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From: Samantha Langlois <splanglois75@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2020 9:43 AM
To: DEP, Nordic Aqua Farms
Subject: Please deny these permits

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To ME DEP,

Thank you for your service to Maine. I was at the public hearing last night (2/11) regarding Nordic Aquafarms held by the Bureau of Environmental Protection at the Hutchinson Center. I was very impressed with the interest and concern expressed by the members of the Bureau.

I do not support this project. I live in Belfast, on the Little River, just upstream from this project. This project is dependent on surface water from the Little River watershed. I am concerned as to how this project will affect my well and that of my neighbors. If my well is negatively affected by this project, how much will it cost me to hire a hydrologist to prove that Nordic Aquafarms is responsible for the damage as is required by law in order to receive any sort of restitution? The one thing we know for sure about climate change is that things become more unpredictable. Just because we have abundant clean water in Belfast now, doesn't mean we should trust that we always will.

I am concerned about disturbance of the mercury in the Belfast Bay. I have read that in order to install the intake and discharge pipes in the bay, dredging is likely to disturb the mercury that is currently safely buried in the sediment. My kids swim in that Bay. They can't swim in a slurry of mercury.

I am concerned about the toxicity of the effluent. Not only will the effluent carry nitrogen and phosphorous into our Bay - capable of causing algae blooms with disastrous consequences for all ocean life as well as our fisheries and tourism industries - but it will also carry residue from chemical cleaners, antibiotics, antivirals, and vaccines. We already know that animals in confinement get sick. Disease has to be treated - with antibiotics, antivirals and chemical cleaners. Will the filters be sufficient to remove all of these pollutants from the effluent, or will they get dumped into the Bay too?

I am also concerned about the temperature of the effluent. I have read in Richard Poldosky's testimony to the ME Board of Environmental Protection (Mr. Poldosky is the Founder and CEO of EcologyAndTechnology, an environmental science consulting firm in Camden) that the discharge waters from this project may average between 15 and 20 degrees warmer than the ambient temperature of Belfast Bay. According to Poldosky, by Nordic's own admission this discharge of thermally charged water will create a permanent thermal anomaly in the vicinity surrounding the discharge pipe which, depending on the plumes movement with time, tide, wind, and wave, may impact 1-2 miles north/south and 1 mile east/west and cover an area equivalent to between 1 and 2 square miles, equal to about 700 - 1500 football fields. It is well understood in environmental science that thermal pollution has profound impacts on the ecosystems where they occur. How will the increase in water temperature impact our Bay?

I am concerned that we don't know what Nordic Aquafarms will be feeding to these fish. I have read that the industry standard for farmed fish food is part soybean and part forage fish. Forage fish are at the bottom of the food chain. When we wipe out the bottom of the food chain, we wipe out the entire food chain. According to the Monterey Bay Aquarium roughly 1/3 of assessed wild fish populations are overfished and 1/2 are fully fished. This is not an efficient way to produce protein for humans to eat. Let's instead focus on restoring wild Atlantic salmon populations to our waters.

I am concerned about the carbon footprint of this project. According to an extensive carbon footprint report compiled by local engineer Jim Merkel, this project will produce between 550,000 and 759,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) to the atmosphere each year. This is equivalent to adding 120,000 to 165,000 cars to the roads. It would increase Belfast's carbon footprint 5 to 7 times. Belfast's city council recently signed onto the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy because they are, theoretically, concerned about our carbon footprint. I don't see how our city council can be both invested in reducing our carbon footprint and supportive of this project at the same time.

We are looking down the barrel of climate change. We can't afford to continue to put economic growth before environmental health and protection. That is how we have gotten ourselves into the current climate emergency.

This project is a huge experiment. Let's not trust our children's future to an experiment.

I urge you to do your job well and deny permits to this project. Thank you for considering the future of Belfast, of Maine, and of our planet.

Best,

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