

## We'koqma'q First Nation partnering with Cooke Aquaculture on steelhead trout

July 15, 2019 – We'koqma'q First Nation, NS – The We'koqma'q First Nation is pleased to announce that we are partnering with Cooke Aquaculture Inc. on the sales and marketing of its Bras d'Or Lakes grown steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

“Our people have lived and flourished on the shores of the Bras d'Or Lakes for over 13,500 years, sustainably living and producing food in and around the Lakes for generations. The Cooke family business shares our belief that aquaculture can be developed in a manner that protects and preserves the environment for future generations,” said We'koqma'q First Nation Chief Rod Googoo. “We believe this relationship with Cooke Aquaculture will help us further develop our Bras d'Or Lakes grown steelhead trout into a recognized brand, enhancing our economy and creating opportunities for our community for years to come.”

“We'koqma'q First Nation has shown leadership among First Nations in its approach to commercial fishing, and we look forward to sharing our best practices to further support We'koqma'q in becoming a leader in aquaculture fish farming development,” said Glenn Cooke, CEO of Cooke Aquaculture Inc. “We're looking forward to a collaborative and productive relationship that will bring this world-class steelhead trout product to consumers.”

We'koqma'q First Nation, an historic Mi'kmaq community, is nestled along the shores of the world-famous Bras d'Or Lakes. Aquatic life is plentiful in the inland sea and the area is home to many successful fishing enterprises. We'koqma'q First Nation employs over 35 community members in the commercial fishery and over 50 community members in the aquaculture business. Several individuals work in the guardian program helping the community access its rights under the Food, Social, and Ceremonial agreements.

The trout farm was re-established in We'koqma'q in 2011, harvesting and marketing of current production begins on July 15<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, visit [www.wekoqmaproud.com/business/fisheries/](http://www.wekoqmaproud.com/business/fisheries/) or [www.cookeseafood.com](http://www.cookeseafood.com).

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