

Larry Franks

It is imperative to the health of Puget Sound and our native salmon and steelhead runs to prohibit ALL net pen aquaculture in Puget Sound. The recent decision by the WDFW to allow Cooke Aquaculture to rear steelhead must be reversed.

- 1) As a biologist, my first and foremost objection to net pen rearing of *any* salmonid is the impact to the surrounding waters. In a very confined area, tons of food in results in tons of poop (eschewing any technical terms) out. The plume downcurrent of this kind of concentration of biomass is highly disruptive to the ecosystems.
- 2) My second concern is disease. Such a concentration of fish is prone to disease, which not only presents a dangerous vector to other salmonids, but is typically treated with antibiotics, frequently prophylactically, which gets those antibiotics into the human consumption path.
- 3) Cook Aquaculture in particular has proved itself untrustworthy. The net pen failure at Cooke's Cyprus Island facility was first blamed on the tides from a "Super Moon", then minimized as a tiny release, finally living up to the reality of about 250,000 adults accidentally released. Subsequent inspection found poor net and securing line maintenance.

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