

Hello Washington Department of Ecology,

I am a Colorado School of Mines student who is doing a project over the Cooke Aquaculture crisis. I have been taking information from local tribes, Cooke's Website, Clam Bay permits, and local news sites. I have a couple questions about the solutions that I have come across that may have been proposed, where more information about some solutions that I may not know about, and some general questions about the situation.

The first question is about the switch from salmon to steelhead. Who did your department consult in order to come to this conclusion? Did you contact local tribes, and if so, which tribes? Did you take into account any of the tribes benefiting like that of the Jamestown Tribe, or did you look at the permits from a strictly environmental point of view?

You have a loose way for reporting numbers according to the "FACT SHEET FOR NPDES PERMIT WA0031526 COOKE AQUACULTURE PACIFIC, LLC CLAM BAY SALTWATER I", that is Cooke Aquaculture will be reporting the numbers directly to you, which can lead to possible fraud. Along with this, to the public Cooke doesn't have the best environmental track record. Why would they not want to report improper numbers?

So it seems that there would also be concerns over environmental degradation of the surrounding area when it comes to the fish waste. I have come across the proposal of using sea cucumbers to get around this hazard, as they are one of the most efficient bottom feeders you can use. Has your organization looked into this proposal, and do you think it is sustainable economically and environmentally?

Over the years since the accident, many foreign countries, especially Canada have taken notice of your response and solutions with the accident. Where do you see your organization playing a role on a global scale, or do you try to keep priorities only related to the problem at hand?

Finally, how under what criteria have you heavily leaned on to create solutions for this problem? Was it research, was it EPA regulations, or was it something second hand, such as Cooke Aquaculture research?

Thank you!

Stephen O'Brien

4237797606

Environmental Engineering Major at Colorado School of Mines

stephenobrien@mymail.mines.edu