

# Kevin Bright

Hi, I'm Kevin Bright. I work at Cooke Aquaculture now. I started in this business in 1990. I've got a degree in marine biology, and I truly believe that aquaculture is the answer to providing food for people, just like agriculture on land provides food for people.

So, I just wanted to say that in 1996 the first and NPDES permits for commercial net pen operations were issued. Those permits required the company to report monthly feed, monthly antibiotic use and monthly biomass for the site, so since 1996, the various companies have been required by the NPDES permit to report all those quantities in ecology, so they have that data. It's publicly available to people, and it's been publicly available since 1996.

I think, in my opinion, ecology has these additional permit modifications and additions that ecology has developed more than adequately will further safeguard the water quality conditions around these facilities. This is a switch from one species of salmonid to another species of salmonid. The fish feeds that we will use are going to be nearly identical and as pointed out in the application materials, probably shorter growing periods, which means increased fallowing periods and more resting periods between generations of fish.

When I first started, we had three generations of the fish at the site. Those sites never went empty. We were adding juvenile fish onto adult fish and the pens constantly remain full of fish. Now we've got a break in the cycle. You put a generation in and then you pull them out. That's a standard aquaculture practice for various reasons. It gives a resting period to the environment. It breaks any disease cycles if there are any. Any parasite cycles if there are any.

It's no different than what happens when you drive through the fields out there in the Skagit Valley and there's nothing planted. There's no tulips. It's an empty field, right? So we take a rest and break, give nature a chance to take a breather.

Ecology's never been easy with the since these NPDES permits came about. Every year that they-- every permit cycle that they've been renewed, there's been new and additional requirements of the industry- pollution prevention plans, escape prevention plans, more reporting. These permits now we are going to do more water quality, sampling, more benthic sediment sampling annually, and sometimes twice a year no for benthic sampling.

So, ecology's done a job of increasing the regulatory environment around aquaculture in Washington State and it's done a good job, I believe, in helping this industry evolve. It's a new industry and it's evolved and it's adapted and I think this is a step of the right direction to start raising sterile, native, all female triploid steelhead, and we're not raising a non-native species anymore. We're raising a native species, which is what a lot of people wanted us to do a long time ago. I had lots of my friends ask me why we weren't raising native species and I gave them various explanations why Atlantic salmon was the fish of choice at the time in the 1990's, but the world's changed and this is a native species and there's a market for steelhead. There's a market for fresh, sustainable seafood and there's a market for jobs in this environment, so that's what I want to say, and thank you for your time.