

I strongly urge you to deny the NPDES permit to Cooke Aquaculture for the following reasons: It's clear that our local wild salmon and resident orca populations are severely threatened. Our Chinook population has crashed and our J Pod will likely starve to death in a matter of a few years. In light of the current science and the **fact that we know that factory farming fin fish in our open waters places an additional burden on the marine ecosystem** it is unconscionable to allow a foreign corporation to knowingly pollute our waters in order to protect their profit margin!

A sustainable native fishery as protected by treaty, a sustainable recreational fishery and a sustainable commercial fishery - which should all be far bigger responsibilities (morally and economically) to the Washington State Dept of Ecology - are incompatible with open pen finfish farming.

The permit is about granting permission to add known pollutants to our waters. These pollutants, which include large amounts of antibiotics and other chemicals are detrimental to our marine ecosystem and human health. The areas underneath the fish pens are complete dead zones due to pollutants, excess nitrogen, eutrophication, etc. We don't even know the extent of the damage done to the various other creatures beyond the salmon and orcas.

I am curious as to why this permit application does not even follow best practices for fish farming - no mention of nitrogen monitoring? Also, why are DOE and Fisheries not testing the adult fish in the pens for picene reovirus? What is the cause of mortality? It's an unhealthy system and even DOE states as much in your own literature.

It may be the path of least resistance for DOE to grant the permit and let the clock run until 2022, but I don't believe our marine ecosystem and our wild fish have the luxury of time. Do the right thing, put our WA waters, our wild salmon, our local orcas and the marine environment in front of the almighty dollar and deny the permit.