

Jeffrey Barrett

I support modification of Cooke's permits to allow for the raising of steelhead. It is a native species, and in any case will be sterile, so that eliminates the agency and public concerns involved in raising non-native Atlantic salmon. More generally, although depending only upon wild fisheries benefits some stakeholders, the reality is that with both the regional and national populations increasing, it is very important that we have viable aquaculture activities to provide healthy animal protein, while also helping to reduce fishing pressure on wild populations. I think most of us that live in Washington consider ourselves to be supportive of the environment. To me Cooke's proposed aquaculture is consistent with that pro-environment attitude because it helps protect wild fish. And Cooke's operations can also help provide seafood at a reasonable cost. That brings value to our citizens that have more limited incomes. Finally, we will import farm-raised fish into Washington even if Cooke's requested permit changes are denied. Banning production of a product in your state, while demanding that it still be available from other states or countries is environmental imperialism. Ecology and the people of Washington are better than that.