

Don Barton

Please do not renew or grant new permits to Cook to engage in raising steelhead in saltwater pens in Puget Sound. There are many good reasons for ending pen raised fish in the Sound and essentially no good reasons to do so.

1. Wild steelhead are precious and endangered. Any activity that could damage wild steelhead should be avoided. Pen raised fish pose risks to wild steelhead regarding illness and cross breeding. It is well documented that pen raised fish create solution and have illnesses that can be harmful to wild fish.
2. Cook has demonstrated through their past actions and non actions that they are not careful in managing their pens. Their lack of maintenance has cause large releases of pen raised fish putting wild fish in jeopardy.
3. We should not put important public assets at risk primarily to benefit one private for profit company, particularly when the risk to our indigenous fish stock is put to risk, no mater how small.
4. We should take a page from our neighboring states of California and Oregon and refuse to allow net pens in Puget Sound for the purpose of raising fish for the primary benefit of a private company.