish Harbour for recreation for more than forty years. My family owned a cottage at Seabright for forty years. My family swam regularly at the Seabright location. We also owned a sailboat which was docked in the harbour for forty years.

I want to express my support for the proposed oyster farm. I will address my comments in accordance with four of the eight factors.

- a) the optimum use of marine resources,
In my experience there is room for this level of commercial activity in the harbour. I have used the harbour near these areas for swimming and sailing.
- b) the contribution of the proposed operation to community and provincial economic development,
In my opinion, this commercial activity will support the local economy. It fits with the important fishing industry in Antigonish. All commercial activities can have negative impacts on the community. For example, lobster traps can completely surround a shorefront property my family has owned. Fertilizer, with a pungent odor, is used on farm fields that are 10 metres from my residence. These are reasonable impacts especially because there is a long history of fishing and farming in this region.
- e) the other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquaculture operation


This is a reasonable activity and location for boating and swimming.

f) the public right of navigation

I have navigated a sailboat in this area for forty years. The harbour is forgiving of boats that run aground due the soft nature of the bottom. I have personally got out of a sailboat and pushed it off. With proper navigational aids this development should not be a problem for navigation. The oyster traps will appear as floating docks, therefore, they will be obvious to boaters and others. Also the layout of the oyster farm provides for generous corridors for boats to enter and depart the harbour

I would urge approval of the application. I also request to make a sworn oral statement at the hearing.

Sincerely;



Leon D. MacLellan, MEng, PEng, LEED AP

RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 8:41 am, May 25, 2023

NSARB-2022-WRT-150

Clerk of the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

P.O. Box 2223, Halifax NS

B3J 3C4

Damian Lee Welsh

Back East Seafood/Back East At Home

[REDACTED], Antigonish NS

May 18th, 2023

Attention: Mr. Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce,

Please accept my comments for consideration in the matter stated above for the upcoming Hearing slated for Wednesday, June 7th in Antigonish.

I have been a lifelong resident of Antigonish, an avid outdoorsman and fly fisher and friend of the Atlantic Salmon in conservation. In addition to this, I am a local businessman and share points of view representative of both sides on this matter.

I believe that the Applications should be approved.

As a lay person, I offer my humble, honest, and unbiased opinions.

I have reviewed information from both sides and in speaking with several parties both for and against the project, and in addition to that, having had a tour of the proposed areas I feel that the benefits outweigh the risks and the project should move ahead based on the premise that new innovative technologies are being implemented and from a sustainable standpoint, that is the main reason I do not oppose this project.

I do not feel that the sustainability of the Atlantic Salmon moving through the area will be adversely affected by the development, I also do not feel that the right to others enjoyment and use of the waters, fisheries and natural habitat would be impacted in any measurable way. The Locations of the proposed sites are out of the main high traffic areas and should not pose any issue to navigation.

Personally, I do not feel, as a resident of Antigonish myself, that my right to navigate or enjoy these waters would be impacted adversely whatsoever by the proposed operation, nor do I feel that existing shellfish harvesters or other fisheries activities would be impacted adversely to any measurable degree.

With the proper risk mitigation guidelines in place, consistent monitoring of the operation, and if the project keeps within its scope of operation as proposed, it is my personal opinion that the addition of this business venture to the Antigonish Harbour will have negligible negative impact and that the benefits to our area and local economy outweigh the risks to the natural environment.

Sincerely,

Damian Lee Welsh
Back East Seafood/Back East at Home

From: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
To: [pat.mac.donald](#)
Subject: RE: Hearing for proposed aquaculture leases 1442,1443 and 1444
Date: May 25, 2023 8:57:00 AM

NSARB-2022-INT-014
NSARB-2022-WRT-151

Acknowledging receipt of your written submission and of your withdrawal as an intervenor.

Thank you,

Stacy Bruce (he/him), EP
Clerk, Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

1800 Argyle Street, 6th Floor
World Trade and Convention Centre
Halifax, NS
B3J 2R5

Phone mailbox: 902-722-1426
E-mail: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca
<https://arb.novascotia.ca>

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RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 9:00 am, May 25, 2023

From: pat mac donald [REDACTED]@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 4:08 PM
To: Aquaculture Review Board <Aquaculture.Board@novascotia.ca>
Subject: Hearing for proposed aquaculture leases 1442,1443 and 1444

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Dear Mr. Bruce

To avoid repetition of concerns during the hearings, I am officially requesting to be released as an intervenor at the ARB hearing regarding TPCI's application for marine aquaculture leases in Antigonish Harbour and am exercising my right to submit a written statement. #1442, #1443, #1444.

I have been sailing in the Antigonish Harbour for over forty years. I have set personal navigational aid buoys, as required by Transport Canada, in the channel into Grahams Cove. This channel is deep enough to sail my boat to my cottage at Grahams Cove. Mr. Porter was aware that I set the personal navigational aid buoys and assured me that the area within the buoys would not be affected. His application for the aquaculture lease stated that there were no navigational buoys in the harbour. I remain firmly apposed to the granting of any lease to TPCI.

Regards

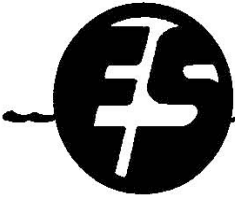
Patrick Mac Donald

[REDACTED]

Harbour Centre, NS

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

**ENTREPRISES SHIPPAGAN LTÉE***Sea-Alex inc.*

262, BOUL. J.D. GAUTHIER
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WHOLESALE FISHING GEAR
DISTRIBUTEUR D'AGRÈS DE PÊCHE
HARDWARE - QUINCAILLERIE

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
P.O. Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4

Date 24 May 2023

Attention: Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Oysters, AQ#1442, AQ#1443, AQ#1444

Dear Mr. Bruce:

My name is Jonathan Gagne, and I represent Entreprises Shippagan Ltd one of the largest suppliers of commercial fishing and aquaculture supplies Canada. We operate 12 locations across Atlantic Canada, specifically 7 Vernon d'Eons stores in Nova Scotia. Obviously, the development of aquaculture in the province of Nova Scotia is of importance to our development, growth, and investment as a company operating in the province.

As a Nova Scotia aquaculture industry association board member and active participant, I am aware of the Town Point Oysters applications and wish to express my views for consideration by the ARB. A successful application for Town Point Oyster would signify progress in the advancement of the shellfish aquaculture industry in Nova Scotia. An industry that is waiting to offer so much to the province in terms of rural economical development. A successful application would also be in line with the desire from the provincial government to see this sector grow into a competitive industry compared to other more successful aquaculture provinces.

The Town Point Oysters applications are essentially test cases for our future. The outcome of these applications will to a large extent show us where we are headed as a shellfish sector. Will it be as the Doelle Lahey and Ivany Reports recommended – embrace “low impact high value” opportunities? Or will it be continued weak development with lack of vision, purpose and support.

I know from my over 15 years of experience in the Canadian aquaculture industry, from coast to coast, that such shellfish operations more than satisfy the requirements of factors a), b) and g): oyster farms make optimal use of marine resources, make positive and impactful contributions to the communities in which they are located, and have no impact on wild salmon sustainability.

I am not very familiar with Antigonish Harbour so cannot comment of the five other factors that are considered as part of the Town Point Oysters application. However, I do know that before an application reaches your board there has been an exhaustive review of all eight

factors by many government departments to ensure they are all satisfied, so please consider the merits of these applications.

I thank you for this opportunity to express our support for the Town Point Oyster application and for taking our feedback into consideration.

Best Regards

Jonathan Gagné

Entreprises Shippagan Ltee.

Sea Alex Buoys

Vernon D'eons Fishing Supplies

ESL Marine Supplies

jonathan@entship.ca

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Tel: 1-506-336-2213

Fax: 1-506-336-8777

Cell: 1-506-888-0924

From: [Aquaculture Review Board](#)
To: [Andrew Arbuckle](#)
Subject: RE: Town Point Consulting Inc - AQ1442,1443,1444
Date: May 25, 2023 9:26:00 AM

NSARB-2022-WRT-154

Acknowledging receipt of your written submission.

Thank you,

Stacy Bruce (he/him), EP
Clerk, Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board

1800 Argyle Street, 6th Floor
World Trade and Convention Centre
Halifax, NS
B3J 2R5

Phone mailbox: 902-722-1426
E-mail: aquaculture.board@novascotia.ca
<https://arb.novascotia.ca>

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RECEIVED

By Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board at 9:27 am, May 25, 2023

From: Andrew Arbuckle [REDACTED]@res-group.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 4:26 PM
To: Aquaculture Review Board <Aquaculture.Board@novascotia.ca>
Subject: Town Point Consulting Inc - AQ1442,1443,1444

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Attn Mr. Stacey Bruce, ARB Clerk

I am writing in support of Town Point Oyster Farm, located on Antigonish Harbour.

I am a landowner with my main residence location on Antigonish Harbour [REDACTED], Antigonish, Nova Scotia, [REDACTED] and I am also a commercial lobster fisher in Antigonish County.

As a commercial lobster fisher, I support the sustainable development of aquaculture activities in the region and believe the seafood industry in Nova Scotia would benefit immensely from developments such as the Town Point Oyster farm. Lobster fishing requires a significant amount of bait and external inputs to sustain our fishery, something not required with the proposed Town Point Oyster Farm. This is why I believe the development of oyster farming and alternative forms of aquaculture to augment traditional fisheries such as lobster fishing is an excellent use of marine resources.

I frequently use the Antigonish Harbour with my family for recreational purposes and feel as though the proposed Town Point Oyster Farm is thoughtfully planned to ensure continued recreational use without infringement.

Kind Regards,
Andrew

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NSARB-2022-WRT-155

Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board
PO Box 2223
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Attention: Mr Stacy Bruce, ARB Clerk

Reference: Town Point Consulting Inc, AQ#1442, AQ#1443 and AQ#1444

With regards to the proposed Oyster Farm,

I had the opportunity to spend a couple of hours with the potential owner and operator of the proposed business, although I was very unaware of the business or what it can potentially bring to the community, I appreciated the open conversation and explanation of how the industry and the local business could work. I currently own and operate a successful investment business, and found that many people were hesitant in our vision. After many meetings and corporate conversations we gained approvals to have our operation approved. We have been in business now for over 4 years, and are employing dozens of people across Atlantic Canada. Although hesitancy was a part of our start up, sometimes it takes a small push to get the support and give an opportunity to a local business looking to employ and sustain a long term business.

Without a lot of experience in the fishing industry, after my conversation and educating myself locally on the location, It seems as though they have taken the proper steps and procedures to have a ethical and sustainable operation

With the proper warning and buoy system in place to notify any water activity of the location of the farm or its activities, this should not be a problem in the harbour where said business is looking to take place.

As in many operations or business's, there can be situations that can hurt or harm surrounding areas, but in my conversations with the potential operators of the farm, and the research I have personally done being a local water front property owner in this area, the steps and material they are utilizing appears to be environmentally and economically safe, with a very up to date and beyond technology.

The family has a history or success in business, and I feel can be a great attribute moving forward for many years in our community and many other communities abroad.

Thanks for your time,

Sincerely, Dennis Hull