

Northwest Fisheries Enhancement

Hello, I am the Chairman of Northwest Fisheries Enhancement- NWFE, a Washington Non-Profit and 501c4. NWFE is active in hatchery management, assessments with recommendations to utilities and government. NWFE has recently assisted Cooke Aquaculture to find a home for over 400,000 Triploid Rainbow trout they were stuck with after regulatory delays and did not want to destroy- again.

Please see-

<https://www.24-7pressrelease.com/press-release/472241/northwest-fisheries-enhancement-helps-save-over-400000-rainbow-trout-during-covid-19> and <https://nwspportsmanmag.com/riffe-lake-stocked-with-unexpected-405000-triploids-from-cooke/>

I visited Cookes Skatter Creek hatchery and inspected these really nice rainbow trout as did WDFW. These are premier trout and a high quality fish. The facility was ran with the highest standards and practices, Cookes Recirculating and partial recirculating systems are some of the nicest I've seen, all the staff were substantially more knowledgeable than many other hatcheries I visit. Jim Parsons the GM has his MS in fish genetics and a leader in aquaculture. Jim is now a Advisory Board member for NWFE and sincerely interested in fish health and care. Everything I saw at the Skatter Creek hatchery and during the fish plantings show how Cooke Aquaculture Pacific professionalism and expertise should very well translate to the Puget Sound Grow out facilities and the quality of fish raised there.

Additionally while Washington Department of Ecology is not directed by NOAA Fisheries -please see NOAA Fisheries Priorities and Annual Guidance 2019; <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/noaa-fisheries-priorities-and-annual-guidance-2019> and message from administrator Chris Oliver- # 1 priority To support the Blue Economy—a NOAA priority—we will amplify the economic value of U.S. fisheries, including aquaculture. We support the long-term sustainability of our fisheries to benefit commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishermen as well as aquaculture producers, the seafood industry, and coastal communities that depend on those fisheries and coastal resources. Our successes at ending overfishing and rebuilding fisheries support a strong U.S. seafood economy. In 2019, we will focus greater attention and involvement in the arena of international seafood marketing and trade. A highpriority objective in the Department of Commerce strategic plan is "increasing marine aquaculture production." Supplementing U.S. wild-caught fisheries, a healthy marine aquaculture industry has the potential to greatly increase our overall U.S. seafood production and reduce the seafood trade deficit. In 2019, we will give our full support to growing a healthy U.S. marine aquaculture industry. Our first step will be to address the bureaucratic hurdles an applicant faces in the federal permitting process.

While WDOE has very important directives please support aquaculture and Cooke Aquaculture in this process.

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