

# Alanna Rozee

I would like to state my support for Cooke's proposal to farm steelhead trout in Washington State.

I believe that the change from raising non-native Atlantic salmon to native Steelhead trout should eliminate much public concern regarding the safety of farmed fish in Washington State. In addition, the plan to raise triploid (sterile) fish mitigates the risk of genetic interaction between farmed and wild populations. The technology for producing triploid fish is simple and easily applied on a commercial scale (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/raq.12092>).

I believe Cooke Aquaculture has worked hard with the state to make sure that they are able to continue operations as state laws change. Operational management and confinement measures have improved greatly as the industry has grown and the Cooke farms all meet external auditing standards for best practices. Decisions on the reliability of the company should be based on their current approach and successful operations in other areas.

Aquaculture provides employment opportunities in rural areas where unemployment rates can be high. I have personally witnessed the positive changes that Cooke Aquaculture can bring to coastal communities. Aquaculture, when compared to other traditional land-based farming methods, has a much smaller environmental footprint. The United States imports over 90% of the seafood it consumes and is being provided with the opportunity to lower this number. Supporting aquaculture production will increase local food security and economic opportunities. When weighing the pros and cons of Cooke Aquaculture's proposal, I firmly believe that moving forward with strong support for the aquaculture industry is the right thing for Washington State to do.