

Annie Herrold

I am a fourth generation oyster farmer in Willapa Bay and I strongly believe that the Draft SEIS supports the issuance of a Draft Permit. My family has been farming in Willapa Bay for over 100 years and we have worked to control burrowing shrimp populations since their explosion in the 1960's. Currently we are facing an infestation and without any tools to reduce the populations on our beds they are being destroyed and the estuary as a whole is beginning to see what will be devastating effects if burrowing shrimp are left unchecked. If you have taken the time to walk the beds, then you've seen the disastrous effects the shrimp are having. As a member of the local Chinook Indian tribe and a family that are long time Pacific County residents, I care deeply about the health and sustainability of Willapa Bay. Farming oysters is a way of life for us, and without a healthy balanced ecosystem our way of life would cease to exist.

Oyster growers are constantly working to protect this beautiful bay that we call home. If the science didn't support the issuance of a permit, then we wouldn't support it either. We are proposing to use only up to 8 oz an acre of the next generation, EPA approved imidacloprid on less than 1% of the total acres in Willapa Bay. It is undetectable in the water within 24 hours and will not be applied to the oysters themselves but directly to the sediment during the lowest tides of the year. The long term result would be healthy vibrant beds with an abundant diversity of species present and oysters that won't contain even a trace of imidacloprid. I am proud to farm some of the same land that my great grandpa did and it is a tradition that I hope to be able to pass down to the next generation but to do so we need a way to protect our land. Please issue the Draft Permit so that we can save our farms and preserve the delicate ecology of Willapa Bay.