

Jeff Nesbitt: My name's Jeff Nesbitt and I grew up on Willapa Bay. I'm a resident of Pacific County, I currently live in Chinook, WA and I work as Director of the Department of Vegetation Management for Pacific County and also as the coordinator for the Noxious Weed Control Board. So I'm here tonight as a private citizen to recommend that you select alternative 3 from the choices. In that respect I think that in a limited capacity the safe use of this chemical does not pose a large enough risk to jeopardize the livelihoods of families that are depending on the success of aquaculture in the area. Growing up in the area and knowing the bay as intimately as I do – I lived on the bay starting at age 12 and ever since then I've lived or worked on Willapa Bay and I love the bay. The last thing I want is to see it damaged or harmed in any way. So the important thing to look at is risk, and where the true risk is. And a lot of people assume that doing nothing is less risky than taking action, when I would completely disagree with that.

A good example is to look back to the Spartina infestation that was just very recently resolved, because of human intervention. Without the time investment and the financial investment of the Willapa and Grays Harbor Oyster Growers Association, Willapa Bay would be a grass field today. These guys put in millions of dollars and hundreds of hours of their time to invest in the health of the bay and it worked. It's been one of the most successful restorations in recorded history -- and very little drawbacks. It's been a massive success. And to tell them that now, after the success of this program, your investment was a waste because you're not allowed to protect your crops is ludicrous. The risk is inherent in pesticide use and that's something that we all accept working in the industry and as consumers of products every day. But in this case the risk does not outweigh the potential benefit. And when safely used herbicides and pesticides are very useful tools and with strict monitoring and specifically the 5-year permit with monitoring throughout and then a re-evaluation at the end of that permit to decide maybe if some of these uncertainties have been cleared up just through monitoring over those years and then to readdress the question of whether or not to continue and who knows in that time they might find another alternative that works better. And I hope they do -- because non-chemical methods would be great. And the fact is that we currently don't have any that work.

The first 2 years that I worked in this industry I was a research assistant at Washington State University Long Beach branch and I worked under Kim Patton doing research on growing shrimp. And we spent a lot of time trying out different methods. And I actually got to ride on that big all-terrain vehicle thing and while it was fun – didn't kill the shrimp. And I think that we should definitely not stop looking for alternative methods but at this point the proposed plan seems to be the most viable option. Thank you.