

Alan Bogner: Again, I am Alan Bogner, the hearings officer for this public hearing. This evening, we are conducting a hearing on the draft permits for four Atlantic Salmon net pen aquaculture facilities. Let the record show it is 7:46pm on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019. And this hearing is being held at the Bainbridge High School. Notices of the hearing were emailed on two occasions to 1,189 interested people. A news release announcing the comment period was issued on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and notice of the applications were published in the Kitsap Sun and the Skagit Valley Herald on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018. I will now be calling people to provide testimony based on the order your name appears on the sign in sheet. Once everyone who has indicated that they would like to testify has the opportunity, I will open it up for others. Remember, oral comments should be about three minutes. At the two and a half minute mark, I will kind of whisper to you, "30 seconds" to alert you have 30 seconds left. That is your cue to wrap up your comments so that the next person can testify. When we call your name, it will be your turn to testify. Please come down here, take a seat, state your name for the record, and if you haven't given us your contact information, please do so. You can also provide this information after the hearing. Please speak clearly and not too fast so we can get a good recording of your testimony. We will begin with Brenda Berry followed by Stephanie Ross. Brenda Berry, come on down.

Brenda Berry: I've said enough. I'll write it and I'll pass and move on to Stephanie.

Alan Bogner: Okay, great. Stephanie, come on down.

Stephanie Ross: All right. Can I look at them and talk? Can you hear me appropriately? All right. My name is Stephanie Ross. I am appearing as a citizen in a non-representational capacity. I'm here to state that the pollutants that are the subject matter of this permit are in direct opposition to federal law, the governor's policy, the stated concerns about the orcas, and that the permits should be denied in full. I would like to start by submitting to the record a letter which was sent to congress by 130 different fishing organizations and fishermen representing thousands of people, which is a direct opposition to all marine fin fish aquaculture in US waters. I have 100 copies of those over there if anybody's interested so we have some kind of perspective about jobs here. I was authorized to do this by the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association. So that's in the record. And I would like to just go over a few points in this very briefly. The people who submitted this in December 2018 said, "We depend on a healthy marine ecosystem to supply quality, abundant wild fish stocks. Marine fin fish aquaculture pollutes the natural ecosystem, degrades and threatens wild fish stocks, and challenges the economic stability of commercial fishermen, American commercial fishing, and marine fin fish aquaculture cannot coexist. And they go into, in some detail, the questions about pollutants. I would also like to submit into the record specifically even though you can find it on the side if you really dig what the pollutants are that are supposed to be going into the water, irrespective of PRV, irrespective of the fish carrying the PRV. These are the pollutants, all right? That was, I think, actually Cooke did a great job of honestly and accurately submitting their application in 2017. It's too bad it

took over a year for it to be processed. Okay, so here's just a few of the pollutants that are going to be going into: canthaxanthin, astaxanthin, antioxidants, [indecipherable], terramycin, finquel --

Alan Bogner: 30 seconds.

Stephanie Ross: Yes. Left? 30 seconds left? Okay. The laws that this is in violation of is that the NPDES must take into consideration the endangered species act. There are endangered species of southern resident ponds that are entirely dependent upon the Chinook salmon. And I'd also like to enter into the record the 2015 WDFW study about pollutants' effects on the Chinook Salmon. I do not believe that the state of Washington has the right to introduce more pollutants into the Puget Sound. And, in fact, they have a duty to deny the permit. Thank you.

Alan Bogner: Okay, thank you. Remember, you can come back.

Stephanie Ross: Thank you.

Alan Bogner: Okay. That is all we have on the sign up list. Is there anyone who has changed their mind and would like to now testify? Sure, come on up, Kevin.

Kevin Bright: Hi, my name's Kevin Bright. I work with Cooke Aquaculture. I've got a marine biology degree and have been in this business for way too long, 20-some odd years growing salmon. I'll just give you a quick -- Atlantic Salmon have been raised in net pens in Puget Sound for nearly 40 years. Atlantic Salmon have never successfully established themselves outside of their native range of the Atlantic Ocean. There's been no self-reproducing runs of Atlantic Salmon ever found in Washington State. Unfortunately, I think our legislature made a decision that was based more on emotion than it was on science or historical experience. The fish that we raise come from domesticated stocks that have been bred in captivity for over 40 years. The ability of these fish to survive outside of the net pen environment and have food delivered to them is greatly diminished. We go to great lengths to keep the fish healthy. We are famers. Like I said, we don't want our fish to get diseases. We screen for diseases. We watch the fish. We dive the pens and we keep track of mortality rates so that we know if -- and we do fish health screening. We look for any signs of disease. And if we see a disease, we will treat it with antibiotics. The amount of antibiotics we use is extremely low. It's much less than land-based agriculture. I understand that salmon farming's been -- it's a very controversial issue. It always has been and it always probably will be. Unfortunately, I think aquaculture is where we're going to get our seafood for the future. The UN projects another two billion people on this planet in the next 30 years. Those people will need some source of protein. Wild capture fisheries are at their maximum level and they will not be able to sustain that kind of pressure and demand on that natural resource. Aquaculture is going to be where we need to look to produce a protein that is essential for feeding a growing population.

Alan Bogner: 30 seconds.

Kevin Bright. As I stated, the UN, FAO says that aquaculture's our best chance to increase global protein. Several environmental organizations are starting to come to that same conclusion, such as the World Wildlife Foundation. Yeah. I think we need these facilities and I appreciate Ecology's work on this. Thank you.

Alan Bogner: Okay. You can come back up if other people have a chance. Anyone else? Brenda? I like how I know all your names already.

Brenda Berry: I know. We're getting to be friends. Rich is my friend now too. I guess what I just want to say is I really do understand that people need jobs, corporations need to make money. But at what cost and at what cost to our endangered native wildlife and at what cost to the marine ecosystem? So we do know and Department of Ecology's publications themselves state that the fish in the pens are a pollutant. They state that what's going into the water is a pollutant. The permit under question is an international corporation asking the state of Washington for permission and the privilege of polluting our water in order for them to make money and run their business. My question for the state of Washington is what's the greater good? What is the obligation to this corporation that you branded a lease versus the obligation to the people, the marine life who rely on a clean marine environment? Because there is no level of aquaculture that does not, in fact, degrade the marine environment. And I was on the ferryboat a couple weeks ago. We were coming home and little kids, we all spotted the J Pod in the water. And I don't know if you have kids but you know when they scream and it's somewhere between a cry and a shout and a yell because they see a big mammal that's wild in the water, there's nothing like that. And they were clapping and people were crying. And the reality is, that J Pod, it's doomed. Like, it's probably already doomed. It's starving. And it's starving to death because there are not enough Chinook salmon in our water to feed that. And there are a lot of pressures on wild salmon. There are a lot of pressures on Chinook salmon. But this is an additional pressure. So why give that privilege, why say -- these endangered salmon have been here for 10,000 years and are amazing, why would you say, "Someone's ability to make money is more important than those fish and those orcas." And those kids that got to see that, their children won't get to see it. My grandchildren probably won't get to see it. and so I'm encouraging you to deny the permit and err on the side of protecting our precious marine environment. The end. Did I make it under time?

Woman: Only two minutes, 20 seconds.

Brenda Berry: My name was Brenda Berry and I'm a concerned citizen. Okay. How was that.

Alan Bogner: Good. Anyone else? Yes. Remember to state your name.

Jamie Beckett: Yep.. I'm Jamie Beckett and I am a concerned citizen and I was happily going to walk out the door and understand that different citizens and different stakeholders have a different vested interest in Puget Sound. But the gentleman from Cooke Farms started citing UN and FAO data. And he's correct that we will be required to feed the population of the planet with aquaculture. There's no doubt about that. But that aquaculture absolutely will have to be sustainable in order to be successful. And this is not a sustainable aquaculture endeavor. It may be, but one of the most important criteria at this point in time for sustainable aquaculture would be nitrogen and eutrophication and we're not monitoring that in this case. And I don't understand that. Recent studies for the Puget Sound indicate that nitrogen, a little bit of phosphorous, and eutrophication are one of the primary impacts in the Sound. So I'd like to know from the state why we're not monitoring that. I think that's an oversight. Brenda eluded to the precautionary principle, which is an international standard by which we should -- must and should hold ourselves accountable. So we are trading short-term vested interest of a corporation for the long-term benefit of our children and future stakeholders. That's egregious. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Alan Bogner: Lady in the back? Remember to state your name, please.

Mary Brown: Good evening. My name is Mary Brown and I speak as an individual, private citizen. And I just want to remind everyone that Chief Seattle once said that we don't make the web of life that we're just a strand in it. And whatever we do to any strand of life, we do to ourselves. And so it is my understanding that the fish farm fish are fed herring and that means less herring in the waters for the wild salmon. And because they have less herring to eat, they are starving. And because the orcas have less salmon to eat that they are starving too. So I just want us to think more about the overall web of life in which we are participants. Thank you.

Alan Bogner: Stephanie, come on up.

Stephanie Ross: Thank you.

Alan Bogner: Welcome back.

Stephanie Ross: Thank you.

Alan Bogner: State your name again.

Stephanie Ross: Yes, Stephanie Ross. I'm appearing as a private citizen and I would just like to state for the record the conclusion that was reached of WDFW in their extensive study about the survival rate of Chinook in the Puget Sound. And they said the conclusion is "a significant portion of Puget Sound Chinook salmon are at risk for some type of health impairment due to contaminant." Why in the world would the state authorize any more contaminants? I just want everybody to think about that. Why would they do that? I would also like to state that there is another federal

law that's implicated in all this and that's the treaties and the protection of the habitat and the state is required to consider the treaties and they're required to follow that. And now they're required to consider the habitat of the wild salmon. And that was in US versus Washington, which the state lost in the last year, so I think that's an important consideration. And I'd like to encourage anyone to come up and get these handouts please. And thank you very much, Ecology. And I hope that you will listen to what the governor said when he said our orcas and our wild fish come first. Either it was true or it wasn't. Ecology's an executive agency. So let's see which one wins. Thank you very much for your time.

Alan Bogner: Anyone else? All right. Remember, if you would like to send written comments, we have to receive them by midnight on February 25<sup>th</sup> unless you put them in the US mail and then they must be postmarked by the 25<sup>th</sup> or you can submit online comments with our ecomment form. Again, please remember to give us your contact information if you want to receive updates on this process. You can email a physical address or an email address to staff after the hearing today. All testimony received will be part of the official hearing record for this proposal. This includes testimony at the webinar hearing, during the two public hearings here today and the one on February 5<sup>th</sup> in Anacortes, along with all written ecomments received by midnight on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Ecology will send a notice about the response to comments publication to everyone that provided written comments or oral testimony on these draft permits and submitted us their contact information also to everyone who sent a mailing or email address to staff and other interested parties currently on the agency mailing list for these types of draft permits. The response to comments document will contain the agency's response to questions and issues of concern that were submitted during the public comment period. If you would like to receive a copy but did not give us your information, please contact Laurie or Rich. They have business cards on the table over there. And finally, after the comment period, the next step is to review the comments and make a determination whether to reissue the permit. Ecology Southwest Regional Water Quality Program Manager Rich Doenges will consider the permit documentation, staff recommendations, and will make a decision about issuing the permit. Permit reissuance is currently scheduled for spring of this year. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to ask. You can contact Laurie or Rich if you have any other questions. On behalf of the Washington State Department of Ecology and myself, thank you for participating and I greatly appreciate your courtesy and cooperation. Let the record show that this hearing is adjourned at 8:06 pm, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

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