

NSW DPI / Huon Yellowtail Kingfish Research Project - Stakeholder Update

October 2017

On the 20th September three new sea pens were installed onto the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease taking the total number of pens to five. 11,000 Yellowtail Kingfish were then airlifted from Port Stephens Fisheries Institute (PSFI) on the 29-30 September to stock Pen 3.

The next batch of fingerlings is ready for transport to the lease and this should take place late October early November.

Sampling for water column chemistry, sediment fauna and nutrients, and Remote Operating Vehicle (ROV) video transects were undertaken by the independent contractor and Newcastle University 13-24 September. Samples were taken from under sea pens and within the lease, on the edge of the lease and at three sites at a distance from the lease in Providence Bay.

The comparison of results from the pre-farming baseline sampling and the post-farming April sampling has found no significant impact from farming activities on the environment around the lease. <https://www.huonaqua.com.au/about/portstephens/>

During the international *Seafood Directions* conference in Sydney in late September, delegates toured the Research Lease and PSFI and sampled fresh Yellowtail Kingfish at the Sydney Convention Centre conference dinner. Huon also supported the *Go Fish* event in Nelson Bay in early October with fish for filleting and cooking demonstrations.

NSW DPI will be presenting at the NSW Coastal Conference at Shoal Bay in November about water quality protection and the oyster industry, and how research undertaken on the Marine Aquaculture Research Lease is supporting sustainable industry policy development.

Huon has installed six new Sealite Poseidon cardinal markers on the lease to replace the original Spar Buoy markers. This was done in consultation with RMS to provide markers that are more visible in high seas and strong current. Four buoys mark the corner of the lease, and two the western and eastern sides.

Recreational fishers and spearfishers are reminded that it is an offence to tie up to or interfere with lease infrastructure and should remain a safe distance away from sea pens, netting and buoys given the dynamic nature of the seaway around the pens. Red 'tie up' buoys will be installed on the lease edges for recreational fishers use in the near future.

Huon are recruiting 8-10 new staff for operational work such as feeding and harvesting.

There was a minor escapement of fish on the lease when several stanchion pins broke in heavy seas recently and the railing holding up the culture net dropped slightly. Fish were then seen between the culture net and predator net with a number recovered and returned to the sea pen.

An Annual Environmental Management Report has been submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. This report covers 12 months of operations including: construction and deployment; operation and maintenance; environmental monitoring and biosecurity; research; transport of fingerlings; marine fauna interactions; navigational interactions; compliance with standards and performance measures and community engagement. Once considered by the Department of Planning and Environment, the report will be loaded to the web.

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

Upcoming events:

- Airlifting Yellowtail Kingfish fingerlings (Batch 4) late October/early November 2017
- Presenting at the NSW Coastal Conference and tour of PSFI early November 2017
- Tour of PSFI for Marine Rescue mid-November 2017
- Uploading MARL Annual Environmental Management Report to the web
- Harvesting Yellowtail Kingfish to market late 2017

More information

<https://www.huonaqua.com.au/about/portstephens/>

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



Sea pen deployment September 2017



ROV preparation for video footage of sea floor



New Huon workboat New Sealite Poseidon lease markers



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