



Uchucklesaht Tribe

**2013/14
DOMESTIC INTERTIDAL BI-VALVE
FISHING PLAN
February 21, 2013-January 31st, 2014**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CONTACTS 3

2. INTRODUCTION 4

 2.1. Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program..... 4

 2.1.1. Water Quality Assessment..... 4

 2.1.2. Biotxin Monitoring 5

 2.2. Communication Plan 5

3. OVERVIEW OF THE FISHERY 6

 3.1. Harvest Locations..... 6

 3.2. Species..... 6

 3.3. Time Frame of the Fishery 6

 3.4. Participants 7

 3.5. Additional Management Measures..... 7

 3.6. Fishery Monitoring and Enforcement 7

 3.7. Catch Reporting..... 7

 3.8. Product Handling..... 7

4. POST-SEASON REVIEW 7

1. CONTACTS**Uchucklesaht Tribe**

Director Lands and Resources	Monty Horton	(250) 724-1832
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Fisheries and Oceans Canada

DFO Resource Management:

Fisheries Manager	Paul Preston	(250) 756-4452
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DFO Aboriginal Fisheries:

	Bill Shaw	(250) 756-7152
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DFO Conservation & Protection	Jim Robson	(250) 720-4450
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Canadian Food Inspection Agency

A/Fish Policy Officer	Deirdre Kelly	(604) 666-3578
Inspection Specialist	Andre Youssef	(604) 666-3737

Environment Canada

Section Head, Marine Water Quality Monitoring Program	Walter Hajen	(604) 903-4475
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West Coast Area Coordinator	Jady Tyers	(604) 903-4478
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2. INTRODUCTION

This Intertidal Bivalve Fishing Plan has been prepared by the Uchucklesaht Tribe (UT) for submission to the Maanulth Fisheries Committee and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and forms part of the Maanulth Annual Fishing Plan (MAFP). The plan is designed to assist in the planning for UT fisheries to be conducted between February 21, 2013 and January 31, 2014.

This is a domestic use only fishing plan and describes the harvest locations, management measures, communication plan, enforcement plans and catch reporting for Intertidal Bivalves as defined in the Maanulth Final Agreement. The species for which this fishing plan applies are: manila clams, varnish clams, butter clams, native littleneck clams, razor clams and oysters. This plan does not apply to unallocated bivalves under the Maanulth Fishing Agreement (for example, cockles and mussels).

Prior to any harvesting, it is critical that all harvesters confirm that the beach is open for harvesting and that no closures are in place due to water quality or biotoxin contamination. Water quality or biotoxin closures of the beaches are implemented for the health and safety of the Uchucklesaht Tribe people, and anyone who may consume the product. Please see Section 2.2 for more information on finding notices of closures within the community. Also, information may be obtained at the following DFO website:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/contamination/index-eng.htm>

2.1. Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program

Intertidal bivalve fisheries are limited by programs for marine biotoxin (PSP, ASP) monitoring and sanitary growing water surveys.

2.1.1. Water Quality Assessment

Environment Canada (EC) conducts water quality surveys to assess the sanitary conditions in shellfish growing waters. These surveys are a requirement under the CSSP to establish and/or maintain approved growing area classification.

Harvesters may not harvest intertidal bivalves in areas which are unclassified or closed due to the risk of possible sewage contamination. For information on the location of current sanitary shellfish closures please check with the nearest Fisheries and Oceans Canada office or refer to the Shellfish Contamination page on the DFO Internet site at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/contamination/index-eng.htm>

Permanent bivalve harvesting closures are in place for Canadian fisheries waters of the Pacific Ocean within:

- a. 300 m radius around industrial, municipal and sewage treatment plant outfall discharges;
- b. 125 m radius of any marina, ferry wharf, finfish net pen, and subject to subsection (c), any floating living accommodation facility; and
- c. 25 m of any floating living accommodation facility located within a shellfish aquaculture tenure where a zero-discharge waste management plan is a condition of the Provincial aquaculture licence and is approved by the Regional Interdepartmental Shellfish Committee.

2.1.2. Biotoxin Monitoring

Area openings are dependent upon regular submission and analysis of samples for PSP/ASP analysis, as set out in a biotoxin monitoring protocol administered by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

Three consecutive mussel samples (*Mytilus californianus* or *Mytilus edulis*), along with a sample of the targeted food species containing acceptable levels of biotoxin must be received in order for CFIA to lift a harvest restriction in an area. CFIA will recommend lifting the PSP prohibition and a harvest site can then be considered by DFO for fisheries openings. Once an area is open, on-going submission of mussel samples is required to maintain the opening. CFIA will recommend closure of the harvest area to DFO if there is a lapse in sample submissions or if unacceptable levels of PSP/ASP are detected (>80 ug/100g PSP and >20 ppm domoic acid).

2.2. Communication Plan

Copies of this fishing plan will be made available to all harvesters, and will be posted on the Uchucklesaht Tribe webpage: www.uchucklesaht.ca. Public Notice of harvest areas, openings, closures and biotoxin results will be posted at the following locations: bulletin boards at the UT administration office in Port Alberni and in the village of Ehtlateese. Those members living in remote areas are provided the information about a closure by hand delivered mail, telephone, email notices, or a visit in person by the UT Fisheries crew.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE FISHERY

3.1. Harvest Locations

Part 1, Plan 3 of Appendix P for Tzartus Island;

- i. **“Geer Islets (Tzartus Island)”** That portion of Subarea 23-5 surrounding the Geer Islets inside a line
 that starts at48°55.828’N 125°06.707’ W
 then south following the low water
 mark to.....48°55.673’N 125°06.672’ W
 then north following the low water mark to the point of commencement,
 including the intertidal zone between the north and south islets.

- ii. **“Meade Islets (Tzartus Island)”** That portion of Subarea 23-5 surrounding the Meade Islets inside a line
 that starts at.....48°55.650’N 125°07.290’ W
 then south following the low water
 mark to.....48°55.423’N 125°07.507’ W
 then north following the low water mark to the point of commencement,
 including the intertidal zone between the east and west islets.

3.2. Species

Species of Intertidal bivalves for which this Fishing Plan applies are; manila clams, varnish clams, native littleneck clams, butter clams, razor clams, and oysters.

3.3. Time Frame of the Fishery

Intertidal bivalve harvesting will occur mainly from October 1 to March 31. However, harvesting occurs throughout the year. Openings will be announced through Fishery Notice issued by DFO and the UT Director of Lands and Natural Resources, and will only take place once the appropriate monitoring has been established and acceptable biotoxin and water quality results are determined. The fishery may be closed at any time if elevated PSP levels are detected through the on-going monitoring program.

Please see Section for 2.2. for more information on finding notices of closures within the community. Also, information may be obtained at the following DFO website:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/contamination/index-eng.htm>

3.4. Participants

UT members with a valid harvesting licence will participate in harvest of bivalves. All licensed harvesters are required to report their harvest weekly. See Section 3.7 regarding reporting requirements.

3.5. Additional Management Measures

The Uchucklesaht Tribe requests that all harvesters backfill their dig holes to ensure that remaining clams are not exposed to freezing conditions or over-heating.

3.6. Fishery Monitoring and Enforcement

The UT may have on-ground monitoring during openings to monitor harvesters' activities.

3.7. Catch Reporting

Uchucklesaht Tribe Fisheries Regulations specify that anyone who harvests in a UT fishery must report the quantity harvested to the UT in accordance with the terms and conditions identified in the regulations or in an order of the Director. The catch reporting will be consistent with those described in any Maa-nulth Harvest Documents, the Maa-nulth Fisheries Operational Guidelines, and any harvest plan developed for UT and Maa-nulth fisheries.

UT harvesters are required to record the date, gear, location, species, number and/or weight and to submit record of catch each week.

3.8. Product Handling

To avoid contamination or spoiling of product, be sure to keep product cool, keep out of the sun and clean and preserve right away.

4. POST-SEASON REVIEW

At the end of the fishing period, UT fisheries staff may meet with DFO staff to discuss the harvest season to identify any issues or areas of concern that need to be addressed. The UT Domestic Intertidal Bivalve Fishing Plan will be amended as needed to reflect changes to the management and harvest of the intertidal bivalves.