



**Notice to Lennox Island First Nation Community Members:
Lennox Island First Nation Intends to Launch a Treaty Protected Fishery this spring**

As we all know, the Treaty Right to fish and sell those fish in support of a moderate livelihood is a communal right, it can be exercised by individuals, but it is a communal right. The Council takes our obligation to manage this communal right very seriously.

Over the last year, the Council has worked hard to understand the concerns and interests of our community members through surveys, meetings, and discussions. We have also worked very hard to analyze the many factors we needed to consider in coming to the best possible decision for the Lennox Island First Nation regarding the Treaty Protected Fishery. We commissioned scientific and policy advice, we considered the concerns and interests of non-indigenous fishers, unfortunately we were also forced to consider the position that was communicated by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and how that would impact our plans, but our highest priority was the safety and interests of our community and members. We also know that the greatest interest from members is in expanded access and opportunities in our communal commercial fishery and we continue to push DFO to provide greater investments for our communal commercial fishery in a fair, respectful manner.

The Lennox Island First Nation has respectfully been in discussion with DFO officials for the last several months regarding our First Nation's intention to pursue our right to a Treaty Protected Fishery, as recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Marshall* decision. Our community consultations and engagement and our research and analysis guided our decisions as we developed and finalized our Treaty-Protected Fishery (TPF) Management Plan.

Now complete, our TPF Plan is moderate in size, and intentionally reflects the content and size of the six treaty-protected fishery plans in NS which received a letter of support from DFO. Our TPF Plan provides for a maximum of 1000 traps and follows existing DFO regulations including existing DFO lobster seasons.

Our Council voluntarily acknowledged with DFO that our TPF Plan would follow existing rules within Canada's regulatory regime, including seasonality, trap configuration, and gear specifics as well as DFO Conservation and Protection monitoring. Based on this approach, we fully expected that DFO would support our plan, as they did with the six treaty fisheries in NS. However, much to our disappointment, they did not. The advantage to receiving the DFO support letter is that it would have guaranteed that they would not try to obstruct our fishery and seize traps. Because they refused to provide Lennox Island a support letter, as they did in NS, we have no guarantee that DFO will not attempt to obstruct our TPF. However, the Council has made it clear that we expect our TPF Plan fishers to be protected and not harassed.



Despite DFO's decision, our Council and our community know that the Treaties provide us with the right to fish and sell fish in pursuit of a moderate livelihood. Therefore, our Lennox Island First Nation Treaty Protected Fishery will launch our Treaty Protected Lobster Fishery on May 7th, weather permitting in accordance with our Management Plan already shared with DFO. The plan will be posted in the Band Office.

If you wish to be part of the TPF, please contact Kristin Lewis at kristin.lewis@lennoxisland.com or 902-831-2168 to get an application. Individuals can apply for a maximum 100 tags and a maximum of three approved fishers can fish from one boat. The other rules and criteria can be found in the Management Plan.

Please note that there are some risks associated with participating in this TPF, including possible trap seizures and fines. This is disheartening and it is our continuing expectation that DFO and others will respect our right and the law. The Council and the community has done everything possible to secure DFO's support but we must also make sure that those wishing to fish under our plan understand the risk.

Yours in spirit,
The Lennox Island First Nation Council