

June 9, 2009
Fundy Bay keeper

No public notice given of pesticides use in Bay of Fundy

The infestation of parasitic sea lice has returned to the aquaculture cages in the Bay of Fundy where farmed Atlantic salmon are being raised in crowded conditions on an industrial scale. The federal government has given the industry emergency permission to apply a pesticide, Deltamethrin, that is commonly used to treat parasites on cattle, sheep and poultry. Applications are expected to begin this week without any prior public notice.

"This is a matter of public interest and the public needs to be informed" said David Thompson, Fundy Baykeeper. Deltamethrin is known to be toxic to shellfish and crustaceans such as lobsters, crabs, and shrimp.

"The pesticide called Slice that has been used for the last several years to control sea lice on farmed salmon failed to eliminate the problem," said Thompson. "Instead, the sea lice appear to have developed resistance to that chemical. Other pesticides used before Slice were also ineffective in controlling sea lice," he said.

According to the Fundy Baykeeper, there is always concern when toxic pesticides which present biological risk are used in marine waters. "The Bay of Fundy, its species and well-being are important to everyone, and the public must be informed and consulted about any plans to release pesticides into the Bay of Fundy," concluded Thompson.

The Fundy Baykeeper is a program of the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, licensed by the Waterkeeper Alliance.