

February 18, 2020

Dear DEP,

My name is Rachel Herbener and I am a resident of Belfast, Maine.

I am contacting you concerning the Nordic Aquafarms salmon factory being proposed in the town of Belfast on the Little River.

I attended the open comment session last Tuesday, February 11 from 6 pm – 9. Citizens ranging in age from 10 – 80 voiced their opposition to the factory farm. The eloquence, passion and scientific research supporting their position demonstrates the importance of this issue.

We the citizens expect you to protect our environment. Climate change threatens our state's environment, our nation, the entire planet. As you know, it is imperative to reduce our carbon footprint. Nordic would dramatically increase our footprint and would leave it up to Maine based businesses to try to somehow compensate.

It is my understanding that Maine's Climate Action Plan states that Maine cannot reach its carbon reduction goals with business-as-usual. Nordic Aquafarms is a business-as-usual factory farm. Here are a few examples of all it will require:

- the dumping of 7.7 million gallons of nitrogen rich effluent that will also contain unknown quantities of chemicals and drugs including antibiotics, pesticides and cleaning agents, as well as pathogens that will pass through the filtration system, every day into the Penobscot Bay where children swim, lobstermen fish, and the endangered Atlantic salmon and Shortnose sturgeon struggle to survive.
- the liquidation of a maturing, carbon sequestering forest, and wildlife habitat of Special Significance, carbon storing soils and wetlands of Special Significance, streams and drainages, critical shoreland wetlands,
- a massive infrastructure with a huge carbon footprint (it will equal the size of Gillette Stadium, Fenway Park, and two TD Gardens),
- eight diesel generators each with a 67 foot smokestack,
- a cement plant,
- alterations to Route 1 and at least 5 years of construction and
- unknown amounts of noise and odor,
- 1,250 gallons of fresh water a minute,

- the use of so much electricity that the existing grid cannot sustain the demand which equals that of Belfast, Northport, Lincolnville, Camden, Rockport and Rockland combined.

I understand Belfast, like all towns, needs to receive revenue. However, the climate and extinction crisis demand that we move beyond the business-as-usual model proposed, and adopt innovative, creative technologies and systems that drastically lower greenhouse gas emissions, and protect the natural world. Protecting the Penobscot Bay from pollution and warming is critical.

Nordic's approach is an outdated model based on receiving a "license to pollute." Belfast, the State of Maine, and the world can no longer afford this approach.

It is my understanding that far better aquaculture systems exist that require significantly less energy, recycle all of their waste, and do not entail the antibiotics, pesticides and caustic cleaners Nordic requires.

Nordic has not shown that they have the financial capacity to build and maintain a \$500 million project.

Maine should choose to support corporations using these fully closed systems. This will bring good and lasting jobs and revenue to Maine. It will guarantee that local lobstering and fishing businesses, as well as small-scale aquaculture ventures, and recovering wild fish populations, are protected from pollution.

Fully closed systems are the future, and they represent a win-win-win for Maine.

We are counting on you to fulfill your duty to the citizens of Maine.

Sincerely,

Rachel Herbener
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