

Chris Usami

I urge the Department of Ecology to NOT authorize Cooke's modified NPDES permits until the ongoing lawsuit challenging the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) environmental review process and determination is complete. In view that there is relevant new information that was not considered during the SEPA process, this new information should now be considered.

It is vital that you ensure compliance of rules set by NPDES . As well, Washington's landmark 2018 law, HB2957, created a new and stricter regulatory regime for marine net pen aquaculture. Switching species does NOT reduce the rampant daily pollution and water quality risks posed by open water net-pen aquaculture. Ecology should reconsider all water quality risks associated with this industry.

And certainly, Cooke's past record and miserable performance in maintaining state compliance with its salmon culture pens are not worthy of our trust that they can handle any form of reasonably responsible industry practices in our precious Puget Sound waters!