



Maw-lukutijik **Saqmaq**
Assembly of Nova Scotia
Mi'kmaq Chiefs

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“WITHOUT PREJUDICE”

May 4, 2020

The Honourable Bernadette Jordan, M.P.
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Via E-mail: Bernadette.Jordan@parl.gc.ca

Dear Minister Jordan,

I am writing as the Lead Chief for the Fisheries portfolio of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs (“the Assembly”), in relation to the ten First Nations’ that the Assembly represents in the fisheries’ negotiations. We’d like to advise on several key points regarding the negotiation process.

The DFO negotiation team has confirmed with us that there is no mandate in which they can provide the fisheries access required by our communities and livelihood fishers for the implementation of Netukulimk Livelihood Fisheries Plans. The DFO negotiation team had informed us that they have an exclusive mandate to provide access to such a fishery through, “banked licenses” and a \$9 million portion of funding allocated under the *Rights Reconciliation Process*. **This is a very serious obstacle to reaching an understanding between our communities and DFO.** Without a proper mandate to explore alternative methods of access, our negotiations will not be effective.

Our communities do not wish to accept the “banked licenses”, and do not wish to accept all or part of the \$86.6 million *Rights Reconciliation Agreement*. Accepting these two offers will limit our access to the fishery. We require your support, Minister Jordan, specifically through a mutually decided upon mandate, with the DFO negotiation team, to effectively move forward.

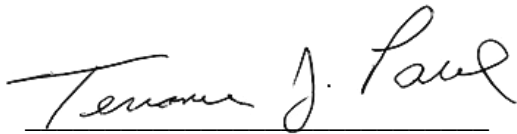
We know you wish to see what the First Nation Livelihood Management Plans look like. We are continuing to develop our plans, which will determine what fishers would like to harvest, as well as, where, when and how they will harvest.

Minister Jordan, we entered into discussions in good faith over the last few months in hopes of implementing an interim arrangement for our moderate livelihood fishers. We wish to continue the negotiations and implement the fishery in a manner that is agreeable to both the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia and DFO. However, we continue to fear for our fishers who exercise their right. Our arrangement is integral to protecting the safety and well-being of our livelihood fishers. We will reiterate as we have before, if our fishers are exercising their constitutional right to fish for a moderate livelihood, we should be accommodated. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans, our partners in this process have an important role to play in educating the industry about our existing rights. This will play a strong part in the protection and safety of our Mi'kmaq fishers.

Minister Jordan, we need you to help us meet the needs of our communities and livelihood fishers, to ensure the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia can access the fishery.

Thank you. Wela'lin.

Yours in Recognition of Mi'kmaq Rights and Title,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Terrance J. Paul", written over a horizontal line.

Chief Terrance Paul
Fisheries Lead and Co-Chair

cc. Viola Robinson, Lead Negotiator, KMKNO
Chief Deborah Robinson, Acadia
Chief Gerald Toney, Annapolis Valley
Chief Leroy Denny, Eskasoni
Chief Sidney Peters, Glooscap
Chief Paul Prosper, Paqtnkek
Chief Andrea Paul, Pictou Landing
Chief Wilbert Marshall, Potlotek
Chief Norman Bernard, Wagmatcook
Chief Rod Googoo, We'koqma'q
Jaime Battiste, M.P.
Jim Jones, Lead Negotiator, DFO
Rob Lamirande, Director General - Indigenous Affairs, DFO