

# Steve Hawes

I wish to voice my strong opposition to allowing Cooke Aquaculture to establish a steelhead fish farm in Washington waters. Besides the obvious negative ecological impacts (dead zones under and around the pens, disease outbreaks, escapement, etc.), Cooke has already proven to be an unreliable and unethical partner to the state. As residents of West Shore on Guemes Island, directly across Bellingham Channel from Cooke's Cypress Island facility during the 2017 pen failure and breakout, we witnessed the event firsthand. Cooke was repeatedly unreliable in its maintenance of the pens, even following repeated warnings. This lack of maintenance resulted in the pen failure. Following the failure, Cooke blamed it first on the solar eclipse (laughable but pathetic), and then on extreme tides. The tides were not extreme at the time of the failure. Additionally, the pens are located in Deepwater Bay, which allows plenty of protection from strong currents. Their explanations were dishonest. NO to Cooke Aquaculture. "Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me."