

9 April 2009

Dear

**PRELIMINARY EVALUATION REPORT – WILSON BAY INTERIM AQUACULTURE MANAGEMENT AREA**

I am writing to inform you of the Ministry's **preliminary decision** concerning the request by Environment Waikato for an aquaculture decision on the Wilson Bay Interim Aquaculture Management Area (AMA).

At this time, the preliminary decision is to make a **determination** for (i.e. approve) the Wilson Bay Interim AMA. This decision is made on the grounds that, given the information available at this time, the delegated officer of the Ministry of Fisheries is satisfied the activities contemplated in the Wilson Bay Interim AMA would not have an undue adverse effect on fishing or the sustainability of fisheries resources. The enclosed preliminary evaluation report outlines the reasons for this decision.

Please note a preliminary decision is not final. It provides you with an indication of the Ministry's initial assessment of the request based on the information available at this time. You now have an opportunity to provide additional information for consideration before a final decision is made.

When making this decision, the delegated officer of the Ministry is required to consider the effects of the proposed aquaculture activities on fishing and the sustainability of fisheries resources. To make a determination, the delegated officer must be satisfied that the proposed activities will not have an **undue adverse effect** on fishing and the sustainability of fisheries resources.

As mentioned above, this decision is not yet final. Parties potentially affected by the decision now have an opportunity to respond before a final decision is made. The deadline for submissions is 15 May 2009.

If you have any questions, or require clarification of any matters discussed in this letter or the enclosed report, please contact Rachel Alexander (03 545 9488, [rachel.alexander@fish.govt.nz](mailto:rachel.alexander@fish.govt.nz)) or me (03 545 7762, [christine.bowden@fish.govt.nz](mailto:christine.bowden@fish.govt.nz)).

Yours sincerely

**Christine Bowden**  
Aquaculture Manager  
Ministry of Fisheries

Encl



14 April 2009

## Ministry of Fisheries makes preliminary aquaculture decision in Firth of Thames

The Ministry of Fisheries has made a preliminary decision to approve the 1,783 hectare Wilson Bay Interim Aquaculture Management Area in the Firth of Thames. Of this area, 520 hectares has been zoned for shellfish farming, with the remainder being access-ways between marine farm blocks.

“We had to judge whether the proposed farm would unduly affect fishing or the sustainability of fisheries resources in the area,” said Ministry of Fisheries’ regulatory manager Russell Burnard.

“The application will have some effects on commercial set net fishing. However, based on current information in front of me, I’m satisfied the proposed site would not have an ‘undue’ adverse effect on this fishery.”

The applicant and affected parties now have the opportunity to provide additional information before the Ministry’s final decision is made. The preliminary decision may change if additional information shows the effects are more or less than currently expected.

“We like to run an open process,” said Mr Burnard. “Now that I have made this preliminary decision, parties get to see what I am thinking and what information I have taken into account. They can then provide additional information they wish me to consider”.

“Any additional information provided will be carefully considered before the final decision to grant or decline the application is made”.

Submissions on the preliminary decisions should be made by 15 May 2009. The Ministry will then start to consider the information it receives and will, depending on the amount of additional information, probably make a final decision on the Wilson Bay Interim Aquaculture Management Area in June 2009.

ENDS

*For more information contact:*

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