

Laura Hendricks: Laura Hendricks. I represent the Coalition to Protect Puget Sound. We have members throughout the state of Washington and I am physically located in Gig Harbor, WA. We appreciate the opportunity to make and provide comment but this SEIS is seriously flawed, which the process is based on. The shellfish industry is addicted to pesticides. We have seen that over the last 40 years. So where do we start with a baseline, when you have been poisoning Willapa Bay for decades, and people that have been there? Kim Patton was the primary scientist who decided over 40 times under SEIS and he was just found in violation of ethics rules because he was a shellfish grower selling shellfish to the very people that are benefiting from these chemicals. That is something ecology has known for years, because we pointed it out, but yet you still took his science and he still testified at hearings and you still allowed permits. Which should never have happened. There has been little monitoring, little testing, and no independent studies of Imidacloprid spraying directly in marine water. Our document that says there are no direct effects on mammals, fish, and birds is not correct -- because you're not looking at marine studies that are directly sprayed into marine waters.

Yes, there are too many uncertainties -- and in prior testimony that I understand happened in South Bend, where growers stated that things were great in Willapa. Well, the facts are: waterfowl has decreased from over 100,000 to less than 8,000 and now there is a no count. [unintelligible] populations have dramatically declined. Herring counts are down to zero. Used to have herring, now you have a no count. [unintelligible] have gone from threatened to endangered. Sturgeon are now in danger. I hear something that really concerns me -- is that you're going to look at testimony of people that are going to be here to get more information that can help supplement studies, basically is what you said. You can't be taking people that have a vested interest in making money, take their information as gospel, and then put that alongside a study and say that is the same kind of information you can base a decision on. That's biased information. You need to have facts. We're not talking about a small amount. We're not talking about 1 little pond. We're talking about Willapa Bay, putting in 100's of acres, scattered all over, with a very toxic chemical. We request that a permit not be issued based on this flawed SEIS and that Representative Blake not be allowed to overstep this if you don't issue a permit -- and come in with another bill to try to let this go through as a study as you are killing mammals, as you are killing the invertebrates you are harming the birds and you are doing the kinds of things that we all know will happen. There are too many people involved. Willapa Bay is not the oyster growers' private property. This is a public bay and everyone has a voice and it cannot be used just for private enterprise. There is much too much at stake. Thank you.