



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2020

Canada Not Acting in Good Faith on Avon River

Members of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs had a meeting booked today to talk to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Minister Bernadette Jordan on their concerns with the recently shelved Ministerial Order (MO) on Windsor Causeway Avon River Aboiteau.

Despite being told earlier in the week by a high level DFO official that Minister Jordan would be pleased to discuss fish passage on the Avon River in this meeting with the Chiefs, the meeting was cancelled by the Minister at the very last minute.

“The Minister is clearly demonstrating to us that she does not want to work with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia,” said Chief Gerry Toney, Fisheries Lead for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. “By shelving the MO and then not discussing her decision with us any further is unacceptable and disrespectful to our Nation-to-Nation relationship.”

The MO, which was developed by DFO themselves, was brought to the Mi'kmaq through consultation and collectively all parties saw this as a great step forward in the protection of fish passage in the Avon River.

“The delay in implementing the MO has already missed the run of salmon – which is an endangered species in Nova Scotia,” continued Chief Toney. “The decisions that are being made on this MO could continue to have major effects to the fish and the environment, and we needed the opportunity to discuss these impacts with Minister Jordan.”

The Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia have been clear that free-flowing fish passage is required at the mouth of the Avon River and there is clear evidence that the current causeway structure is not allowing fish to complete their life cycle. The Mi'kmaq remain concerned about fish mortality, lack of free-flowing fish passage, and the need for restoration of critical salt marsh habitat.

“The Assembly, our environmental organizations, Water Protectors and community members all expect better from Canada. We are frustrated and concerned that Minister Jordan is not respecting the Consultation Process, that we have built with the Province and Canada, and is no longer acting in good faith with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia,” concluded Chief Toney.

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