



February 15, 2024

POSTPONEMENT OF ELVER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

Dear community members,

I am writing to inform you of an important update regarding the proposed community Treaty Rights-Protected (TRP) fishery engagements concerning elver fishing that were scheduled to take place in our communities over the next couple weeks.

We regret to announce that these sessions will be postponed until further notice. This decision is because a number of our Mi'kmaw communities received a letter from the Minister of Fisheries on February 13 that outlined the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) intention to not renew any elver licenses for 2024. This effectively ceases all authorized commercial elver activities in our region.

The Minister's letter says DFO has concerns about unauthorized and unreported removals of American Eel, exceeding sustainable levels. They also wrote that the current monitoring and enforcement tools and resources they have are insufficient to manage and protect this species. Safety and sustainability are highlighted as their primary concerns.

Because of this development, our fisheries team at the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs are drafting a written response to advocate for the continuation of an Indigenous-led, sustainable, and well-managed fishery. Our goal is to support our community's rights and interests, while addressing the concerns raised by the Minister. We aim to submit this response before their February 23rd deadline.

We will provide further updates on potential next steps and the path forward for our communities once we hear more from the Minister. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

Please stay tuned for updates via email, social media, and community notices. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or our community Fisheries Liaison.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we navigate this very important matter together.

Chief Deborah Robinson