

Jim Parsons

Thank you. So, my name is Jim Parsons. I'm the general manager for Cooke Aquacultures Pacific Operations here in Washington State. We truly appreciate the Department of Ecology for their thorough review of the existing science that was used in determining that the proposed modification to our NPDES permit, a switch from non-native Atlantic salmon to sterile native rainbow trout will result in no increases in nutrient discharge and may even, in fact, lessen any discharge impacts from our marine farming operations.

We will reserve our comments on specific aspects of the permit changes involving increase data submission and analysis of our operational factors for our written this month.

It does seem appropriate at this time, however, to remind our regulatory agencies and those listening that the United States currently imports 80% to 90% of its seafood. Given that food has been shown to be increasingly important for our collective health and that over half of the seafood that is imported comes from aquaculture operations in foreign lands, which may be far less regulated than that in our own country and state

Food and nutritional security alone should dictate that we should be looking at ways to increase [audio breaking up] instead of reducing or eliminating it. Couple of the importance of rural, working waterfront economies and employment, we clearly need to expand this industry.

All food production systems have some form of environmental impact. Latest research trends from throughout the globe are finally demonstrating that the growing of aquatic organisms is one of the most environmentally friendly forms of protein production on our planet. CAP will continue to work with regulators to implement new production technologies as they develop and to continuously improve our operations and minimize our impact, while providing much needed local and safe seafood to our communities.

Thank you for the time to comment tonight.