Our farm @ May’s Cove, Production this year 1000 Metric Tonns, ~ $4,500,000 Gross Rev. Each String of Cages is 1200 feet long. Each Cage from 16,000-25,000 fish. The boats in the picture are our feeding crew.
The Miawpukek First Nation and Aquaculture

- The Miawpukek First Nation’s initial involvement in Aquaculture was prior to Federal Recognition. (Mussels and Pacific Salmon)

- It was investigated as a potential economic development in the Mid 1970’s in partnership with the Ocean Sciences Center, the Marine Research arm of MUN.
The Miawpukek First Nation and Aquaculture

- These initial investigations proved unsuccessful, however it was discovered that the Bay d’Espoir estuary had temperatures conducive to salmonid Aquaculture.

- At this point the Miawpukek First Nation redirected its effort into negotiations with the federal government in hopes of gaining federal recognition and funding in order to improve the socio-economic status of the community.
The Miawpukek First Nation and Miawpukek Aquaculture Inc.

- Our Aquaculture operations were incorporated under the Conne River Development Inc. in 1996, recently renamed Miawpukek Aquaculture Inc.

- I was hired as the Aquaculture Manager in 1994 after attending a rigorous training program in the field of Aquaculture management.
The Miawpukek First Nation and Miawpukek Aquaculture Inc.

- At this time I took over the Business planning and Commercialization effort from Director Ross Hinks, developing a five year business plan in conjunction with all relevant staff and Clyde Collier who is now the Aquaculture Manager.

- We are currently in the fifth year of commercialization, 1 year behind schedule, but doing very well.
Current Status

• Currently, we are farming both Steelhead & A. Salmon.
• Production: 335,000 SH & 110,000 AS (S1 & S2)
  1000 MT current with 2000 MT Capacity
  250 MT AS
  850 MT SH
• Sales: ~$4.5 to 5 million market dependent
• Sites: 4 Licensed sites
  3 Marine - 2 summer grow-out & 1 over-wintering
  1 Lake site
Current Status

- Pens: 30 Marine Pens (70M Circles)
  12 Lake Pens (15mX15m)

- Employment: 30 Band Members ranging from 14 weeks/year to full-time (10% of the Bands total labor force)

- We own majority shares in the largest Aquaculture operation in the province making the Miawpukek First Nation the largest Aquaculture investor/Operator in Newfoundland. However, we are in the process of selling this investment, & focusing on vertical integration of our own operations.
The Miawpukek First Nation and Miawpukek Aquaculture Inc.

• After the above mentioned success and new developments in the local Aquaculture industry the Miawpukek First Nation felt that it was again time to re-evaluate Aquaculture as an Economic Development option.
• The Band underwent a public review and consultation process in late 1990 and early 1991 to scope out the potential of such a venture. It was decided by the community and the Council to proceed in further evaluation of Aquaculture through a pilot operation.
Future Aspirations

- Processing Capacity
  Potential Employment Opportunity of 30 seasonal positions

- Hatchery
  Small operation with 6 Employment Positions
  - Jeddore Lake Site - examining new and revolutionary technology with hopes of employment in the very near future, developed in conjunction with non Band partners (Band owned)
  - Land Based - In conceptual stage
The Miawpukek First Nation,
The Environment and Aquaculture

Currently, Miawpukek Aquaculture is part of the Fisheries Department within the Band. Groups involved in the department include Fisheries Conservation and Enhancement, Commercial Fisheries, Food Fisheries, Recreation Fisheries and Aquaculture. All groups work together to ensure that the Miawpukek First Nation is doing everything possible to preserve and protect wild stocks of A. Salmon, local Trout and commercial species. This is to ensure that these stocks are available for sustainable use by the Band as defined in our mission statement. “To preserve, promote and advance the culture, health, economic, educational and social well being of our people.” After all, the Miq’maw (Micmac) are, by tradition, a sea-going people living in oneness with the sea and the land.
Miawpuekek Aquaculture Inc. and Fisheries Department

The Fisheries Department and Miawpuekek Aquaculture are similar in that they both serve to further the Band's goals and involve fish, but they are very different in mandate.

The Fisheries Department itself is mainly entrenched in Traditional usage, fisheries development, and Conservation. Thus, our goals often at odds with one another.
Miawpukem Aquaculture Inc. and Fisheries Department

Miawpukem Aquaculture Inc.'s operations are international in scope and is penetrates the far-reaching markets of the world - Asia, Europe, the US, even British Royalty have consumed our product.

Because of the business nature, size, scope and ever changing goals of Miawpukem Aquaculture, we believe that approximately 1/3 eligible community members will be employed in Aquaculture in 5-10 years. Also, it is because of this that we have requested that the present General Manager be assigned to Aquaculture responsible for Sales, marketing and financial matters.
Miawpukek Aquaculture Inc. and Fisheries Department

At this stage in development a missed opportunity, whether in processing, sales, or financing could mean a gain of 30-40 jobs, &/or $500,000 in savings on feed, &/or $500,000 in maximal utilization of existing assets. Further, we have proposed that Tammy Drew’s eventual take over as General Manager be expedited to facilitate this and a separation of Aquaculture from the Fisheries Department and Band Administration to achieve these goals.
Environmental Misconceptions

I feel that Aquaculture has been given an unjust reputation in the eyes of many environmentalists. Mistakes have been made, but the industry has developed, in part due to globalization of the industry, into one that is responsible, progressive, efficient, and sustainable. Valid, scientifically based and justified concerns are few and far between. We have been actively working towards solutions to all environmental concerns.

The Miawpukek First Nation and the Fisheries Department including Miawpukek Aquaculture believes in environmental preservation. In fact, aquaculture thrives on a clean, pure and unpolluted environment. We produce a superior product that demands the best. Any compromise in this is detrimental to the operation and the environment.
Environmental Misconceptions

Considering that all development has some form of impact on the environment, the Miawpukek First Nation has chosen to develop its aquaculture operations in a style that has little to no impact on the environment. We have been actively involved in:

• large scale environmental assessment of the local industry

• development of an industry Code of Practice

• Escapee Prevention Plan

• development of Escapee Recapture Protocol and Equipment

• direct involvement in Fisheries Conservation through implementation of aquaculture practices to enhance local wild stock returns to the area.
Environment and Industry

As a last point of consideration, let’s leave a few points to consider with respect to the environmental movement, industry and their individual agendas.

- For the past 400 years, non-native groups have continually contributed to the decline of the aboriginal community by asserting their beliefs, thoughts and values on the aboriginal people. Our people have suffered at the hands of non-native people. This is evident by the current socio-economic statistics aboriginals across Canada.

- The aquaculture industry and the environmental movement are not different. They have an agenda to promote their own beliefs and what they perceive to be best for the aboriginal community.

- One agenda cannot be chosen over the other, nor should one group force or mislead the aboriginal community in one direction only. Open dialogue has always been encouraged and should be of importance in these decisions. Investigation will show that industry cannot develop unless it goes hand in hand with the environment.
Conclusion

In closing, there is large potential in development of aquaculture that will have a POSITIVE impact on future growth of coastal aboriginal communities. Revenues and employment created by the industry will increase community awareness, contributing to socio-economic independence and empowerment of the aboriginal community. This will further contribute to increased income, social status, education, self esteem and social networks that will promote a sense of control over one’s life and move the aboriginal community closer to economic independence and self governance.