

Embargoed until Monday 21st May 2007

**Wilderness Tourism Association Bears Witness in Norway
“Norwegian Government urged to protect wild salmon from Cermaq’s open net pen salmon farms in the Broughton Archipelago”**

The Wilderness Tourism Association (WTA) is visiting Norway (20th to 23rd of May) to urge Cermaq to implement a safe migration corridor for wild salmon in the Broughton Archipelago and to endorse the recent recommendation by the BC Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture to make the transition to closed containment systems within the next five years. The Norwegian Government’s Ministry of Trade and Industry is the largest shareholder in Cermaq – the world’s second largest salmon farming company – which operates as Mainstream Canada in the Broughton Archipelago and the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.

Tom Rivest, President of the Commercial Bear Viewing Association of BC and representing the WTA in Norway, said:

“The Wilderness Tourism Association is travelling to Norway to bring a crystal clear message to the Norwegian Government – Cermaq’s business operations as Mainstream Canada are having a detrimental economic impact on British Columbia’s wildlife-based tourism businesses. Since founding Great Bear Nature Tours in 1999, I have witnessed declining wild salmon stocks caused by the spread of sea lice from open net salmon farms. Trained as a biologist, and living on a salmon river with grizzlies as neighbours, I see a bleak future. British Columbia’s wildlife and humans have long relied on wild salmon for vital nutrients, without which, our dense populations of bears and other wildlife will slowly diminish. With the loss of wildlife and wild salmon we will also lose most of our tourism jobs. This last great intact temperate ecosystem in North America will die a slow death, crippling the entire economy of British Columbia along the way and leaving this vibrant coast as nothing more than a feedlot. By promoting Cermaq’s operations in BC, the Norwegian Government is sponsoring this bleak future” **[1]**.

The WTA, joined by representatives of the Pure Salmon Campaign, has meetings in Norway with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Environment and various Norwegian MPs on the 21st and 22nd of May. A video message, letter, and invitation to visit the Broughton Archipelago will also be delivered to King Harald V of Norway (an avid angler) **[2]**.

Dean Wyatt, Director of the WTA and owner of Knight Inlet Lodge, said:

“The returns of wild pink salmon in 2006 on the BC coast were dismal and in the Broughton desperate – and there is every indication that 2007 figures could be even worse. Our nature-based industry relies on healthy wild salmon. If the Provincial and Federal governments fail to protect these already struggling stocks from the looming devastation of spring sea-lice infestations they are making a choice. They are choosing

to sacrifice our jobs, our families and our BC-owned businesses in order to ensure a profit for Norwegian-owned salmon farming corporations. Do we want healthy wild salmon sustaining local businesses, First Nations and the tourist economy or do we want an unhealthy open pen cage salmon farming industry benefiting the Norwegian Government and shareholders in Cermaq?"

At Cermaq's AGM on 22nd May, Cermaq's Board of Directors will make a recommendation with regards to a shareholder resolution lodged by the Pure Salmon Campaign. The shareholder resolution, supported by the WTA as well as the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform, asks Cermaq to conduct a third-party audit of its environmental and labour practices globally. A Supporting Statement detailing sea lice problems in the Broughton Archipelago and quoting Brian Gunn from the WTA includes the following message to Cermaq from scientist Alexandra Morton of Raincoast Research:

"If your industry expects to be on this coast in the long term it would seem in your best interest to lead the way. Move your enormous captive populations of Atlantic salmon away from our tiny juvenile wild salmon and both could thrive. Leave your farms where they are and 90% of wild salmon passing your farms will be threatened by sea lice from your fish, with devastating affect to everyone - the public, the politicians, your company and all our children" [3].

For more information:

Tom Rivest (available for interview on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th May in British Columbia: 1-250-902-9496; and from Sunday 20th to Wednesday 23rd in Norway: +1 202 251 3997)

Brian Gunn in Campbell River (1-250-286-4080)

Notes to Editors:

[1] Photos of Tom Rivest and Great Bear Nature Tours are available via: www.greatbearstours.com

For more information on the Wilderness Tourism Association visit: <http://www.wilderness-tourism.bc.ca/index.html>

[2] Video footage broadcast by Global TV (featuring interviews with Dean Wyatt and Craig Murray of the WTA) in May 2007 can be made available to Norwegian TV companies upon request.

A new video clip by filmmaker Twyla Roscovich featuring a message to Cermaq from Alexandra Morton will also be available from Sunday 20th May via: <http://www.callingfromthecoast.com/>

[3] The Pure Salmon Campaign's shareholder resolution and supporting statement to Cermaq is available via: <http://www.puresalmon.org/norway.html>