



NSW DPI / Huon Yellowtail Kingfish Research Project - Stakeholder Update

June 2017

The first and second batches of Yellowtail Kingfish from late 2016 are growing exceptionally well with an anticipated harvest date later this year. It is hoped that the first harvest will coincide with the planned *Love Seafood Love Port Stephens* event. Huon has already submitted fish for consumer trials to much acclaim.

The late arrival of the Huon work boat Omaha into the Nelson Bay Marina complex has delayed installation of the new sea pens on the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease. As soon as the current swell subsides, mooring ropes will be connected to the existing submerged grid to enable installation of one sea pen. A backlog of fingerlings at Port Stephens Fisheries Institute will then be transferred by helicopter to the sea pen. The company undertaking the air lift has taken on a larger helicopter and purpose built transfer containers to support delivery of fish to the lease.

The Omaha has capacity to lift the sea pen mooring grid for inspection and maintenance that includes removal of natural fouling on grid lines. This is likely to assist buoyance of the grid buoys meaning that they will sit higher and be more visible. One mooring buoy recently became detached from the grid and was recovered on the lease. There appears to have been a structural fault in a shackle which is being investigated with the manufacturer.

Marine fauna monitoring data has been uploaded to the Huon website. Dolphins have been the predominant fauna recorded in the last four months. Humpback whales migrating northwards have also been sighted and recorded in the last few weeks. No seal interactions have been recorded on the lease given the predator proof fencing. There have been recent sightings of a small pod of seals hauled out on rocks at Cabbage Tree Island.

An updated water and sediment quality report from monitoring undertaken under the sea pens, on the edge of the lease, and at control sites in Providence Bay will be uploaded to the web shortly. Preliminary results are excellent, showing no negative impacts to water or sediment quality from operations. This work is conducted by the University of Newcastle and an independent consultant.

Huon has taken up residence in the Shearwater Estate at Taylors Beach with an expanded footprint for gear and feed storage.

The Yellowtail Kingfish in the sea pens were treated again in May with hydrogen peroxide to manage naturally occurring skin and gill flukes. Huon and DPI answered an inquiry by a local stakeholder about the use of this product and confirmed that it had been addressed in the applications and consent conditions to operate, that it has been used and studied in aquaculture for some 25 years, and is currently used under veterinary supervision on the lease.

There has been a request to visit the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease, Port Stephens Fisheries Institute and Port Stephens Barramundi by the International Seafood Directions Conference organising committee in September 2017. Plans are also being developed to offer facility tours to participants at the forthcoming NSW Coastal Conference to be held at Shoal Bay.

Recent Yellowtail Kingfish research at the Port Stephens Fisheries Institute has focussed on optimisation of hatchery culture conditions including salinity and photoperiod during early larval rearing. Dietary evaluation trials have continued with an emphasis on determining the specific amino acid requirements of Yellowtail Kingfish juveniles and experiments are about to begin looking at extending the nursery period for fingerlings before they are sent to sea.

The emergency contact number for the Research Lease is **1300 920 987**, to be used for any incident involving the sea pens.

Upcoming events:

- Hawks Nest Tea Gardens Progress Association update
- Deploying sea pen June 2017
- Stocking fingerlings by helicopter to one sea pen June 2017
- Marine Interaction Fauna Committee members to visit July 2017

More information

www.huonaqua.com.au/wildlife-interactions/

www.huonaqua.com.au/about/portstephens/environmental-monitoring/

www.huonaqua.com.au/about/portstephens/benthic-monitoring/

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aquaculture/starting-up/finfish-aquaculture-lease-modification-application> or contact aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au



Feeding Yellowtail Kingfish

Huon's Omaha

New mooring lines



Huon's new land based facility at Taylors Beach

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development, 2017. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Department of Primary Industries as the owner. Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (June 2017). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser. Published by the Department of Primary Industries. OUT17/23205