

# Gordon King

I write in support of the Cooke Aquaculture's Net Pen Proposal to raise Steelhead in Washington State.

I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and have been involved in Aquaculture for 40 years farming several different species in the marine environment over the years but shellfish in Washington State for the last 28 years.

We have a problem in the North West with the health of our marine resource which has serious impacts on the well being of many marine species including native salmonids. Because of this it is important we direct our resources for creating change to focus on issues that really have an impact. These areas of concern need to be identified with objective science not by lay members of the public who have a strong emotional feeling with little scientific understanding. We only need to look to Oregon and Northern California with no marine finfish aquaculture industry but a seriously depleted marine resource and many endangered salmonid stocks to understand laying these problems at the foot of the net pen industry in Washington State is a convenient distraction not backed by unbiased evidence.

Using net pens to raise Steelhead is an efficient way to produce high quality farmed fish with minor impact to the marine resource and all environmental concerns can be monitored and controlled with the many regulations already available to government agencies.