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STATE OF MAINE

MAINE BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AND
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

IN THE MATTER OF
NORDIC AQUAFARMS, INC.

APPLICATIONS FOR ATLANTIC SALMON LAND-BASED
AQUACULTURE FACILITY

PUBLIC TESTIMONY
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020

PRESIDING OFFICER: ROBERT DUCHESNE

Reported by Robin J. Dostie, a Notary Public and
court reporter in and for the State of Maine, on
February 11, 2020, at the University of Maine
Hutchinson Center, 80 Belmont Avenue, Belfast, Maine,
commencing at 6:00 p.m.

1 BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

2 MARK DRAPER

3 SUSAN LESSARD

4 JAMES PARKER

5 STEVEN PELLETIER

6 ROBERT SANFORD

7

8 DEP & STAFF PRESENT:

9 GERALD REID, COMMISSIONER, DEP

10 PEGGY BENSINGER, OFFICE OF THE MAINE ATTORNEY GENERAL

11 LAURA JENSEN, OFFICE OF THE MAINE ATTORNEY GENERAL

12 KEVIN MARTIN, OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

13 BETH CALLAHAN, BUREAU OF LAND RESOURCES

14 DAWN HALLOWELL, BUREAU OF LAND RESOURCES

15 JOHN HOPECK, BUREAU OF WATER QUALITY

16 GREGG WOOD, BUREAU OF WATER QUALITY

17 CINDY BERTOCCI, EXECUTIVE ANALYST, BEP

18 RUTH ANN BURKE, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, BEP

19 DAVID MADORE, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

20

21

22

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PARTIES

Intervenors (cont.):

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1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

2 MR. DUCHESNE: Well, good evening and thank
3 you all for coming. I now call to order this public
4 testimony session of the public hearing of the Maine
5 Board of Environmental Protection on Nordic
6 Aquafarms' proposal for an Atlantic salmon land-based
7 aquaculture facility in Belfast and Northport. This
8 hearing is to evaluate the applications submitted by
9 Nordic for permits under the Natural Resources
10 Protection Act, the Site Location of Development Act,
11 the Water Pollution Control Laws and the Improvement
12 and Protection of Air Laws.

13 This hearing is governed by the Maine
14 Administrative Procedures Act, Title 5 of the
15 Department of Environmental Protection's Rules
16 Concerning the Processing of Applications, which is
17 Chapter 2, and the Department's Rules Concerning the
18 Conduct of Licensing Hearings, which is Chapter 3.

19 Notice of this hearing was given in
20 accordance with the Maine Administrative Procedures
21 Act and our rules governing hearings. Notice was
22 published three times in each of the following Maine
23 newspapers, the Bangor Daily News, the Republican
24 Journal, the Camden Herald and the Courier Gazette.

25 While Nordic's permit applications will

1 ultimately be judged by the Board on all of the
2 criteria of the permits it is seeking, this hearing
3 is focusing on specific permitting criteria. We ask
4 as best you can that you focus your testimony this
5 evening on the following criteria, this is what most
6 enables the Board to make a good decision; Nordic's
7 financial capacity to construct and operate the
8 proposed project, weight usage -- or water usage, I
9 beg your pardon, potential impacts to wetlands
10 including streams, freshwater wetlands and coastal
11 wetlands, stormwater management and erosion and
12 sedimentation control, potential impacts to exiting
13 neighboring uses, potential impacts from blasting and
14 odor, air emissions and wastewater discharge to
15 Belfast Bay. That will be most interesting to the
16 Board when it renders its decision.

17 And my name is Robert Duchesne. I am a
18 member of the Board and the Presiding Officer for
19 this hearing. I live in Hudson. Other members of
20 the Board here this evening are Mark Draper of
21 Caribou, Susan Lessard of Bucksport, James Parker of
22 Veazie, Steven Pelletier of Yarmouth and Robert
23 Sanford of Gorham.

24 Joining me from the Department of
25 Environmental Protection this evening are Gregg Wood,

1 Dawn Hallowell, Beth Callahan, Kevin Martin, Dr. John
2 Hopeck and David Madore up front here. Also here are
3 Peggy Bensinger and Laura Jensen, Assistant Attorneys
4 General and Counsel to the Department, Cynthia
5 Bertocci, Board Executive Analyst and Ruth Ann Burke,
6 Board Administrative Assistant.

7 Our hearing today is being transcribed by
8 Dostie Reporting Service. In order to ensure an
9 accurate transcript, I ask you to clarify the
10 pronunciation of -- or spelling of your name when you
11 do start to testify. Please speak clearly and not
12 too quickly for the sake of the court reporter.

13 If you wish to speak, I hope you have signed
14 up. If you have not, there are sign-up sheets just
15 out by the doorway. Please sign-in on one of the
16 appropriate sign-in sheets on the table in the
17 corridor in support of the project or opposed to the
18 project or neither for nor against the project. I
19 will call names from the sign-in sheets one at a time
20 for you to come to the microphone and speak. To
21 ensure everyone gets an opportunity to speak, people
22 wishing to testify tonight will have three minutes to
23 speak. And I want to emphasize this is not out of
24 disrespect to the people who have something to say
25 over the first course of the evening but out of

1 respect to the people on the back half of the evening
2 who need an equal amount of time to express their
3 views and concerns to the Board so that we do get to
4 hear from everybody as best we can. We have a
5 timekeeper who will let me know when you are about to
6 exceed your three minutes. As time permits, I will
7 be lenient because we are very anxious to hear what
8 you have to say. When I tell you that your time is
9 up, please wrap up quickly and I will ask you to
10 summarize. I ask that you be concise so that
11 everyone has a chance to speak and please focus your
12 testimony on the Department's hearing criteria.

13 Prior to presenting your testimony, please
14 state your name, where you are from and who you are
15 affiliated with. You may submit a written copy of
16 your testimony if you wish to by handing it to David
17 Madore. There are two reason for this, or really
18 just one reason, we want to make it easy on our
19 reporter. She doesn't necessarily have an easy time
20 catching every word especially if the acoustics are
21 bad on any given microphones, so if she has a copy of
22 what you've provided after you're done delivering it
23 that makes her job easier. Prior to presenting your
24 testimony, please state your name -- I said that.

25 All participants in the public hearing this

1 evening are expected to be courteous towards the
2 Board, the Department Staff, each other and the
3 general public. Please direct all testimony to me.
4 Do not address or speak to the audience. No booing,
5 cheering or clapping allowed. If you need to, get
6 that out of your system now. If anyone is unable to
7 conduct themselves appropriately, I will take
8 necessary action. Generally that's not necessary,
9 but it may include excluding an individual from
10 further participation in these proceedings, but this
11 is Belfast and I know it's a good bunch.

12 At this time, please silence or turn off
13 your electronic devices, including cell phones, so
14 that there will not be interruptions.

15 Please note the location of the emergency
16 exits and do not block the doorways.

17 All witnesses will be -- at the hearing will
18 be sworn. Witnesses testifying this evening are
19 subject to cross-examination by the parties and
20 questioning by Board members and staff. I expect the
21 parties to let me know if they would like to
22 cross-examine any of the witnesses this evening.

23 A copy of the application is located on the
24 side table right over here. After the hearing, the
25 application will be available for public review by

1 arrangement during regular business hours at the
2 Department's Augusta Office. The project file is
3 available on the Department's webpage at
4 maine.gov/dep/projects.html.

5 At this time, I ask all persons planning to
6 testify to stand and raise their right hand. Do you
7 swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to
8 give is the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

9 (Witnesses affirm.)

10 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Just a procedural
11 matter, two things that I mentioned, if you have
12 testimony you can give to David after you're done
13 with it, he will collect it for Robin. And when you
14 come up, we're going to -- I'm going to be calling
15 everybody and telling you who is on deck as well so
16 that you have some idea two or three speakers down
17 the road when your turn is. I would ask you to come
18 up an aisle and stand in line there so that we can
19 make sure that the doors to the room are not blocked.
20 That makes the staff here really much happier.

21 And with that in mind, I believe we're ready
22 to proceed. So we will start with Sidney Block. I
23 have on deck Pat Kaplan, Lew McGregor and Steve
24 Byers.

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. My name

1 is Sidney Block. I live in Northport.

2 MR. DUCHESNE: You need to turn that on.

3 MS. BENSINGER: Our tech person is coming to
4 make sure the microphone is on.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Sidney Block.
6 I live in Northport. I am speaking as a private
7 citizen. 50 years ago, I was called to duty in the
8 United States Air Force. I took an oath to protect
9 our country. I served honorably. I followed the
10 rules. I did what I was supposed to do. For the
11 last two years, I have watched Nordic Aquafarms do
12 what it is supposed to do. It is an investment
13 company whose job it is to make us want to buy their
14 farm whether or not we need it, whether or not it is
15 good for us. It is classic Madison Avenue.

16 I am surprised how readily our governor, our
17 legislators and local officials bought into Nordic's
18 pitch, swallowed the financial bait and then found
19 themselves either convinced or hooked despite
20 accumulating facts in evidence. Their amplification
21 of Nordic's promotion has engendered an unrealistic
22 expectation of significant economic benefits for this
23 city. When all of the final costs and consequences
24 are tallied Belfast taxpayers are going to be
25 justifiably disappointed.

1 Nordic's promises have unnecessarily divided
2 equally well-meaning citizens of Waldo County.
3 Sadly, whether or not Nordic comes, it will have
4 built one thing, an unnecessary and unwanted wall
5 between our economic and environmental interests.
6 Nordic has wounded our community and the scar will be
7 slow to heal.

8 Frankly, my biggest disappointment is with
9 our regulatory agencies, supposedly expert,
10 independent, featured by fairness and viewed with
11 integrity first, these agents bypassed the foremost
12 fundamental determination of TRI, which exists to
13 save themselves time and energy and taxpayers money.
14 Then they ignored, bent and stretched their own
15 permitting rules while constraining and confining
16 their hearings to unfairly favor and follow political
17 pressure, suspect science and financial fantasies.

18 My parents, your parents and grandparents
19 survived the Great Depression, rebuilt our economy
20 and protected our country by their selfless service
21 in the Second World War. They have aptly been called
22 the greatest generation. Sadly, we, our generation,
23 we have not been the best stewards of what the -- of
24 the world they left us. What will we leave in our
25 environment for those who will follow us?

1 Because I am not optimistic about the
2 outcome of these hearings, I speak this evening for
3 the record so that one day when our Little River
4 forest and wildlife habitat are but a memory, our
5 Belfast water is once again polluted and our economy
6 and residential neighborhoods demeaned, when our
7 children and grandchildren ask how did this happen,
8 they will learn that I, amongst others, did care.

9 I was lucky during the Vietnam War,
10 stationed stateside, still nonetheless every so often
11 a stranger thanks me for my military service and I
12 reply I only did what I was supposed to do. I would
13 like to be able to thank you for your service to
14 Maine. Do what are you supposed to do. You are the
15 Bureau of Environmental Protection. You are supposed
16 to protect our environment. Do your duty. If not
17 you, who? If not now, when? And if not here, where?
18 Thank you.

19 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you very much. Are
20 there any questions from anybody? Seeing none, I'll
21 got to Pat Kaplan with Lew McGregor on deck.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. I am Pat
23 Kaplan and I live in Belmont, Maine about five miles
24 out of the center of town. I would ask us to listen
25 to the silence. (Pause.) Thank you.

1 Over the course of the past two years Nordic
2 Aquafarms has made many assurance -- assurances that
3 its Belfast industrial fish factory will be quiet.
4 But now we learn that Nordic Aquafarms is saying it
5 will fill and truck away 14,000 truck loads of earth
6 from its proposed construction site. Surely Nordic
7 Aquafarms knows this process will not be quiet. Can
8 we consider for a minute the sound of the earth --
9 excuse me, of the 14,000 truck loads of earth
10 rumbling through our formerly peaceful and quiet
11 community for days, probably weeks and possibly
12 months on end.

13 And how can we believe Nordic's assurances
14 anyway? After Nordic told residents of Fredrikstad,
15 Norway that its industrial fish farm there would not
16 only be quiet but silent only to make so much noise
17 that neighbors of the factory were up in arms.
18 Neighbors repeatedly besieged Nordic to do something
19 about that noise that penetrated the walls of their
20 homes where families and children once lived in peace
21 and quiet.

22 I am hopeful that this trusted body and
23 trusted by the good people of Maine to protect and
24 defend the environment upon which we all depend for
25 our lives will listen with open hearts as well as

1 technical experience and say this project is not
2 suitable nor fair to our struggling planet. Thank
3 you.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Are there questions? Seeing
5 none. Lew McGregor is next. Steve Byers and Eileen
6 Wolper on deck. And, again, if you have any written
7 testimony you can leave it with Mr. Madore when
8 you're done.

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi, there. Thank you.
10 Lew McGregor from Belfast. And I have been here
11 since 10 or 10:30 this morning listening to testimony
12 regarding water usage and I -- it reminds me of the
13 feeling I've had about Nordic the last couple years
14 I've followed this process of moving the goal post
15 and seeming rather elusive in terms of details that
16 remind me of the cliché of like raising teenagers is
17 like trying to nail Jello to a tree.

18 So I'd like to be able to support the
19 project, but I feel like it's -- it's not fully
20 formed, it's not fully contained in its plan for
21 Belfast and I would like you to put the brakes on to
22 just really slow the process down. Thank you very
23 much.

24 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
25 questions. We'll go to Steve Byers, Eileen Wolper on

1 deck, Marsden Brewer I believe it is following with
2 Jennifer Hill after that.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. My name is Steve
4 Byers. I'm a resident of Waldo, Town of Waldo, and
5 I'm a small business owner here in Belfast. I am
6 here just to ask that you please deny Nordic
7 Aquafarms their permits for their pipeline request.
8 It puts the Belfast Bay and the greater Penobscot Bay
9 and even greater the coast of Maine and beyond at
10 risk for disturbing the buried HoltraChem mercury.
11 According to the Maine Lobstering Union the value of
12 the Waldo County lobster catch has an economic worth
13 to the Maine -- to Maine and the mid-coast economies
14 in excess of \$9 million and \$15 million annually. As
15 a new company to Maine, Nordic has failed to
16 demonstrate adequate understanding of how potent such
17 a loss could be to Mainers. Imagine the mid-coast
18 without lobster. Imagine the mid-coast with so many
19 lost jobs and lost lobstering business.

20 I am a homesteader and work a part-time job
21 and have my own business and my family, we catch
22 alewives. We go to the Ducktrap and we -- this last
23 year we caught 250 alewives and we're reclaiming the
24 old tradition of salting and smoking them, eating
25 them and also feeding them to our pig who is pregnant

1 and having babies in April. It's concerning to me
2 that when a record number of alewives is returning to
3 the Penobscot Bay when in 150 years we haven't seen
4 this many alewives that the BEP would allow such a
5 pipeline to come in and disrupt the resurgence in
6 their population. Dwayne Shaw of the Downeast Salmon
7 Federation has said if you let -- if you bring back
8 the small fish, you bring back the big fish. So if
9 we bring back the alewives we'll see more of a
10 resilient comeback of the salmon and other species.

11 So I end with how are we to trust the
12 promises of Nordic, this young very wealthy invested
13 company? Their track record demonstrates that they
14 cannot be trusted. Will we pass permits with a trial
15 by error approach such as what they did in
16 Fredrikstad where they had to -- where their building
17 is falling to the ground? Please consider just for a
18 moment asking the bay, does the bay want this?
19 Please ask the children, do they wish to swim in
20 water contaminated by industrial waste? Would you
21 like to see signs that say caution, swim at own risk,
22 swimming not recommended? We take our children down
23 to the bay and there is a whole bunch of kids in the
24 back who aren't going to speak tonight, but they're
25 all kids that I've seen swimming in this bay here and

1 I can guarantee you that they will not be able to
2 swim in the bay if construction for this devastating
3 industry is allowed. Do the lobstermen want it? The
4 answer is no. The risk is too great. Belfast will
5 resist to the end and so will the bay. Thank you.

6 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you very much. I need
7 to check with my timekeeper. When you indicate one
8 finger --

9 MS. BURKE: One minute left.

10 MR. DUCHESNE: One minute. Good.

11 MS. BURKE: Yes.

12 MR. DUCHESNE: And it doesn't mean times up.
13 Good. I think we're good for the course. Next,
14 Marsden Brewer and Jennifer Hill. They will be
15 followed by Nancy Durand-Larson.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. I'm Eileen Wolper.
17 I've lived in Belfast for 30 years and for 28 years
18 of those 30 years I've been a nurse at Waldo County
19 and every day of my commute I drive by the
20 Passagassawamkeag River and it is a joy to see it in
21 all its seasons.

22 Thank you for allowing me to speak. I am
23 going to address the environmentally inappropriate
24 site chosen by Nordic. Even if this project had some
25 merit, the Little River is the wrong place for it to

1 be. Compared with Bucksport, for example, Nordic's
2 concrete will not be laid upon already industrialized
3 ground, instead at Little River it will destroy a
4 precious environmentally important and sensitive
5 green space with a mature forest and wildlife
6 habitat.

7 Two, Nordic's pipelines will trespass
8 through a residential area with a covenant
9 prohibiting commercial use and then through a
10 registered conservation area. Furthermore, Nordic
11 will discharge its daily waste not into a rapidly
12 flowing river like the Penobscot, but instead into a
13 shallow 35 feet of water close to and thereby a
14 threat to another thriving residential community,
15 meaning Northport. The rate of dissipation in this
16 area of the bay is so low that the effluent will
17 never be fully diluted or completely gone for however
18 long the Nordic plant exists. There will be an ever
19 present plume of nitrogen water, a threat to other
20 marine life and economically important aquaculture's
21 interests. Because of the site chosen alone you
22 should not grant Nordic the permit it seeks. Thank
23 you.

24 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Are there
25 questions? Seeing none, thank you very much.

1 Jennifer Hill. I'm sorry, I beg your pardon, Marsden
2 first.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Marsden Brewer.) Yup.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Jennifer Hill on deck, Nancy
5 Dorand-Lanson and I believe Robert -- I can't read
6 his name.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'd like to thank you guys
8 for the opportunity to speak. My name is Marsden,
9 M-A-R-S-D-E-N, Brewer, B-R-E-W-E-R. I am a
10 commercial fisherman down in Stonington. I am also a
11 farmer. I've got a few goats, raise a garden, but
12 more importantly, I grow scallops in Penobscot Bay
13 off of Deere Isle. I sell whole scallops, okay.
14 Whole scallops are considered a high risk species.
15 You take a mussel or an oyster and you have a plume
16 in the summertime with red tide or ASP or PSP. With
17 ASP and a scallop if you increase the level too much
18 that scallop will hold the ASP for the rest of its
19 life making it next to worthless for an
20 aquaculturist.

21 There is another farm up above me and there
22 is a farm in North Haven growing scallops. There is
23 a lot of interests around the bay. I'm President of
24 the Maine Aquaculture Co-op. That's a group of
25 fishermen that have banded together and farmers, you

1 know, to develop scallop aquaculture in Maine looking
2 for a sustainable fishery and an opportunity and so
3 far it looks real good. We'd like to see it stay
4 that way. Penobscot Bay is noted for its lack of PSP
5 and ASP. I would hate to see it change. We're
6 seeing a lot of good things happening in the bay.
7 The cod fish are all the way up to the lower end of
8 Deere Isle now. They haven't been there in 30 years.
9 They're up around the north end of North Haven.
10 They, you know, this is schools of fish, not just an
11 occasional rock cod. They haven't been there in a
12 long time. There is small hake and scallops up
13 around Little Deere Isle, they haven't been there in
14 a long time. Granted, that mill has only been closed
15 four or five years, but when you stop operating with
16 that chlorine being allowed into it for the bleaching
17 process the bay seems to be coming back to it a
18 little bit. You've got salmon coming up in the
19 rivers. You breached some dams. You've got the
20 herring -- I mean, the alewives. The other stuff all
21 returned. There is all kinds of good stuff going on
22 in the bay.

23 And the outfall from growing 60 million --
24 producing 60 million pounds of fish a year, that 10
25 percent of fine solids, suspended solids that's going

1 to be coming out through the pipe that they're not
2 capturing that's going to drift for a long ways
3 around the bay and it's also -- it builds up in the
4 wintertime. If we had 12 hours of daylight and 12
5 hours of darkness we'd be good, okay, because we
6 could photosynthesize and manufacture all of that
7 stuff, but when the sun angle goes down
8 photosynthesis stops from late October, okay, until
9 April before it starts to pick up, end of March. So
10 that just allows all this nitrogen to accumulate and
11 sets you up for bloom in the summertime. It's --
12 it's wrong for the bay. It's wrong, you know, for
13 the species. I just -- I don't know. I can't say
14 enough wrong with it.

15 I was asked a week ago to fill out a survey
16 on aquaculture and, you know, it -- the first
17 question was, you know, do you support it or do you
18 oppose it. And it's like how the hell do you answer
19 it? On one end you're, you know, vehemently opposed
20 and on the other end you're very supportive, you know
21 you wish the mussel -- the oyster guys could get rid
22 of their things, but anyway, I'll leave it at that.

23 MR. DUCHESNE: You actually put it very well
24 and it's very enlightening. And it's -- it's
25 actually encouraging to hear the positive things you

1 have to say about our fisheries, so.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Marsden Brewer.) It is
3 and it just -- please don't screw them up.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Okay. Thank you. Jennifer
5 Hill will be next, then Nancy Durand-Lanson, I
6 believe, is following that and Robert Brewer, Chris
7 Wright and Lucky Skidgell appears to be following.
8 You may proceed.

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jennifer Hill.) The
10 Board of Environmental Protection, thank God you're
11 here. Belfast Little River district needs you.
12 Tonight rousing myself to leave the warmth of our
13 family's hearth for the chill and slush of a February
14 evening, I think of all those people whom I know
15 won't bother. Simple folk who just want to be left
16 alone to enjoy their comforts believing that nothing
17 they can say or do will change the minds of the
18 powers that be anyway.

19 It has been an ugly battle. I won't speak
20 on behalf of either side in the manner of right or
21 wrong. I am here only to tell you my own thoughts on
22 the proposed corporate fish project. I am no
23 scientist but a retired business woman. Maine
24 Business School Financial Professor Bob Strong taught
25 us that before considering what something will cost

1 determine the need. What is the need here? The
2 bottom line for Nordic Aquafarms is to make money for
3 their shareholders, which they have persuaded local
4 proponents will result in more tax revenue for the
5 city. That's obvious. We could all use more money.

6 A certain number of environmentalists have
7 been persuaded that the problem addressed is the
8 amount of fossil fuels expended by flying fresh
9 salmon from the coast cold water of Norway to the
10 markets along the eastern seaboard in the United
11 States. But wait a minute, solving dubious problems
12 with money making schemes hasn't worked for us in the
13 past. If you don't believe me visit the landfill.
14 Real problems like increasing -- like increasing
15 public transportation, reducing industrial pollution
16 and our own ferocious demand for creature comforts
17 continues unaddressed. These are our real
18 environmental problems.

19 Erik Heim has devised an Americanized
20 version of the salmon. A product sequestered in huge
21 tanks and fed meals of whatever the market will bear,
22 flushing the creature's treated waste into the bay.
23 The amount of energy required to circulate the
24 millions of gallons of water around the clock for its
25 years of operation is substantial and will give this

1 proposed solution its own huge carbon footprint.

2 We are immersed in our environment and
3 cannot step outside of it, but for scientists and
4 dreamers we are destined to repeat what has gone
5 before. The past is our gospel, our go-to for
6 safety. How do we correct a course wrought for
7 disaster for our species? Through the Department of
8 the Environmental Protection, the courts, public
9 opinion. Well, let the correction begin. Young
10 people are demanding it and I am here to stand with
11 them.

12 Today we seek wisdom and power from our
13 Board of Environmental Protection in a nod to the
14 future help us to say no to this false problem so
15 that we may look to our future for real solutions to
16 the vast real environmental problems that we're
17 facing. Thank you.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you very much. Seeing
19 no questions, we can proceed to Nancy Durand, and I
20 can't quite read her -- is it Lanson or Larson?

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Lanson.

22 MR. DUCHESNE: Lanson. Very good. Thank
23 you so much. In the wings should be Robert I'm going
24 to say, Brewer but that may be wrong, Chris Wright,
25 Lucky Skidgell, Susan Cutting after that followed by

1 Terry Faulkingham. You may proceed.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you. Thank you for
3 coming first. I was desperate and worried. So my
4 name is Nancy Durand-Lanson. I live in Monroe and
5 came to live in Maine with my husband four-and-a-half
6 years ago, which was a conscious choice to finish
7 raising our family in an environment that was closer
8 to nature.

9 When I first heard about this project, I
10 waited to hear a little bit more. As months have
11 passed what I was hearing and seeing didn't make any
12 sense. I could see city officials quickly changing
13 regulations to adapt to a project in order to rapidly
14 secure a deal with corporate money. I could read
15 Nordic's -- Nordic's disregard for the environment
16 despite shouting that their fish plant is
17 eco-friendly. Their actions are leading examples,
18 the pipelines changed about three times to the
19 benefit of them not the bay, the effluence got closer
20 to the coast and people's property creating more
21 issues than they started with. I am concerned that a
22 discharge will raise the temperature of an already
23 alarming fast warming Gulf of Maine. The temperature
24 difference between the sea and the plant water
25 discharge will be between 2 and 34 degrees

1 Fahrenheit. No matter how much water there is in the
2 bay it will change the temperature as a higher
3 positive.

4 I was at the DEP annual climate council
5 meeting on January 29 and the second scientific
6 presentation was exactly on that topic and how
7 climate change is affecting Maine's -- Maine's
8 coasts. They referred to fish species moving north
9 of Maine as the water is getting warmer and that
10 water surges are already affecting coastal developed
11 areas. This plant in addition to the one in
12 Bucksport and many more maybe will highly contribute
13 to the warming of the bay as well as changing its
14 salinity. DEP -- BEP needs to put one and one
15 together and realize that this kind of project is how
16 we got into a climate crisis and that your strong
17 immediate actions are necessary to reduce Maine's
18 emissions by 2030, our first reduction deadline. You
19 are not to add to Maine's emissions for your
20 colleagues to clean up and who will if you're the one
21 we pay for to do it and you're not able to oppose
22 tensions?

23 It has been done and it doesn't work. We
24 just need to go and travel around the U.S. or the
25 world to take a look at it or even just go to see

1 Nordic's first plant in Denmark and realize that DEP
2 isn't aligned with its mission right now. And
3 likewise, you should be standing for what you are
4 paid for. There is no human without a clean Earth,
5 therefore no economics.

6 I will finish by first saying that the
7 Little River site is inappropriate for Nordic to
8 build an industrial farm and then that feeding the
9 world isn't a task that pertained to Belfast. This
10 town and many around are thriving on small scale
11 businesses and farms that are so much in trend today
12 and create much more jobs. Thank you for listening.

13 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you very much. Seeing
14 no questions, you're off the hook. Thank you so
15 much.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Nancy Durand-Lanson.)
17 Thank you.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: Robert Brewer followed by
19 Chris Wright, Lucky Skidgell, Susan Cutting and Terry
20 Faulkingham.

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. My name is Robert
22 Brewer. I'm a fisherman/aquaculturist. I have a
23 scallop farm in Penobscot Bay. And I don't think
24 it's a good idea to be discharging into the bay with
25 all that stuff because it's not going to be good for

1 anything and really a site -- a farm that big should
2 be either off-shore or further inland away from the
3 water so it can't pollute the bay because that
4 doesn't help anybody out, so. But it's very
5 concerning to me, so. Thanks.

6 MS. DUCHESNE: Great. Thank you very much.
7 You're an example of why we love public hearings.
8 What concerns people is what concerns us and we
9 appreciate it. And we can proceed to Chris Wright.
10 Lucky Skidgell would be next followed by Susan
11 Cutting.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. That's Chris Wright
13 with a W, W-R-I-G-H-T. I live in Belfast. I was
14 thinking this evening was as much for asking
15 questions as testifying, so I don't have too much to
16 say, but probably this was several years ago that one
17 of Nordic's consultants did some modeling as far as
18 water coming in and out of the bay as far as the --
19 the water movement during tides. And they're -- they
20 represented on a screen this movement by having
21 something that looked like to me like ping pong balls
22 on top of the water and what happened during the
23 presentation was that these ping pong balls moved a
24 little bit and then moved back, moved a little bit
25 and then moved back. So I asked the consultant does

1 that mean what goes into the bay does not leave the
2 bay and I was surprised to hear them say, yes, that's
3 true.

4 Putting that together with the fact that
5 Penobscot Bay is warming faster than any comparable
6 size body of water on the planet the idea of having
7 effluent come into the bay and disturbing the mercury
8 that's here and having the water temperature do
9 nothing but rise and it all stays here it just really
10 doesn't make any sense to me at all. And just a
11 stray thought that I had last week was this idea that
12 we're taking a species that has been out in the wild
13 forever and we're trying to take all of the
14 conditions that support that species and put it on
15 land and that just seems really, really an odd thing
16 to try to do. Thank you very much.

17 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
18 questions, we can go to Lucky Skidgell, Susan
19 Cutting, Terry Faulkingham, John Murphy would be next
20 in the queue. And if Lucky is not ready...

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Lucky Skidgell.) I'll
22 pass.

23 MR. DUCHESNE: Okay. Lucky will pass. We
24 go to Susan Cutting. Terry Faulkingham, John Murphy
25 in the queue.

1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Susan Cutting.) Hi. I'm
2 also here with my son who wanted to say something and
3 he -- we have written his name in there. So I also
4 am asking you to please deny the application for the
5 permit for Nordic Aquafarms and there is lots of
6 reasons why I am really concerned about the project
7 and I am here, here are just three of them.

8 One, the health of the bay. Releasing 7.7
9 million gallons of chemically treated wastewater with
10 1,600 pounds of nitrogen here every day only like
11 two-thirds of a mile from the shore into like 35 feet
12 deep water will likely result in the continual plume
13 of 100 million gallons of this effluent that is
14 possibly 5 to 30 degrees warmer than the rest of the
15 bay. And I'm not a scientist, but I can't see how
16 that wouldn't affect the ecosystems of the bay.
17 And -- and I -- I spend a lot of time on the water,
18 you know, regularly. I'm rower and I have been
19 seeing a lot of fish and a lot of activity --
20 wildlife activity, more than ever before, and I have
21 been so excited that the bay is finally recovering
22 after the -- the chicken farms and -- and this --
23 this is -- it's unthinkable to me to allow our bay to
24 be harmed again. And I have to ask as well and I
25 am -- I won't want my son to swim in the water in the

1 effluent and I ask would you want your children to
2 swim in that?

3 The second reason is the ecosystems of those
4 34 acres are secondary growth mature forests
5 including 10 wetlands and bordering the Little River
6 trail. I have walked that trail many, many times
7 with my family and friends. We've seen river otter
8 slides and listened to the birds and frogs and
9 treasure this special natural area. The idea of
10 taking down a forest, removing 15 to 18 feet of soil
11 or 215,000 cubic yards to build this factory is
12 literally obliterating the natural environment and
13 taking this experience away from our community. And
14 if they need to remove not only the trees and plants
15 and animals but also a huge amount of the soil itself
16 in order to build this destroying wetlands, a popular
17 nature trail and reservoir. It's not an appropriate
18 site for this project.

19 Finally, I know it's not in your hearing
20 criteria, I have one minute left, but I -- I have to
21 say we can't afford to be excluding carbon footprint
22 from the decision-making process any longer and this
23 factory would produce 550 to -- 550,000 to 759,000
24 metric tons of carbon, which is like 14,000 to 18,000
25 new households in Belfast and increasing Belfast's

1 carbon footprint five to seven times and this is your
2 responsibility and it's wrong and it's harmful for
3 our children and our planet.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Now, would your son like to
5 say hi?

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: All right. My name is
7 Walden Cutting and I am 10 years old. I might be
8 just a kid, but I do care about stopping Nordic
9 because -- and there are a few reasons why. I've
10 been -- first, I've been to the forest by the Little
11 River and I really enjoy going there and I -- it's a
12 really beautiful place and I would just hate to see
13 it be destroyed and replaced by a huge polluting fish
14 factory. Second, when I visit there I've seen many
15 signs of beavers and other -- and other species of
16 wildlife that live and thrive there. And all species
17 of animals deserve to have a habitat. So I just
18 really hope that Nordic can be stopped and this -- so
19 we can preserve this forest. Thank you.

20 MR. DUCHESNE: That's great. I think we
21 found our new Chair. And let me just ask you, have
22 you ever been to a proceeding like this before? Is
23 this your first time at a meeting like this
24 because --

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Walden Cutting.) Ah,

1 I've been to one of these before, I think.

2 MR. DUCHESNE: You did good. Thank you so
3 much. Terry Faulkingham. John Murphy in the queue
4 followed by Christopher Hyk, Rachel Herbener and
5 Andrew Stevenson behind them.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. My name is
7 Terry Faulkingham, Jr. I am from Belfast, Maine, a
8 resident of 55 years. I am a commercial lobster
9 fisherman also self-employed for 40 years fishing out
10 of Belfast Harbor and fishing all around the upper
11 Penobscot bay. And I would like to ask you folks if
12 I could split my time with fellow friend and
13 fisherman of myself, so try to keep me -- make sure
14 I'm under a minute-and-a-half because I'd like to
15 make sure that he has -- what he has to say can be
16 used on my time.

17 I am mainly concerned of the discharge, in
18 opposition of the discharge going into the -- the
19 amount of water going into the upper Penobscot Bay.
20 We do not need water increased in temperature. I
21 have a floating lobster cart in Belfast Harbor, which
22 floats 2 to 3,000 pounds of lobster daily which would
23 be devastating to my industry and my income. Young's
24 Lobster Pound also draws intake of water coming into
25 their facilities which would probably be

1 non-existent. Where this discharge pipe comes out
2 there is also a mussel farm there that would be
3 impacted. There is one right across the bay on the
4 Islesboro side of the shore that would be impacted
5 and the fellow that spoke three or four things before
6 me talked about cod. That is true, cod fish and
7 stuff are coming back into the upper Penobscot Bay.
8 And I don't know how I am on time. I'm trying to
9 cram a lot in there in a short time.

10 MR. DUCHESNE: You're doing just fine.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Terry Faulkingham.) This
12 gentleman right here, his name is Hunter Penney.
13 He's a resident of Waldo. He's 15-years-old and he
14 is very -- the most honest and respectable young
15 fellow you'd probably ever meet and I really admire
16 the child, so I give him the opportunity to speak.
17 Have at it, Hunter.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Hunter Penney.
19 I'm 15-years-old and I'm a fourth generation
20 fisherman. I fish out of Belfast and own my own
21 lobster boat. For the past four years I've been
22 lobster fishing the bay. I fish 150 traps and want
23 to expand in the future and when I graduate from high
24 school I want to be a lobster fisherman full-time.

25 I'm speaking tonight because I have concerns

1 over the impact of lobster fishing if the salmon farm
2 is built in Belfast and the effects it will have on
3 Penobscot Bay. One thing I have learned is that
4 lobstermen and lobsterwomen in our state have worked
5 very hard at protecting our way of life and
6 protecting our resources for our future and future
7 generations. I'm worried that if the salmon farm is
8 built it's going to mess up the ecosystem and our bay
9 is potentially jeopardizing my future and all of the
10 fishermen who depend on making a living.

11 MR. DUCHESNE: Yes, could you spell your
12 last name? I know how to spell it.

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Terry Faulkingham.)
14 Hunter Penney.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: (Terry Faulkingham.) Hunter
16 Penney.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: P-E-N-N-E-Y.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: E-Y. Okay. Good. Thank you
19 so much.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Hunter Penney.) Thank
21 you.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Terry Faulkingham.) All
23 set on us?

24 MR. DUCHESNE: All set. Thank you so much.

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Terry Faulkingham.)

1 Thank you.

2 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. And I believe John
3 Murphy is next who will be followed by Christopher
4 Hyk, Rachel Herbener, I hope I'm pronouncing it
5 correct, but I'll find out soon enough.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is John Murphy.
7 I'm a resident of Belfast. I live not too far from
8 the proposed site. My 12-year-old son caught his
9 first striper right in the area where the fish
10 factory is proposing to dump their waste and I'd like
11 the opportunity for another 12-year-old to catch his
12 first striper there. And I am -- I'm also concerned
13 about anything that comes out of that area. Who is
14 going to want to eat it with all of the mercury
15 that's going to be dredged up in their dredging
16 operation. We all know the mercury is there. It's
17 been proven by the Corps of Engineers and what do you
18 think is going to happen to that mercury? So I am
19 asking you to deny these permits for the good of the
20 environment. Thank you.

21 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
22 questions. I want to check in with our reporter to
23 make sure you're okay.

24 MS. DOSTIE: Yes.

25 MR. DUCHESNE: All right. Good.

1 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. My name is
2 Christopher Hyk. I am a Belfast resident and about
3 five years ago I attended a symposium at Point
4 Lookout that covered the Penobscot River watershed.
5 It had numerable speakers coming everything from dam
6 removal to mercury toxins and that sort of thing. I
7 attended one lecture there given by Dianne Kopec,
8 D-I-A-N-N-E, K-O-P-E-C. She's a Ph.D at the Senator
9 George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability
10 Solutions at the University of Maine. Her specialty
11 is wildlife ecology and environmental toxicology. I
12 believe her expertise is --

13 MS. BENSINGER: Can you slow down a little,
14 please.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Christopher Hyk.) Her
16 expertise is in mercury sediments. The words that
17 she had to say were quite disturbing. The problem is
18 far more serious than I think most people understand.
19 I suggest that Upstream Watch speak with her and give
20 you some insights as to just how much mercury is
21 likely to be disturbed by this dredging for the
22 pipes. I -- I don't think you could find a better
23 expert witness. She's done 12 papers on the topic
24 and I hope you will consult her before you make your
25 decision and from what little I can recall from the

1 symposium, I don't think you should really permit
2 this to go forward. Thank you very much.

3 MR. DUCHESNE: Yeah, just for my
4 convenience, I was actually distracted by the sign-up
5 and I missed which person at the University of Maine
6 did you give?

7 MS. BENSINGER: Yeah, what was the person's
8 name?

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Christopher Hyk.) Dianne
10 Kopec.

11 MS. BENSINGER: Thank you.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Christopher Hyk.) Her
13 last name is spelled K-O-P-E-C.

14 MR. DUCHESNE: Just --

15 MS. BENSINGER: May I ask a question?

16 MR. DUCHESNE: Yes, you may ask your
17 question.

18 MS. BENSINGER: I'm not asking a question of
19 you. Earlier this evening there was a woman that
20 spoke to me about wanting to testify this evening and
21 having an exhibit she wanted to display and I've been
22 trying to find her and if she is here come see me.
23 Thank you.

24 MR. DUCHESNE: So that was Christopher Hyk,
25 I believe. We can go to Rachel Herbener. And please

1 correct my pronunciation.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Rachel Herbener.) You
3 did pretty well. It's Herbener. And I'll just make
4 it brief. I oppose this for environmental reasons
5 and I ask that you do your job and take all of these
6 testimonies into account and protect Belfast. And I
7 really don't trust the company either to be truthful
8 and straightforward. Thank you.

9 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
10 questions, I will go to Andrew Stevenson. Janie
11 Phillips and Maddy Godine are on deck. That will
12 finish up my third sheet of paper and I will take
13 some opposition or some support rather for a few
14 people as well. So we can continue with
15 Mr. Stevenson.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Andrew Stevenson.) Good
17 evening, Mr. Duchesne, members of the Board and the
18 representatives from the state regulatory agencies,
19 thank you for the work that you do and for allowing
20 us to address you tonight. This is a very important
21 topic.

22 To begin, I want to acknowledge that we are
23 all living today on the occupied lands of the
24 Wabanaki Nation, one of the continent's First Nations
25 and I hope to honor and respect that fact with my

1 remarks tonight. In a sense, we are all truly from
2 one.

3 Here is my major concerns about Nordic's
4 plan and the permitting process it depends on. I
5 have learned over my professional career that
6 technology always outpaces regulation. The RAS
7 technology is evolving rapidly. It is one of the
8 youngest branches of commercial aquaculture. Its
9 long-term impacts on surrounding environments are
10 largely unknown and there is no commercial facility
11 of the size and design that Nordic has chosen
12 anywhere else in the world today. I submit that you
13 cannot reliably assess the long-term impacts of their
14 proposed facilities without the right yardstick and
15 this Board, the DEP and the other state regulatory
16 agencies with responsibility over such enterprises
17 need to be extremely cautious when deciding on RAS
18 applications.

19 To make your job harder, the track record
20 for land-based RAS is not encouraging. The Nature
21 Conservancy report listed 16 failed projects so far
22 and I have the reference in my prepared remarks,
23 which I will leave with Mr. Madore. The authors
24 examined the reasons for each failure and they found
25 that operational and management expertise is critical

1 and they warn that financial and technical success
2 depends on, and I quote, modular systems allowing for
3 project development and system redundancy in case of
4 failure, technology validation via subscale
5 demonstration projects and proximity to major
6 markets. Nordic's plan largely ignores this warning.

7 In my mind, Nordic's construction plan is an
8 all or nothing strategy. It wants to build all of
9 its Stage 1 facilities together, then build all of
10 its Stage 2 facilities, turn on the switch and see if
11 it and the team operating it will all work together
12 without damaging the surrounding community or
13 polluting the Penobscot Bay. What Nordic should have
14 presented is a plan to build an end-to-end pilot
15 scale operation of modules that will complete one
16 working example of a system that can successfully
17 take a salmon egg and grow it to a market size fish.
18 Once the bugs have been shaken out of version 1.0, so
19 to speak, Nordic could build out a second end-to-end
20 module.

21 I urge you to postpone any decision on the
22 various permits before you until Nordic provides a
23 better plan, a substantial financial performance
24 guarantee and a suitable decommissioning bond. Thank
25 you for your time and attention.

1 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you very much.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Andrew Stevenson.) Thank
3 you.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Seeing no questions. Janie
5 Phillips is next, Maddy Godine, I believe, is after
6 that then I'll be switching to Larissa Flimlin, Peter
7 DelGreco and Patricia Iger.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. My name is
9 Janie Phillips and I live in Belfast. This morning
10 as Mr. Heim made his opening remarks he said, and I
11 quote, all that matters is what you produce, end
12 quote. In that statement lies the reason for my
13 objection to this project. Mr. Heim is a businessman
14 and his concern is his product, the market for that
15 product and the profit from that product. With all
16 due respect to Mr. Heim your product is meant for
17 high end markets and places outside our community and
18 its profits largely benefiting an international
19 company are not all that matters to us, the people
20 who live and work here.

21 The destruction of 50 acres of forest and
22 wildlife habitat matters. The daily discharge of 7.7
23 million gallons of warm wastewater into our bay
24 matters. The enormous consumption of fresh water
25 from our aquifers matters and the enormous carbon

1 footprint generated by this project matters. The
2 potential disruption of mercury and subsequent
3 consequences to our lobster fishery matters. The
4 proposed blasting through a fragile intertidal zone
5 without permission from its rightful owners matters.

6 As citizens and stewards of this community
7 and this planet, we have an obligation to protect and
8 defend our natural resources. No amount of money can
9 replace what is lost when habitats are destroyed and
10 water is polluted. You've heard what matters to
11 Mr. Heim. I've told you what matters to me and many
12 others who share my concerns. The future of this
13 project is in your hands. It's up to you to decide
14 what matters most. Thank you for your time.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. Thank you. Seeing no
16 questions, we can proceed to Maddy Godine.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Godine.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: Godine. Yes, at any time you
19 can correct me and if necessary scold me.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. My name is Maddy
21 Godine, G-O-D-I-N-E. I'm opposed to the Nordic fish
22 farm for the environmental impacts that would
23 inevitably create harm in the bay, industrial waste,
24 the warming of the waters, the increase of nitrogen
25 and mercury are all concerning and I hope you oppose

1 this for the health of our unique and beloved
2 ecosystem here in the Penobscot Bay. Thank you.

3 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
4 questions, I would like to get to a few of the
5 supporters because they signed up early as well and
6 it would be unfair to put them to the end. Besides,
7 at the point, I have three on one sheet and two on
8 another, so we can proceed right to Larissa Flimlin.
9 Peter DelGreco being on deck and I believe Patricia
10 Iger would be third. You may proceed.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. My name is Larissa
12 Flimlin and I live in Belfast. Before my husband and
13 I moved here two years ago we heard about this big
14 announcement that was coming to Belfast. The
15 Governor was talking about this and they were going
16 to make this big announcement and it was Nordic
17 Aquaculture that was coming here. And at first we
18 were very excited and then we learned that it was
19 literally in our backyard. We live on Perkins Road.
20 And so we have been attending a lot of sessions,
21 getting the information.

22 There have been a lot of specious arguments
23 that I have heard. I am not a scientist, but I have
24 consulted with people that know the science. Do you
25 know what specious arguments are? They're arguments

1 that make something look very attractive but they're
2 wrong. A lot of the things that I've been hearing
3 are really scientifically wrong. We support Nordic
4 Aquafarms coming. We're looking at the big picture.
5 We had to make a decision before we moved here as to
6 whether we would actually build our home knowing that
7 this thing was coming in back of us. And after doing
8 the research, talking to people, we decided to
9 proceed and so we live here now full-time. We are
10 very much in support, not for the reasons of taxes
11 being lowered, I don't really believe that because we
12 came outside of Atlantic City when the casinos came
13 in there that was the same argument that was used
14 there, taxes were not lowered, so I'm not going for
15 that. But we felt that it was -- our consideration
16 was that this was a good thing for Belfast and we
17 could not oppose something that was good for the
18 town.

19 So I live with someone that has spent 40
20 years in aquaculture, so a lot of the things that I'm
21 hearing tonight, the arguments, I would consult him
22 and other people that were knowledgeable in the
23 industry and say is this true, is this going to be
24 messing up our water, you know, the carbon footprint,
25 all of this, and I found that there is some merit to

1 some things but the greater overall good is for
2 Belfast I believe. Thank you.

3 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
4 questions, Peter DelGreco is next, Patricia Iger, I
5 believe, is on deck after that. I will take Linda
6 Silvia O'Connor, who is neither for nor against and
7 then we'll resume with opposition.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you, Presiding
9 Officer Duchesne and thank you to the entire Board.
10 Again, my name is Peter DelGreco, D-E-L, capital
11 G-R-E-C-O. I am the president of a non-profit
12 economic development group called Maine and Company.

13 Like others that have been in front of you
14 tonight, I'm not going to pretend that I'm a
15 scientist. My liberal arts background just wouldn't
16 stand scrutiny, but scientific groups and many
17 scientists have come out in support of this project.
18 Personally, I work in economic development and I'm
19 excited about a project like this because of its
20 potential to produce jobs and have a positive
21 impact -- economic impact for Belfast and the entire
22 region. And I know that's not a primary or maybe
23 even a secondary concern of this Board, but that's
24 from where we come from.

25 I have a lot of -- I've done a lot of work

1 in the Belfast area both with the team from Nordic
2 Aquafarms, but even before that bringing companies
3 like Athena Health, a non-process technology to
4 Belfast. They are employing over or approximately
5 1,000 people in this community.

6 The Governor's new economic development plan
7 calls for attracting new people to the State of
8 Maine. In fact, about 75,000 over the next 10 years.
9 Projects like this help. I've worked with Nordic
10 Aquafarms for a little over two years now. I have
11 found them to be a group that has the highest levels
12 of integrity, they adhere to the highest levels of
13 environmental standards that were imposed upon them
14 through where they were coming from in Europe. Their
15 standards there are higher than we have here and they
16 are bringing those standards to us. They're setting
17 a new standard especially in the world of discharge.

18 When I travel and I go to aquaculture shows
19 and people hear that we're working with Nordic
20 Aquafarms and people like Erik Heim and he's viewed
21 as an environmentalist and somebody who is doing
22 things and putting projects together that are going
23 to reduce the carbon impact that we're seeing across
24 the world right now. They have been incredibly
25 transparent. They've met with people in their living

1 rooms. They're willing to meet and discuss this
2 project with everyone. I have personally witnessed
3 Erik Heim walking through a line of protestors right
4 outside this door, shake hands with people that were
5 saying some inappropriate things to him and offered
6 to very generously have an engaged discussion with
7 them to share his project and his vision.

8 This project has been subjected to
9 tremendous scrutiny. The opposition has used
10 personal attacks. They've been attacked locally for
11 not being American enough. They have used circular
12 reasoning to discredit the company and they've had
13 personal ad hominem attacks. If this company can
14 meet the environmental standards that you've set
15 forth I encourage you, I implore you to judge this
16 project on its environmental methods, not -- on its
17 environmental standards, pardon me, not on the
18 methods of the opposition. And if it meets those
19 environmental standards, I urge you to support and
20 grant them their permits. I'm happy to answer any
21 questions. Thank you.

22 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. I think I do have
23 one. You stated that we created, I think, the rules
24 or the standards and the reality of the statute is
25 created by the Legislature and the rules are set up

1 through a permitting -- through a rulemaking process,
2 so what we actually do is follow what's already put
3 in front of us that we are charged to follow.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Peter DelGreco.) Fair
5 enough.

6 MR. DUCHESNE: Would you agree with that?

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Peter DelGreco.) Yes.

8 MR. DUCHESNE: Okay. Thank you. Any other
9 questions? So Patricia, I believe, would be next.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Peter DelGreco.) Thank
11 you.

12 MR. DUCHESNE: If you have any printed
13 material you can --

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Peter DelGreco.) Am I
15 allowed to submit something via email by the 18th?

16 MS. BENSINGER: Yes.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Peter DelGreco.) Okay.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. DUCHESNE: Yup. Patricia? No. Then I
20 believe we can go right to Linda Silvia O'Connor.
21 And that would put Samantha Langly or Langlon on
22 deck, Emily Harriman, Conny Hatch, Sally Brophy and
23 Jim Merkel will be the five following them.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Linda Silvia O'Connor.)
25 Thank you. Thank you all for the work you do and in

1 my choosing the standing tonight it's -- it's a real
2 challenge to be on -- I'm a citizen of Belfast. I've
3 wanted to live here for 30 years. I finally two
4 years ago moved to Belfast. And with all of the
5 things considered and the environmental work that is
6 part of what you do and what everything is around, I
7 don't understand and I don't know where you all --
8 where this fits for you, but in looking at the
9 different focal points I see Site Location of
10 Development/Natural Resources Protection Act. So on
11 that alone, I'd like to say I don't understand why
12 environmentally you or anybody else would allow this
13 to go on the site that's been chosen when in Belfast
14 we have 100 acres, plenty of room to grow, okay, by
15 our industrial park. And it has the infrastructure
16 for roads, which the other part of this Location of
17 Development/Natural Resources is the access to Route
18 1 is a real danger to anybody traveling route where
19 if they're next to the industrial park they have all
20 of the infrastructure of the roads, they have a
21 beautiful exit and entrance onto Route 1. I don't
22 know why that isn't being talked about more and
23 looked at and it could make peace in many ways if
24 this project has to go forward and this project has
25 merit and it can become a closed system, it's going

1 to save the bay or at least it's not going to be a
2 contributor to problems in the bay, it's not going to
3 move soil out of the pristine forest that's there.
4 It's got a location that it can grow in. It's 100
5 acres that is here and was slated for more of an
6 industrial use and so that's the piece I'd really
7 like you all to pay attention to.

8 You've heard everything else that I think is
9 a concern. And I am going to say -- well, I say they
10 meaning you and I am going to thank Nordic Aquafarms
11 for one thing for making us all more informed
12 citizens. Thank you.

13 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
14 questions, we go back to opposition. That would
15 include Samantha, I can't quite tell if it's spelling
16 Langlon or Langley.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Langlois.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: Langlois. Okay. Thank you.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. My name is
20 Samantha Langlois. I live in Belfast. I have a
21 Master's degree in Environmental Studies and
22 Conservation Biology. I home school my children and
23 I run our small farm.

24 There are so many pieces to this project
25 that I am concerned about, more than I can account

1 for tonight in three minutes. I am concerned about
2 water usage. This project would draw surface water
3 from the Little River watershed. I live on the
4 Little River upstream of this proposed project. I'm
5 concerned as to how this project would affect the
6 Little River watershed and my well and that of my
7 neighbors. If my well is negatively impacted by this
8 project, how much would it cost me to hire a
9 hydrologist to prove that Nordic Aquafarms was
10 responsible for any damage to my well as is required
11 by law in order to receive any sort of restitution.

12 MR. DUCHESNE: We may want to slow down just
13 a little bit.

14 MS. DOSTIE: I'm okay.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: You're comfortable. Okay.
16 And at this point, I'm going to be pretty relaxed
17 about the three minute rule, so if you have substance
18 to say.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Samantha Langlois.)
20 Okay.

21 MR. DUCHESNE: We're good.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Samantha Langlois.) The
23 only thing we can count on about climate change is
24 that everything is becoming more unpredictable. Just
25 because we have abundant clean water now doesn't mean

1 we should give it away.

2 I am concerned about effluent in the bay.
3 Just because we have been dumping nitrogen into the
4 Penobscot River and Penobscot Bay for decades doesn't
5 mean that adding more is a good idea.

6 We already know that animals raised in
7 confinement get sick. Outbreaks of disease have to
8 be treated, perhaps with antibiotics, perhaps with
9 antivirals, perhaps with chemical cleaners. Will
10 this project have filters sufficient to completely
11 remove these pollutants or will the effluent and all
12 these pollutants as well get dumped into the bay
13 together?

14 How many times have we heard that technology
15 will prevent problems? Historically, technologies
16 fail and problems happen. Maine's rivers are filled
17 with dioxines, PCBs and mercury because technologies
18 fail.

19 I am concerned about the carbon footprint of
20 this project. According to an extensive carbon
21 footprint report compiled by local engineer Jim
22 Merkel this project would increase Belfast's carbon
23 footprint five to seven times. Belfast's city
24 council recently signed onto the Global Covenant of
25 Mayors for Climate and Energy because they are

1 theoretically concerned about our carbon footprint.
2 I don't see how our city council can be both invested
3 in reducing our carbon footprint and supportive of
4 this project at this time same time.

5 I am concerned about water temperature. I
6 have read that the discharge waters from this project
7 may average between 15 and 20 degrees warmer than the
8 ambient temperature of Belfast Bay. It is well
9 understood in environmental science that thermal
10 pollution has a profound impact on the ecosystems
11 where they occur. How will the increase in water
12 temperature impact our bay?

13 I was recently at a local issues forum that
14 was put on for local home schooled teens here in
15 Belfast so they could learn firsthand of this
16 project. One of our city council members announced
17 to this group that he would not support Nordic
18 Aquafarms' proposed project if it wasn't for the tax
19 benefit for the town. He went one to apologize to
20 the kids assembled for the environmental damage that
21 has been caused by his generation. On brave teenage
22 girl responded to his comment with an apology is not
23 enough. I would go beyond that to say that an
24 apology on the heels of business as usual is like a
25 slap in the face. It's just talk. We need action.

1 We are looking down the barrel of climate change. We
2 can't afford to continue to put economic growth
3 before environmental health and protection. That is
4 how we have gotten ourselves into the current climate
5 emergency. This project is a huge experiment. Let's
6 not trust our childrens' future to an experiment.
7 Thank you.

8 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
9 questions, Emily Harriman will be next. Emily
10 Harriman, Conny Hatch, Sally Brophy and Jim Merkel I
11 have in the queue. And if Emily is not available
12 then we go to Conny.

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's me. Good evening
14 everyone. Thank you for being here. My name is
15 Conny Hatch. I live in Belfast. And thank you all
16 for the time and effort you're putting into these
17 hearings, all of you. All of you, thank you.

18 I've been a yoga teacher for over 15 years.
19 Today -- towards the end of each class I guide my
20 students to lie down on their mats for the final pose
21 of Shivasana, a quiet pose of conscious relaxation.
22 And one of the first things I say once everyone is
23 done and still is this, surrender to the support of
24 the earth. I realize that I am no longer sure that
25 the earth will continue to be able to support us if

1 we do not act to prevent further destruction to our
2 land and oceans and air. I feel like Belfast and the
3 entire region of Maine has been put into harm's way
4 and I am deeply alarmed about the Nordic Aquafarms
5 proposal.

6 Here is my comment. I begin with an
7 assumption that everyone in this room in the city and
8 in the State of Maine and beyond wants to have access
9 to clean water and air, healthy woodlands and
10 forests, thriving rivers, estuaries, bays and ocean.
11 Here is an assumption, that most everyone in this
12 room and in this city and in the State of Maine and
13 beyond realizes that the entire planet is in an
14 undeniable ecological crisis meaning that all beings
15 are vulnerable to the consequences of our ecosystems
16 being unable to support basic survival needs.

17 The people of the State of Maine can choose
18 to be at the forefront of regenerative agriculture,
19 regenerative economics and a thriving egalitarian
20 society and supporting it all a strong backbone of
21 environmental stewardship. Why then would we
22 consider giving the green light to a mega-industrial
23 project which clearly presents as the antithesis of
24 an ecologically friendly and assured economic success
25 story.

1 I looked up the definition of regenerative
2 agriculture and this is what I found. Regenerative
3 agriculture is a system of farming principles and
4 practices that increases biodiversity, enriches
5 soils, improves watersheds and enhances ecosystems.
6 Regenerative agriculture aims to capture carbon and
7 soil and above-ground biomass, reversing current
8 global trends of atmospheric accumulation.

9 If you, the members of the Maine State Board
10 of Environmental Protection, are assigned to enforce
11 the laws related to environmental protection then the
12 proposed Nordic Aquafarms project needs to be
13 rejected as a direct and unmitigated assault to the
14 environment and to the common good. Thank you.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
16 questions, we can go to Sally Brophy. Jim Merkel is
17 in the queue, Aimee Moffitt, Joanne Moesswilde,
18 Gretchen Heilman Piper would be the following. Thank
19 you.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. I'm Sally
21 Brophy, B-R-O-P-H-Y. I live here in Belfast. Thank
22 you for your time.

23 One of the statements Nordic often makes is
24 to feed the world we have to do things differently.
25 It is a dangerous illusion that we can solve global

1 hunger by expanding industrial scale agriculture.
2 The world already grows more than enough food to feed
3 10 billion people. Hunger is caused by a scarcity of
4 power. Power over land, water and wealth. Nordic
5 isn't trying to feed the world. They're trying to
6 feed people who can afford expensive fish. They want
7 to do this by digging a giant the hole in the Belfast
8 Bay watershed then filling that hole with huge
9 concrete and steel machines that require enormous
10 amounts of power and water.

11 My family has been in Maine for six
12 generations. Mainers are resilient. We can go from
13 snow to freezing rain to heat waves all in the same
14 week. We know how to check in with our neighbors and
15 share what's needed. There are sustainable ways that
16 this grand environment that we share can produce
17 healthy food. Nordic's proposal is not one of them.

18 For example, Nordic is currently seeking a
19 discharge permit. That permit is literally a license
20 to pollute. Do we really want to go back to the past
21 where building a giant food processing plant beside
22 Belfast Bay was supposed to be the answer to our
23 future prosperity? The crucial need for tax revenue
24 makes the city and state susceptible to corporations
25 promising money. We need to pay for schools and

1 roads and snowplows and the list goes on, but we
2 can't pay for them with smoke and mirrors. As we
3 heard this morning, Nordic hasn't even supplied a
4 coherent financial plan. Their answer was, well, we
5 need the permits before we'll have any details on our
6 finances. I wish we could buy a business that way.
7 Just give me the keys and once I've moved in I'll
8 show you I can pay for it.

9 Nordic likes to state that the carbon
10 footprint of this product would be less than that of
11 salmon airfreighted from abroad. What happens if the
12 lucrative markets of Boston and New York aren't open
13 to buying Nordic's fish? Then Nordic will ship them
14 wherever they need to in order to sell their product.
15 There are no carbon savings in this misleading
16 statement. In truth, Nordic's factory would be very
17 carbon intensive.

18 Growing food on chemical-intensive
19 monoculture farms is quite literally destroying the
20 resource base, soil, water, climate on which future
21 food production depends. We cannot afford business
22 as usual. Now is the time to change these old
23 patterns and address climate change by rolling back
24 monopoly power and creating favorable conditions for
25 more localized, resilient and equitable food systems.

1 Maine can be a leader in this. Our environment is
2 Maine's most valuable asset.

3 This Board as an independent decision-making
4 authority responsible for the protection of our
5 environment can safeguard those assets to ensure that
6 we can feed our communities in the future. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. There are some
9 folks who may have come in late who aren't aware that
10 we have sign-up sheets going outside, so if anyone
11 has come in late we would ask you to sign up.

12 MS. BENSINGER: And if you...

13 MR. DUCHESNE: And if there is anyone who
14 came in late, did sign up, hasn't testified yet and
15 hasn't been sworn in yet we would need to take care
16 of that small little detail. But, Mr. Merkel, you'd
17 be up next. I have in the queue Aimee Moffitt,
18 Joanne Moesswilde, Gretchen Heilman Piper.

19 MS. BENSINGER: Oh, someone needs to be
20 sworn?

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

22 MR. MADORE: Do you need to be sworn in,
23 sir?

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

25 MR. DUCHESNE: We will get to you after this

1 testimony because I want to make sure there is
2 nothing else out here on the sign-up sheets. So,
3 Mr. Merkel.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jim Merkel.) All right.
5 Thank you so much. I'm pleased to be here before you
6 tonight. I have been to I think this made my twelfth
7 meeting with a room full of people, a large
8 percentage, maybe 70, 80 percent opposed, but it
9 keeps marching forward. It was from the first
10 meeting even to change the zoning, it was three rooms
11 of people saying slow down, stop, back in 2008 and
12 the city just kept marching forward, so I do hope
13 that you listen to the people in my community.

14 I teach -- my name is James Merkel and I do
15 teach at the university level sustainability. I was
16 Dartmouth College's sustainability coordinator and I
17 helped do a carbon analysis of 110 buildings
18 including a medical center, so the paper that you
19 heard about I was one of the co-authors on the carbon
20 study. But when I teach I have my students --
21 challenge them to find me a monoculture that doesn't
22 require massive chemistry and they can't find one.
23 There is no known monoculture that can be sustained
24 without extensive chemistry because Rachel Carson
25 showed us that when you try to isolate life you have

1 the most resistant form start to take hold. And so I
2 see it as a very dangerous thing.

3 I mean, we collapsed fishery after fishery
4 in Maine and net pens were the savior and now RAS
5 systems are the savior and they're not a savior.
6 They're actually, I think, more risky because of the
7 breeding factor in these massive tanks and Nordic was
8 trying to dis my study by saying that, oh, the study
9 that we quote in China for a much smaller facility
10 they had a stocking density one-third of Nordic's, so
11 they want to pack these fish really into there and
12 they want to feed them much less than the Chinese
13 want to feed their fish and over crowd them and
14 that's how they're getting their efficiency. And so
15 I really want you to look close at that data because
16 massive die-offs have occurred and I notice the
17 internet gets scrubbed from them pretty quick.
18 Those -- the CDC was reporting them up in Canada and
19 you can't find the links from them anywhere. They're
20 gone. But massive die-offs have happened in many
21 facilities.

22 So some of the errors I find in the siting
23 is that this mature forest not only is it a beloved
24 forest but a wildlife habitat and it is an important
25 connecting corridor to the upland. Because, you

1 know, if you go down on the beach and see what's
2 feeding there is a lot of animals that need to move
3 up into the woodland from the beach and they feed and
4 they move and you don't have this habitat anywhere
5 else that I can see in the whole Belfast Bay region.
6 That's a very important area to move for the animals
7 to move to the woodland.

8 And that site was a buffer. It's a
9 greenbelt to the city. It's got a beautiful hiking
10 trail, but it's also a buffer to the watersheds and
11 if you even study back to the turn of the century New
12 York City would protect huge forest areas around
13 their reservoirs because it purifies water very
14 inexpensively. Ecosystem services of a forest are
15 the highest level of ecosystem -- of dollar value is
16 an intact forest has the highest dollar value of
17 ecosystem services because it's purifying the water,
18 it's purifying the air, it's habitat, it's holding
19 soils from erosion.

20 Me and my boy who speak earlier, my
21 10-year-old, we went in there and Nordic has mucked
22 up even in their exploratory drilling wells every
23 little creek that they crossed in mud season was
24 mucked. Completely clogged with sediment right now.
25 I have the pictures. And that, you know, they said,

1 oh, it was raining when we went in and we had to go
2 in anyway. Well, in mud season in Maine you don't go
3 in anyway in mud season.

4 The second point I want to say is the soils
5 are unstable and I've walked that site many times.
6 It's got 17 wetlands. You would never walk that site
7 and say I want to build a house there. So they want
8 to remove between 12 and 20 -- and 48 feet of soil
9 and then import new soil. Completely obliterate the
10 site. So I would say they should be required to use
11 a brownfield site, first off with stable soils.

12 A tail pipe as significant as Nordic's whose
13 nitrogen content is 13 times the Belfast city sewer,
14 that's the last number I have, 13 times the Belfast
15 city sewer should exit into deep ocean currents. In
16 their early meetings Nordic kept repeating deep ocean
17 currents, deep ocean currents and then they found out
18 it was 35 feet of water. That's not deep ocean
19 currents. You can get deep ocean currents on a
20 sailer and I sail all of the time in and out of here
21 off of Rockport, Rockland, Owls Head you get 200 feet
22 of water right away, 35 feet of water, and then when
23 they calculate numbers Nordic will say, well, they
24 calculated the whole Penobscot Bay. Well, that water
25 is just going to sit in Belfast Bay. It would be

1 more honest to say calculate the volume of Belfast
2 Bay in that little area if you want to see how it's
3 flushing, so I see that --

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Let me just interrupt
5 briefly.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jim Merkel.) Sure.

7 MR. DUCHESNE: I'm not going to be cutting
8 you off because this is really new information that
9 we have not had a lot of opportunity to discuss
10 before, so it's valuable to us. I just want to get
11 an assessment about how much more you think you need
12 to present to the Board.

13 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jim Merkel.) Maybe
14 another two or three minutes.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: I'll give you another two.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jim Merkel.) Okay. All
17 right. So I'll move on and to, you know, we have
18 shellfish closures currently and I think you know
19 that, so that's why I think adding more when you have
20 a closure is not a smart idea.

21 Now, I did the studies on the carbon with
22 another friend George Agular and so we're looking at
23 adding go 150,000 cars to the road as an easy
24 equivalent. So Nordic's -- I could give you all
25 these numbers, they're crazy, but 550,000 metric tons

1 of carbon. So if you look at the 2030 carbon goal
2 for Maine Nordic would represent 4 to 6 percent of
3 the entire state's carbon goal for 2030. If you look
4 at Maine's industrial sector of electricity use,
5 Nordic is a third of the total state's electricity
6 use, that's if you look at the embodied energy of
7 creating it and running it.

8 So why does it have such a big impact?

9 Well, it's that you're trying it pump so much water
10 and the feed has a big impact. So but also the
11 concrete, steel tanks, buildings, pipelines, pumps,
12 generators, filters, add to that the liquidation of
13 the forest, which I've calculated the sequestration
14 that the forest currently serves, it's sequestering
15 carbon every year but it's also storing carbon both
16 in the soils and in the trees themselves, so that
17 whole number I have calculated in my report which
18 you'll -- you have a copy of, but I'll make sure you
19 get it. So that's -- so when you add that all up and
20 then advertise it over useful life that's how you get
21 a very big carbon footprint.

22 So my main point here I would say is that
23 until Nordic can demonstrate a deep ocean current and
24 a brownfield site and maybe a closed system and/or a
25 zero carbon -- you know, in Norway they have -- their

1 current plan is to go to carbon neutral by 2025, so I
2 think they'd have a hard time building this because
3 it's an energy hog. Thanks.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. Thank you very much.
5 Okay. We have two groups of people that haven't been
6 sworn in, those who have already spoken and those who
7 haven't yet, so anyone who has not yet been sworn in
8 I would ask you to stand and raise your right hand.
9 Anyone wishing to testify and who has testified but
10 not been sworn in, stand and raise your right hand.
11 Do you swear or affirm that the testimony you are
12 about to give is the whole truth and nothing but the
13 truth?

14 (Witness affirm.)

15 MR. DUCHESNE: Good. Thank you so much.
16 And I believe Aimee Moffitt would be next. It will
17 be Aimee, Joann Moesswilde, Gretchen Heilman Piper,
18 Hillary Emma would be in the queue.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Aimee Moffitt.) Hello.
20 Thank you. Good evening. Chairman Duchesne, DEP
21 members and representatives from the various
22 permitting authorities. I'm worried about the risks
23 involved in the Nordic Aquafarms proposed plant.

24 Potential investors and supporters of
25 large-scale salmon aquaculture plants like the one

1 proposed for Belfast might want to take a step back.
2 The Little River could easily become Maine's next
3 abandoned industrial waste site -- HoltraChem
4 anyone -- because the Nordic industrial development
5 is unlikely to either be either successful
6 sustainable using its current business model.

7 NAF's potential investors and the city of
8 Belfast are speculating on a very large experiments
9 using technology that could be outdated by the time
10 it's operational but cannot be downsized or
11 repurposed because the business model will not work
12 at smaller scales. This is important because there
13 is no plan to pay for cleaning up the site if it
14 fails or at the end of its useful economic life.

15 NAF has chosen to locate in a sensitive
16 coastal watershed. It wants to exploit intertidal
17 zone land that it does not own, one currently
18 protected by both covenant and a conservation
19 easement. Nordic's potential facility would have a
20 direct, immediate and long-lasting effect on the
21 marine environment by discharging a whopping 7.7
22 million gallons every day of tepid nitrogen-laced
23 brine into Belfast Bay. That would not be healthy
24 for a Gulf of Maine that is already warming faster
25 than any other U.S. marine environment. It could

1 sprawl algal blooms that will affect coastal Maine
2 fisheries, hamper other forms of aquaculture and
3 degrade recreation in Belfast Bay and points below
4 it.

5 Water and energy use are also massive.
6 Nordic is planning to draw more than 1,600 gallons a
7 minute from the Belfast aquifer. The aquifer may be
8 in fine shape now, but will likely suffer salt water
9 incursion threatening residents' water. Nordic
10 estimates that it will use 900,000 gallons of deisel
11 annually to run the generators for an enormous
12 facility whose lights and heat must be on all of the
13 time. Combined with the truck traffic to supply fish
14 food, including an unspecified amount of fish meal
15 from relatively depleted wild fish populations, run
16 trucks to major markets far down the coast and
17 dispose of massive amounts of fecal waste, this
18 energy use amounts to significant carbon emissions.

19 In conclusion, there are many reasons to
20 doubt that the industrial development proposed by
21 Nordic will ever be a success financially,
22 technologically and environmentally given its current
23 business model and environmental footprint. We hope
24 that the BEP and the permitting authorities will
25 consider these risks seriously in their

1 deliberations. I beg you to deny Nordic this
2 opportunity to destroy our environment, our home, so
3 that they can line their pockets with gold. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. And seeing no
6 questions, we can proceed to Joanne. And when I said
7 Moesswilde, how close did I get?

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pretty close. It's
9 Moesswilde, M-O-E-S-S-W-I-L-D-E. First name is
10 Joanne, J-O-A-N-N-E.

11 Thank you all for this evening. I
12 appreciate the list of areas of concern that you read
13 at the beginning of the meeting. My comments are
14 general, relevant and I hope will encourage a
15 different perspective on the issue at hand. Also, I
16 can't stand up here without saying how -- without
17 saying how sad I am that literally neighbors are
18 pitted against neighbors. It's breaking my heart
19 every day.

20 But I want to talk to you about the commons.
21 These elements of the commons: Water, it flows under
22 all land and along all shores; trees, their roots
23 reach beyond property lines and the air they clean
24 goes all around for all to breathe; animals, they
25 know no property lines, they travel freely searching

1 for food and homes and mates; air, it's all around
2 for each living creature, you and me too; Earth's
3 soil, it's alive with microbes and life that we
4 rarely see or feel, but we would be lost without
5 them. These are the commons, aspects of our world
6 that support life.

7 The permitting process which you are
8 involved in is a way to judge if certain groups will
9 be allowed to use and take up certain aspects of the
10 commons. I can't call these things resources because
11 that makes it sound like they're something that is
12 supposed to be used. The commons are what support
13 life.

14 I would say that this plan by the applicant,
15 Nordic Aquafarms, is requesting the exclusive use of
16 more than their fair share of our life.

17 (Applause.)

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Joanne Moesswilde.) More
19 than their fair share of our commons, more than their
20 fair share of water, earth, trees, animal homes,
21 habitat, air, soil. And they claim this in the name
22 of money, but money doesn't bring life.

23 Looking at our current situation in our
24 world with the dying species, the thirsty people,
25 paved land, dirty water, the too loud and too bright

1 night sky, I say enough. We need to look at things
2 differently. Our current approach to such questions
3 has gotten us into this state of climate change and
4 earth disharmony. It's been a system of managing
5 earth that has not worked well, so let's reconsider
6 and deeply how we manage the life of our world. It
7 could be simple, you could begin by walking in the
8 forest and listening. Go to this forest, I ask you
9 before you make any decisions, go there quietly, go
10 alone, go with a loved one, but go there and when you
11 finish in the forest, please go sit by the mudflat
12 where my children grew up playing, sit, listen, feel
13 it.

14 And then you'll be further enlightened if
15 you begin conversations with my neighbors, the ones
16 that I agree with, the ones I don't agree with. We
17 need to work towards compromise and don't forget to
18 talk to the fishermen, they know more than anyone.
19 The old system no longer serves us. I have a few
20 suggestions and they've been mentioned before by
21 others.

22 MR. DUCHESNE: I would ask you to, if you
23 could, get close to summarizing because there are
24 people behind you.

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Joanne Moesswilde.) Oh,

1 yeah, I'm done. Mostly, I just want to say I propose
2 limiting projects that are new to existing buildings
3 and brown sites, suggest to use technologies that are
4 closed systems. Okay. Thank you very much.

5 MR. DUCHESNE: All right. Thank you so
6 much. I'm cognizant that our next witness may have
7 some kids who are past their bedtime. Gretchen
8 Heilman Piper would be next. Hilary Emma, Eric
9 Cohen-Salal would follow, Samantha Byers Ames and
10 Bethany Allgrove would be in the queue. You may
11 proceed.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Gretchen
13 Heilman Piper and I am a working mother of four
14 children. I live in Swanville, Maine. Three of them
15 are here with me tonight and they decide their own
16 bedtime. And they are not here to be cute, they are
17 here because they've got my back and they care about
18 this issue very deeply, so.

19 I wish to address three areas of potential
20 impact. Number one, the potential impact of our
21 fresh water streams and wetlands. Each of my
22 children have grown up hiking the Little River trail
23 system several times in each season, so -- and each
24 year, so I'm crystal clear that the impact of this 56
25 acres and 40 some acres of infrastructure will

1 decimate the mature forest, the wildlife habitats and
2 the wetlands. The rights of the animals and the
3 trees and the streams must be upheld. From what I
4 heard today this project will use as much water as
5 they can and if a source goes dry they will feed the
6 fish less and wait, quote, several weeks to resume,
7 but what if a drought lasts months or years? This is
8 not a smart or acceptable use of fresh water, period.
9 No, thank you.

10 Number two, the potential impact of waste
11 discharge on water quality fisheries, marine
12 resources and other uses. People come from all over
13 the world to sail this unique and beautiful
14 coastline. I sail, I swim, I canoe, I kayak and I
15 visit the Waterman Beach in Northport with my family
16 year-round. I refuse to allow 7.7 million gallons
17 per day and because it takes 14 days to fully
18 disperse in the bay 107,800,000 gallons of, quote,
19 effluent containing we don't know exactly what
20 they're feeding the fish as well as bacteria,
21 viruses, chemicals. No. No, thank you.

22 I am concerned about the temperature of the
23 water they're discharging. Algae blooms, local fish
24 populations, the mercury that they could be
25 disrupting? No. No, thank you.

1 The potential impact to air quality, this is
2 number three. We know this is a carbon intensive
3 project and at 43 I've witnessed climate concerns
4 become a climate emergency in my lifetime and I
5 refuse -- given the only other operation like this in
6 the world is less than one-fifth of its proposed
7 size, I refuse to gamble with an experiment against
8 nature and too many unanswered questions and refuse
9 to pass this problem on to my children when the
10 profit from this project will not even be staying in
11 the community let alone the country.

12 For most of the 20th century, I quote, if
13 you want to go to hell fast, go to Belfast. And that
14 was a regional joke because of the stench from the
15 poultry processing. We don't want to go backwards.
16 We cannot only do better, we can create and inspire
17 environmentally sound carbon sequestering projects
18 that benefit our town, Belfast, for all generations
19 to come. Please, please, please, please, please deny
20 these permits. Thank you.

21 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Hilary Emma.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. DUCHESNE: I'm not going to be able to
24 stop it completely, but I'm going to minimize the
25 applause as much as possible and I appreciate your

1 respect for the process and thank you so much. And
2 Hillary Emma.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hilary Emma, E-M-M-A. I
4 am a citizen of Lincolnville.

5 MR. DUCHESNE: Welcome.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Hilary Emma.) Thank you.
7 So I'm here to represent a voice that can't be
8 present with us this evening, those are the citizens
9 of Fredrikstad. This is a letter dated August 29,
10 2019. Ours is a working-class residential area in
11 the 82,286 inhabitant town of Fredrikstad, Norway.
12 Our new neighbor across the street is the first
13 land-based fish farm in our country and promised to
14 be the biggest worldwide. Owned by Nordic Aquafarms
15 it started production in late May this year.

16 Initially, we were all generally positive
17 and felt the dialogue with the company to be good.
18 Now, not so. First, the building process lasted
19 ages. It was two years late in completion mainly
20 because of a large Danish contractor that took some
21 geological shortcuts nearly derailing the whole
22 project and ending up in court. During construction
23 a gray haze of clay dust engulfed our homes, gardens
24 and cars time and again as well as the lungs of our
25 local kindergarten kids. All that is history.

1 Terrible while it lasted, now comes the future.

2 This local future of ours held a surprise, a
3 strange and constant humming noise 24/7. Now, we
4 happen to be in the front line literally, but the
5 inhabitants of the row houses behind us on the
6 adjacent street have started complaining too saying
7 that if they sleep with open windows, as most of us
8 do, some in the summertime only, others all
9 year-round, then they hear it all night. Plus the
10 following day, plus the following night, et cetera,
11 et cetera, forever and ever.

12 One of us had a talk with a worker at the
13 site. He confirmed not only that this will last
14 indefinitely, but also that it is due to the great
15 fans needed to cool the fish tanks being directed
16 towards us. Asked whether the company could have
17 built these noise machines at the far end of the fish
18 farm from us he said, sure, just another mistake, but
19 it can't be righted now. Only the first fan or
20 ventilator machine has started up. At least one more
21 has been readied. One guy attending a meeting in one
22 of our houses had taken home from his job a decibel
23 meter and sure enough during our meeting in one of
24 our houses had taken -- during our meeting, he
25 recording 60 decibels in an open window. It would

1 have been much more if Nordic Aquafarms had not put
2 up a tall earth wall towards us. Are they doing the
3 same in Belfast building an anti-noise wall?

4 Incidentally, some of us recall Aquafarms
5 Director, Erik Heim, also of Belfast saying promising
6 us flat there will be no noise. Well, thank you
7 then. Instead, we now get 60 decibels with no
8 respite. What fantastic lack of empathy, caring,
9 decency and for that matter logic. Why pester us and
10 forever because someone simply didn't know how to
11 think? So there we are and there you are. We are
12 following the fishy business developing in Belfast
13 with keen interest. We think you ought to be as
14 skeptical as we unfortunately have learned to be
15 close -- from close up experience.

16 So, yeah. I think that Nordic has
17 already --

18 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you.

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Hilary Emma.) --
20 demonstrated that they are financially, technically
21 and morally incapable of completing this project.

22 MR. DUCHESNE: And nothing reminds me how
23 old I've gotten that I can't read off a Smartphone
24 screen. Thank you so much. Eric Cohen-Salal I
25 believe would be next. Samantha Byers Ames, Bethany

1 Allgrove. Behind that I'm expecting Lila Nation, it
2 appears to be, Gier -- oh, boy. You know who you
3 are. G-E-I-R. That will be in the queue, so we'll
4 go to Eric.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Eric
6 Cohen-Solal. I live in Monroe with my family. I
7 have three children.

8 This is my brief perspective on what is
9 playing here. Looking at the history of the two last
10 centuries, large companies mainly focus on one goal,
11 profit. This is not their fault. They have
12 shareholders to report to.

13 In general, companies like Nordic would push
14 what they think they know how to do. They have no
15 direct incentive unless forced to, to align their
16 goals with long-term concerns like water source
17 protection, contamination, public health issues,
18 impact on tourism and fishery, having an industry
19 constantly discharging in the ocean and no long-term
20 guarantee on employment.

21 If we are lucky, they have good, ethical
22 practices. Most of the time the only way to make
23 sure that a company does not behave against public
24 trust is to have an individual or group of citizens
25 to exert some form of monitoring and expose relevant

1 information or activity that is deemed unaddressed,
2 illegal, unethical or against public interest
3 confronting a company's way of doing business.

4 Fracking is a perfect example. The oil and
5 gas industry has no idea today what to do with the
6 massive amount of contaminated water it's creating.
7 No idea. Fracking fluids and waste have made their
8 way into the drinking water and aquifers in
9 Pennsylvania, Colorado, Ohio, Wyoming, New York and
10 West Virginia so far.

11 There is a constant tension between the
12 limited amount of public money for independent
13 research and the fast time frame of large companies.
14 Unfortunately, regulations can mostly address generic
15 concerns, not specific ones. Only research and
16 public scrutiny can avoid catastrophe and time is
17 needed.

18 So what do we do? The main argument of
19 Nordic Aquafarms in a nutshell is wealth for Maine
20 and proteins. This is what it comes to. Well,
21 ignorance is bliss. This project and its
22 consequences are not well understood by Nordic. This
23 project and its consequences are not well understood
24 by Nordic. Their expertise is simply questionable
25 today. I am against this project. Thank you for

1 your attention.

2 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Samantha will be
3 next. Say your names?

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Jane.

5 MR. DUCHESNE: Jane.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Samantha Jane Ames.)

7 Good evening. How are you all?

8 MR. DUCHESNE: So far so good.

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I am Samantha Jane Ames.
10 I am a sixth generation captain and commercial
11 fisherman from Matinicus Island. I am also a very
12 passionate aquaculture farmer and a passionate and
13 proud Mainer. I am so proud of all of the
14 aquaculture projects that I have seen throughout
15 Maine. I have worked on many farms. I've seen
16 development. I have been throughout a lot of our
17 coastline and I know like many people in this room we
18 are proud of Maine and men and women that have
19 created the Maine brand. It is built off the hard
20 work of our local community -- communities, sorry.
21 It is built off the hard work of our local
22 communities and it is really, really important to
23 focus on the cold, clean waters because that is what
24 has created this brand.

25 This project is something I am not proud of

1 and I hope that you all take it very seriously that
2 the faith of our bay is in your hands. There is dead
3 zones popping up worldwide and I do not want to see
4 Belfast a part of that. Our waters, our ocean is
5 what connects us globally and it is so crucial now
6 more than ever to take issues like this seriously.
7 It is not just the rivers and the forests in Belfast
8 that we need to be concerned about, it is our future,
9 it is our connection worldwide. Please consider all
10 of those things when you make your decision and
11 please do not approve these permits. You will be
12 throwing away the hard work of sustainable fisheries
13 and aquaculture. Maine is a leader in aquaculture.
14 Give the local communities and the people who are
15 working hard here at home a chance before you just
16 give it away and ruin what we have worked so hard to
17 build for a very, very long time. Thank you.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
19 questions.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you very much. Bethany
22 will be next. In the meantime, I have I believe
23 about eight people including Bethany Allgrove left to
24 go on the list I currently have. Any of us are free
25 to leave the table and go take care of any needs as

1 necessary except our reporter, so I just need to
2 check in.

3 MS. DOSTIE: Thank you.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Everything is fine. Great.
5 Thank you. Bethany Allgrove.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes. Hi. Thank you.
7 Bethany Allgrove. I live in Lincolnville with my
8 family. I have three boys. We moved here five years
9 ago. We left the busy corporate Massachusetts
10 lifestyle to get away from many things including
11 industrial environments. We wanted the quiet, the
12 bay, the people like everyone who is standing
13 together behind us against this project. I've
14 testified many times on this, so I'm not going to
15 repeat all of the reasons and the things that scare
16 me. I absolutely echo everything that's been said.

17 We moved here because we wanted to own and
18 operate a bed and breakfast. We love Lincolnville.
19 We'd love to do it here, but I do not understand how
20 any kind of tourist industry could possibly survive
21 with what would be coming should this project go
22 through. There is no way that disturbing the mercury
23 is not going to create major issues, et cetera, et
24 cetera, with everything else that I promised I
25 wouldn't repeat. So my husband and I are kind of at

1 a standstill. We're not sure what to do, but there
2 is absolutely no way that we would take the risk of
3 going in on owning our own business on this coast if
4 there is going to be a Nordic Aquafarms. People do
5 not come here -- I mean, I guess one lady moved here
6 for this, but the rest of us moved here to be away
7 from it and no vacation appears to be around it. So
8 I really appreciate you taking the time to listen to
9 us. Thank you.

10 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. Thank you. Seeing no
11 questions, I mentioned that Lila Nation, I believe,
12 would be next, if I am pronouncing it correctly, and
13 Geir -- I'm not going to come close. But Gier as in
14 G-E-I-R.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Geir Gaseidnes.) Geir.

16 MR. DUCHESNE: Geir. See, I didn't get the
17 first name right and that's only got four letters.

18 MR. DUCHESNE: I don't see any Lila moving
19 forward, so if you want to jump up and if Lila pops
20 up again later we can address that. And I just may
21 say in the queue Steve Stanford would be next
22 followed by Sam Chandoha-Lee and Jason Rawn.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you all for coming
24 today and hearing me and my neighbors. My name is
25 Gier Gaseidnes. I'm Belfast resident building in

1 Northport. I swim in the bay and row in the bay with
2 my wife and two children. I am here today to mount
3 my defense of Belfast, a town that I have come to
4 love and of the world and its rapidly deteriorating
5 environment.

6 This town is facing a deep challenge and our
7 world is facing a complete crisis. Locally, we need
8 good paying jobs in Waldo County and if we turn this
9 business opportunity away it will hurt us in numerous
10 other ways, tax relief has been mentioned, but I
11 think more importantly we will be left behind by yet
12 another growth industry and we are already scaring
13 off entrepreneurs and investors in doing so.

14 As for the global picture there is a success
15 story here with poverty down dramatically all over
16 world and as billions enter the middle class they
17 want what we have, cars, air conditioning and animal
18 protein. The impact of this is massive. So our job
19 is to reduce that impact in every single one of our
20 trades and industries and Nordic is doing that in
21 theirs.

22 Nordic represents the cutting edge in more
23 responsible finfish farming reducing the climate
24 impact of a large chunk of our current food system.
25 Supporting this project may perhaps be the single

1 biggest thing a small town like Belfast can do for
2 our climate crisis as a small town.

3 I have worked the last four years with
4 conservationists and extinction biologists to
5 encourage the use of cutting edge technology and
6 entrepreneurship to end human induced extinction and
7 they along with other major conservation groups have
8 identified aquaculture advances as a key tool for
9 feeding us all with lower impacts and that includes
10 recirculate aquaculture systems of which Nordic's
11 approach is considered one of the best examples.

12 Now, I suggest that we work with Nordic to
13 measure more frequently, accurately and
14 comprehensively the health of this bay and get a good
15 baseline, make that data public so that we can keep a
16 close eye on this project. We can work with them to
17 reduce the carbon footprint of their farmed salmon
18 even further and also provide good paying jobs for
19 our young families and we can work together to hold
20 ourselves to a higher standard.

21 I place my trust in expertise,
22 conservationists I've worked with, the scientists who
23 are looking closely at this project, the engineers
24 who know how to build water filtration systems and
25 you, our regulators, to keep the big picture in mind.

1 Thank you very much.

2 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
3 questions, I believe Steve Stanford would be next
4 followed by Sam, Jason and Ron Huber would be next in
5 the queue.

6 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. My name is
7 Steve Stanford. I live in Northport. This is my
8 first hearing actually, so I'm behind the eight ball
9 maybe with a lot of people and I don't really seem to
10 understand what's going on in this whole project.

11 But I live on the mouth of the Little River,
12 the point in question, and almost every day people
13 stop at the point. It's a wonderful viewpoint. They
14 stop and they get out of their car and they take
15 pictures of this wonderful bay. And the question is
16 what does the -- what will it look like when there is
17 going to be a pipeline. And I asked the question,
18 well, where is this pipeline going to be? Nobody
19 seems to have an answer where it's going to enter the
20 bay, so it's a little confusing how we get to a state
21 of approval when there doesn't even seem to be a
22 plan. It's like going on a trip, you know your
23 destination but you don't know how you're going to
24 get there. It sort of feels like that's what it is.

25 So environmentally, I built my house and

1 because it's shoreland zoning I had to -- to get any
2 tree cut down I had to get it approved and here we
3 have a project where I hear there is going to be some
4 big trench that's going to go out into the bay, today
5 I hear the word blasting going on, and I ask the
6 question how can this be good for the environment?
7 Thank you.

8 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. Thank you. Seeing no
9 questions, Sam Chandoha-Lee. How close did I come?

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Fairly close.
11 Chandoha-Lee. I am a student at UMaine. I currently
12 live in Bangor. I have been a resident here in Maine
13 for six years. I moved from New Jersey. It's
14 because of the woods that we all love so much.

15 And so we had people tell you that they're
16 against the project for flora, fauna and the
17 fishers -- fishermen. I'm here to tell you that I'm
18 against this for the funga, meaning the fungi. Paul
19 Stamets, leading mycologist, has made the argument
20 that in the ten toxic ways mushrooms can save the
21 world that we need to protect our forests as a matter
22 of national defense. This is because of the work he
23 did with the Department of Defense found fungi
24 species in Oregon in the forest that had a higher
25 biological activity than any other medicine we had

1 before for the smallpox, H1-N1, bird flu and other
2 viral diseases.

3 Much like they are a pharmacy for us, the
4 fungi are a pharmacy for the bees, pollinators and
5 other insects. They include fungi in their foraging
6 like the red belted conk and this helps keep their
7 immune systems active. As you know, the pollinators
8 are already on decline, especially here in Maine and
9 if you put I believe it's 34 acres and secondary
10 growth we could be losing species that we don't even
11 know the implications of because I believe the EPA
12 doesn't include fungi in their survey, so please have
13 that as a consideration.

14 And also I would like to reiterate the
15 consideration of pharmaceuticals not being properly
16 filtered out. We've been seeing time and time again
17 that this has been the case and we would hate to see
18 that happen here. Thank you so much.

19 I actually would like to end on a quote by
20 Henry David Thorough which says many, many men go
21 fishing all their lives without knowing that it is
22 not the fish they are after.

23 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. And I would
24 remark that we have reams and reams of testimony and
25 submissions and documents and that was never in any

1 of it, so that was unique.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Sam Chandoha-Lee.) Thank
3 you.

4 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you so much. Okay. In
5 the queue of course Jason Rawn is next. Ron Huber,
6 Courtney Byers would be after that and I believe our
7 final two people who have signed up would be Camille
8 Perrin and John whose handwriting is worse than mine.
9 You may proceed.

10 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jason Rawn.) Yeah,
11 thanks for being here. I have been sitting at the
12 back and you guys really look like you're paying
13 attention, so thank you, I appreciate it. It's not
14 easy.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: It always surprises people.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Jason Rawn.) So I just
17 want to point out a few things and I had a longer
18 thing with facts and stuff in it that is not what I'm
19 feeling right now, so I'm going to just respond to
20 what some people have said up here tonight and I'll
21 underline this by saying that, you know, these people
22 are -- this investment group/corporation and the
23 people who operate for it are here for only one
24 reason and that reason is to make money and the way
25 that they propose to do that involves an incredible

1 amount of destruction of our environment here. And
2 as others have pointed out in no meaningful way is
3 this any kind of a local economic development
4 project.

5 We can talk about effluent a little bit if
6 we like. That's a word that's thrown around a lot
7 and it almost sounds like it's just nothing,
8 something that can enter the bay and then I looked it
9 up and effluent it turns out is liquid waste or
10 sewage, so that's a fun thing to do when you're
11 reading through all of the pages every time that
12 benign little word effluent comes up you can do that
13 gymnastics in your mind and say, oh, liquid waste or
14 sewage, liquid waste or sewage.

15 Third, in this state in this country on this
16 planet right now it shouldn't be a surprise to
17 anybody that water is, you know, one of the
18 biggest -- one of the biggest things that grabs are
19 being made for and I'm sure you all have, you know,
20 in your capacity here, I'm sure that you've all dealt
21 with, you know, various entities who are collecting
22 or buying up water here in Maine and this is just
23 another one of those things. And I would point out
24 that we are talking about a factory of fossil fuel
25 intensive fish factory that would set up -- literally

1 want to set up on the -- on the drinking water supply
2 on this area. Hmm. Wise? I don't think so. But
3 unfortunately, this isn't a special problem for just
4 this area as you also know because you deal with this
5 stuff, I think, on a state-wide level.

6 So I would -- I'd like to ask you if you
7 could lean toward the people on this. A lot of us
8 understand what's happening in the world right now
9 and people are disappointed in governing bodies and
10 believe that, you know, that they don't serve the
11 interests of their people -- of the people and that's
12 what I'm asking you to do is in any way that you can
13 lean toward the people because the people here are so
14 much more important than 15 Norwegian investors.
15 Thank you.

16 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. Seeing no
17 questions, Ron Huber will be next. I believe I still
18 have Courtney behind, Courtney Byers, Camille Perrin
19 and I'm still looking -- I'm not sure if John from
20 Lincolnville --

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (John Pascinco.) Right
22 here.

23 MR. DUCHESNE: Okay. Great. Thank you.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello, Board and
25 hello Cynthia, I've seen down the years here. My

1 name is Ron Huber. I'm a Friend of Penobscot Bay
2 since 1992 and I've had the privilege of being before
3 the Board in some of its different iterations down
4 the decades and have seen that it will when necessary
5 take a look at the greater impact, the cumulative
6 impacts that one project can have when it's bound
7 with another project. In particular, I really feel
8 like DEP is dropping the ball on that one this time
9 right now that instead of looking at the cumulative
10 impacts, I mean, I begged Gregg Wood back, what was
11 it, a year-and-a-half ago, something like that, you
12 have two of them on the Salmon River, that is you
13 have one down the estuary and now there is another
14 one in Millinocket. Don't go, well, they're all on
15 separate streams or different neighborhoods or
16 something, they won't impact each other, of course
17 they do. And you've heard all of the different
18 things that will be coming out of their effluent or
19 sewage or whatever you want to call it. Now, when
20 you place that up against what we heard earlier and
21 that was about the different fishermen saying, well,
22 look at that, cod fish are coming back here,
23 scallops, others like that, you don't want to start
24 reducing that water quality this way.

25 Now, I know that you're bound by a certain

1 duty of looking at the -- looking at the effects of
2 multiples of these projects and not just going, well,
3 it all will all sort of dilute away a little bit and
4 let's just pretend like that because once this -- if
5 these get approved, both of them, then there is going
6 to be a derby on because no other one will be able to
7 get turned down for having an excess impact because
8 how could two of them together not have an excess
9 impact and a fourth and fifth and you'll have the
10 sort of mess that in a way the urchin fishery was.
11 Suddenly it was let's just fish, fish, fish and bam
12 knocked them off.

13 Anyway, so I think -- and this whole point
14 about neighborhoods, by the way, if you're an elver
15 or if you're a salmon or something, you know, Belfast
16 and Bucksport are neighbors. They're just two things
17 you go through, so, you know, we should really look
18 at it that way, look at the it from the fishes point
19 of view not from the developer want-to-be's point of
20 view.

21 So I really ask you to consider putting the
22 brake on this one -- the project that -- you need to
23 have some kind of Penobscot estuary study. There was
24 one about 20 years ago, 30 years ago and I've been
25 trying, there is a National Estuary Program, but they

1 refuse to put Penobscot Bay into that although Casco
2 Bay is. It's terrible because right now the
3 developers -- things have warmed up. There is more
4 developer interest around the bay and your -- if you
5 would order some kind of estuary study undertaking,
6 you know, from Millinocket to Port Cylde/Isle au Haut
7 you would really argue what is okay to add in there
8 and what not because if they get their permits there
9 will be a lot more coming right behind them.

10 And finally, I think given the fact that
11 Nordic and Whole Oceans for that matter are going to
12 be taking water from the most mercury tainted river
13 there is in New England that -- that you ask the
14 Center for Disease Control to develop a label for
15 that. Not that -- not to impose right on their
16 retail sales, but if they do fail a random test and
17 you find unacceptable levels of mercury you've got
18 this like of sort of -- sort of damocles hanging over
19 the -- that will -- and it can keep things. So I
20 think really that was in it. And, as I say, just
21 mind what the fishermen and the scallop farmers said
22 earlier, they've got cumulative and how ignoring them
23 leads to a derby situation you could end up with an
24 awful lot -- all of them making the same claims and
25 suddenly we have a really degrading water quality

1 going down not up. And think about those mercury
2 levels too. Thank you.

3 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you. And we'll go to
4 Courtney Next. Courtney Byers. In the queue, of
5 course, Camille Perrin and John whose name I can't
6 pronounce.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. My name is Courtney
8 Byers and I'm a resident of Waldo. I home school my
9 two children and there is a school of kids in the
10 back which is probably something you don't normally
11 see at your meetings who many are home schooled, some
12 are public schooled as well and I think it would be a
13 great lesson to show them that when you show up for
14 something and have the courage to speak things can
15 change, so I'm holding you to that challenge.

16 As a home schooling mom, I'm -- I am not a
17 scientist. I'm not going to tell you any facts that
18 you don't know. I'm really bad at throwing out
19 numbers on the spot, so I won't try. But I do want
20 to appeal to you as a parent who is raising their
21 children in this area that swim in this bay, who hike
22 on these trails. We moved here partly because of the
23 pristine nature that's all around. I think lots of
24 people come to Maine for that reason. Many people
25 move here. Our town is growing. I can't imagine how

1 enormous fish tanks would support that economically
2 or for tourism or for people moving to this area.

3 I also work as a doula in this community,
4 which means that I assist women all birthing people
5 who are pregnant and birthing and then post-partum
6 after they've had their babies. So as I've heard the
7 research that so many local residents here have done,
8 the thing I'm most concerned about is the unknown
9 levels of mercury that will enter the bay upon
10 dredging. I don't know if those levels can be
11 predicted before it's done or not, but that concerns
12 me. We all know the implications for mercury in the
13 diets of pregnant women and their unborn children.
14 So I ask you to consider that and the real risk that
15 that poses for all people here who are fishermen and
16 fisherwomen and all of us who are eating what they're
17 catching and raising themselves.

18 I care about the future of our food economy
19 and the food sovereignty in this community. I've
20 been inspired to see young people get up here and
21 share about their generational history of fishing and
22 their desire to continue in it and so I ask that you
23 protect that for them and for everyone. We have
24 amazing organizations that already exist in Maine
25 like the Downeast Salmon Federation and many others

1 that are working in conjunction with that to remove
2 dams and restore natural fishways, building fish
3 ladders so that our native fish populations can come
4 back, which I find to be incredibly innovative and
5 exciting. And I ask why would we not give all of our
6 energy to those kinds of projects and instead divert
7 it with this huge plant that is going to be raising
8 salmon in a tank and than not feeding the people here
9 as a foreign company. Why would we not invest in all
10 of these exciting projects that are already happening
11 in Maine to restore our native fisheries.

12 I -- I just want to end with a challenge to
13 you and letting you know what I would most want to
14 see and that is an environment -- I most want to see
15 an environmentalism and I want to see you uphold this
16 kind of environmentalism that values the rights of
17 all species, animals, plants, humans of all kinds and
18 local economies over capitalism and that's what I ask
19 you to do today by rejecting the permitting process
20 for Nordic Aquafarms. Thank you.

21 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 MR. DUCHESNE: Camille Perrin.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good evening. Thank you
25 all for being here tonight and for hosting this

1 public meeting. I -- my name is Camille Perrin and I
2 live locally here about 20 minutes outside of
3 Belfast.

4 I wanted to share an experience I had
5 attending a previous meeting with Nordic Aquafarms
6 about the effluent. They were answering questions
7 from the community. In addition to the pollution and
8 the toxic heavy metals and everything emptying out
9 into this effluent, I asked what their plan was with
10 the vaccinations that they'll be administering the
11 fish in this fish farm as well as antibiotic use and
12 if they had any plans on combating that from entering
13 Penobscot Bay. At that meeting they had someone on
14 their team who did not appear to be a qualified
15 scientist who actually seemed to be representing a
16 food supplier for Nordic Aquafarms at the time
17 blatantly tell me I was wrong and that vaccinations
18 are not transmittable through water or through fish
19 waste. I have researched this again and again. I am
20 not a scientist. Google is a great university for me
21 and I have found multiple scientific reviews stating
22 that vaccinations and antibiotics are indeed part of
23 what ends up in the fish waste in massive commercial
24 fish farms of this size in and nature.

25 I personally feel that in addition to

1 everything else that everyone has talked about
2 tonight the pollution that's going to be supposedly
3 in this effluent that allowing micro amounts, if you
4 don't know what a vaccination is, micro amounts of
5 diseases that are injected into these fish. I
6 personally feel that micro amounts of these diseases
7 and the antibiotics from the fish farm could be a
8 disastrous toxic soup for Penobscot Bay and I think
9 it would be highly irresponsible to allow something
10 of that nature to potentially destroy many different
11 species in the Penobscot Bay here in Maine. I do not
12 support this permit for Nordic Aquafarms and I hope
13 that this Board makes the right decision here. Thank
14 you.

15 MR. DUCHESNE: Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. DUCHESNE: And, John, if you would be so
18 kind, and I can make out the P in your first name,
19 but after that.

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (John Pincince.) Sorry
21 about that. Pincince is the last name,
22 P-I-N-C-I-N-C-E.

23 MR. DUCHESNE: Good. Thank you.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (John Pincince.) I live
25 in Lincolville and some years ago I retired from

1 teaching over on Islesboro and decided that one of
2 the things I wanted to do is become a Maine Guide and
3 so I -- I did. And one of the reasons I did is
4 because I like to fish, not so much that I like to
5 kill anything, and I hunt also. I sometimes do take
6 animals for food. But one of the species that --
7 that I admire most is the Atlantic salmon, the wild
8 Atlantic salmon. I just wondered if -- if any of you
9 had ever seen a wild Atlantic salmon. They're
10 creatures of extraordinary grace and beauty. And
11 fishing the Ducktrap where I -- near where I live
12 there are Atlantic salmon there, small ones, smolts
13 and -- and they've been trying to come back up into
14 the river there since they were depleted many years
15 ago while we were fishing, pollution, dams, not the
16 Ducktrap fortunately, but. And so they do exist
17 there. I've caught some by accident because they're
18 an endangered species, I don't really want to catch
19 them. As soon as I realize that it is a salmon I --
20 I use barbless hooks and so they are released
21 immediately without even taking them out of the
22 water.

23 There is only, I think, six rivers in the
24 entire east coast that have Atlantic salmon and wild
25 Atlantic salmon, the Ducktrap one of them. And I --

1 my feeling is that -- and our fear is that the
2 effluent from the plant -- proposed plant is going to
3 mess up the ability for salmon to be able to navigate
4 their way back to the rivers of their birth. The
5 effluent, who knows what's in it, and we know that
6 salmon depend on their sense of smell to be able to
7 get back to their rivers of their birth and if we
8 mess up the, you know, the chemistry of the water
9 they may not be able to do that and that would be --
10 that would be a loss not for fishermen so much as
11 really for all of us for the planet because they
12 are -- we are all one. We're all connected and the
13 depth of the disappearance of any one species really
14 falls on all of us. So I am obviously opposed to
15 this plant. Thank you very much.

16 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. Thank you. I believe
17 we have one final person to testify. Shana Hanson.

18 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) Yup.

19 MR. DUCHESNE: And you have not been sworn
20 in yet; is that right?

21 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) That's
22 right. Thank you.

23 MR. DUCHESNE: So if you would be kind
24 enough to raise your right hand, do you swear or
25 affirm the testimony you are about to give is the

1 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) Yes.

3 MR. DUCHESNE: Good. You may proceed.

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) Thank
5 you. So I would have been on time, but I had a baby
6 goat born just before at 5:30 and this is a warm
7 bottle for the way home. So I -- pardon me if I'm
8 repeating what people have said because I haven't
9 been here, but I'm wondering if people have thought
10 about extreme weather events. I am studying a lot
11 about climate change and I've been in conferences in
12 Vermont and everybody there has been dealing with
13 huge floods and we've been dealing with droughts
14 here, but it could flip flop. And so I'm really
15 wondering how much thought has been put into what
16 happens when that whole place goes under water and
17 everything from those tanks goes into the bay
18 including the fish and the medications and all of
19 the, you know, so I just -- I guess that was my
20 point -- main point. And I didn't prepare a
21 speech.

22 MR. DUCHESNE: That's just fine. In fact,
23 it was pertinent.

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) Yeah.

25 MR. DUCHESNE: And since you are the last

1 person talking and we are going to be closing the
2 hearing in a moment, I just want to thank you and
3 everybody who testified tonight. And Steve Pelletier
4 has a question.

5 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) Can I
6 make one more comment?

7 MR. DUCHESNE: Absolutely.

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Shana Hanson.) It's just
9 that that is such a special spot. I have pruned the
10 fruit trees at Jeffrey Mabee's house right where the
11 river comes out for many, many years and each time I
12 spend like an hour extra watching hundreds of ducks
13 there. I don't know what's so special about that
14 spot, but I know it's going to change if this happens
15 and for 100 jobs in a town of 7,000 people it just, I
16 don't know, it doesn't seem worth it. It doesn't
17 seem worth the risk. So anyway, I'm all set. Thank
18 you. Sorry to ramble on.

19 MR. DUCHESNE: Okay.

20 MR. PELLETIER: I just had one quick
21 question just to make sure I caught something right
22 from the woman I think it was Eileen Wolper, if she's
23 still here. Just real quick.

24 MS. BENSINGER: Can you come back up,
25 please?

1 MR. PELLETIER: Sorry about that. Thanks.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) Sure.

3 MR. PELLETIER: I wasn't sure if I caught
4 this right, but I wasn't aware of any covenants or
5 anything on that land and I thought I might have
6 heard you say something about protected easements on
7 the property where there is --

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) Yeah.

9 MR. PELLETIER: -- where -- beyond the
10 shoreland zone for the trails.

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) The
12 Hartleys. Harriet Hartley. Have you heard of the
13 Harriet Hartley Conservation?

14 MR. PELLETIER: I was -- thought you were
15 talking about the upper --

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) No, I
17 was talking about the --

18 MR. PELLETIER: Okay. So --

19 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) -- the
20 pipes going across that conservation land.

21 MR. PELLETIER: Okay. I thought there might
22 be some other protected.

23 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) No.

24 MR. PELLETIER: I haven't heard anything --

25 AUDIENCE MEMBER: There is a covenant on the

1 upland.

2 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) Oh,
3 there is a covenant?

4 AUDIENCE MEMBER: There is a protective
5 covenant.

6 MR. DUCHESNE: Which really at this point is
7 not actually a matter of the hearing tonight, but we
8 appreciate the initial --

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) I'm
10 sorry. I got those mixed up. Do you want to address
11 it?

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

13 MR. PELLETIER: It was mine and I thought it
14 was in the upland portions up there.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Eileen Wolper.) Thank
16 you.

17 MR. DUCHESNE: Great. For the -- for
18 everybody who is still present the written record is
19 open until Tuesday, February 18 at 5 p.m., so if you
20 have written submissions you want to make the record
21 is still open, you may do so. On behalf of the Board
22 and especially myself I'd really like to thank
23 everybody for being here tonight. We are somewhat
24 constrained by what statute is, what rules are, what
25 standards are, but you're not and what we get out of

1 an evening like this is the urgency and the energy it
2 takes to make sure that we do our homework and we ask
3 all of the right questions, we read every page that
4 comes before us and we do the hard work as long as it
5 takes because it really matters to you. So thank you
6 so much for coming tonight.

7 (Applause.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Robin J. Dostie, a Court Reporter and
Notary Public within and for the State of Maine, do
hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and
accurate transcript of the proceedings as taken by me
by means of stenograph,

and I have signed:

Court Reporter/Notary Public

My Commission Expires: February 6, 2026

DATED: March 8, 2020

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