

Bridget Moran

I write to you today as a concerned resident of the Pacific Northwest. I recognize that Ecology is seeking public comment on its draft document entitled "Guidance for Marine Net Pen Aquaculture in Washington State." While Ecology's efforts to regulate, monitor, and mitigate for the impacts of net pen aquaculture in Puget Sound are certainly appreciated, I feel that it is inappropriate to still be entertaining the idea of continued open water fish farming operations in the region. Many of Washington's residents have a deep connection to the Puget Sound and to the marine species that rely on it. Therefore, we collectively serve as guardians for that resource. Cooke Aquaculture has proven, time and again, that they cannot be trusted to operate these net pens in a way that honors and protects the Puget Sound and its wildlife. The waste and disease produced by net pen aquaculture threatens our wild salmon and steelhead, our Southern Resident Killer Whales, and the long-term health of the Puget Sound and its residents. These net pens, even with increased oversight and management from our state resource agencies, are not welcome in Puget Sound. It is high time for our resource agencies to do right by the people of this state and to phase out these operations entirely. No more net pens. Please.