

Brian Sheldon: Hi. I'm Brian Sheldon. I live in Nahcotta, Pacific County. I'm third generation shellfish grower and actually feel like a rookie a lot of the times because there's so much history in this industry. I've lived and worked and played in Willapa. I grew up essentially in the bay – we considered that kind of our playground. You might have a park in the city you go to – well, that was our park. I'm intimately familiar with the bay having grown up with that sense of ecology and what was healthy, what was not healthy. I'm watching the bay become degraded – not just on our shellfish beds – but on public lands also. I'm watching recreational opportunities being lost. It's sad to me. I can't help the public part of it but I have to do something about our farmland. We're losing ground. I know that when we do control on our beds – having experienced that many times – that species diversity is sustained on the bed. If we don't do the control, it's lost. It's that simple. It goes from a flourishing bed with dimension and a lot of critters on the bed – everything from sculpins to sea snails to starfish to crabs to all these different species and eelgrass and every kind of fauna you can think of to like a beach -- of just sand with holes in it. And there's nothing there. We can say that the species is affected. It's destroyed. And greatly degraded and greatly reduced in species density.

I've worked to implement just about any method I can think of to control these shrimp – not just a chemical. Like most growers, we've participated with a lot of the researchers who need direction to get to the place so we observe what's going on on the bed so not only have we tried it ourselves, we've tried different methods through our cultivation practices, our harvesting practices, including mechanical harvesting and harrowing. On our farm – I can't speak for other folks' – I've seen no effect of trying to reduce density with other methods. I wish I could say there was. I've often said I would give anything to find a different control tool. Not because I find the chemical unsafe -- because I find it so political.

It's an emotional issue. It's difficult to remove that from the discussion. And I understand why people get up in arms about it but the science says it's safe and we have no other tool available to us at this time. It doesn't mean we won't continue to look for one but we just don't have a tool right now. Any tool that we could find that has met the IPM, this basic IPM success of efficacy, would be great and I'm sure embraced by the shellfish growers. There's discussion in the SEIS about – it sort of leaves it unclear about different culture methods. Mainly off bottom culture somehow being a tool you can use to farm in shrimp ground. In all my years of experience and all my discussions with every shellfish grower that's tried off bottom that is not factual at all. There are off bottom culture does not developed to farm around shrimp. It was developed to farm marginal ground, where it was exposed to high energy wind wave or tidal flows. Or just wouldn't sustain a bottom culture crop. So you could use an off bottom culture method to try to farm some of that ground. It had nothing to do with farming and shrimp. And it doesn't now. I've asked some of the – we've had a vast expansion of off bottom culture and I've asked the folks that are doing that and every one of them has told me it is not successful. Not successful farming to farm around shrimp. I'm a little concerned in the SEIS that it doesn't talk about the no – I guess I'm done. I will submit more comments. I'll just leave you with I think that the SEIS fully supports issuing this permit. Thank you.