

Burke, Ruth A

From: Diana Newman <timberedlake@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2020 12:31 AM
To: DEP, Nordic Aqua Farms
Subject: written public comment

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2-15-2020
P.O. Box 156
Belfast, ME 04915

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Diana Newman. I am submitting this letter as written public comment regarding Nordic Aquafarm's proposed project for Belfast, Maine.

I am deeply concerned about how inadequately the NAF advocate's were prepared to respond with thoroughness and specificity to so many of the basic questions directed to them during the BEP Hearing regarding concerns related to effluence, mercury, water, wetlands, finances, the status of the aging dams, etc. It would seem reasonable that a company proposing a highly controversial project of this magnitude would have anticipated each of these relevant queries well enough in advance of the hearing to have been prepared to provide more than cursory responses.

Whether this lack of preparation was born of myopia, inexperience, or a sense of entitlement, it raises yet another red flag regarding NAF's level of experience and integrity. It serves to reinforce, rather than alleviate, the ongoing concerns of so many engaged citizens who are passionately devoted to safeguarding the health and safety of our bioregion's cherished land, air, and water.

Perhaps the company spokesman's assertion, during the course of the hearing, that the nature of modeling is "all imaginary" was not intended to seem cavalier, but combined with the company's lack of initiative in undertaking adequate biological surveys to help better assess potential environmental impacts, it appears to indicate a marked lack of foresight and commitment to holding themselves accountable to thoroughly assessing potential environmental impacts including specifying how they would incorporate proven mitigation strategies in an event of unanticipated problems.

It seems painfully clear that NAF will not, in the interest of environmental safety, do any more than is clearly and stringently required of them by law. In any event, I hope we can trust the BEP to leverage a thorough and rigorous Environmental Impact Study to offset these glaring deficiencies.

It is my fervent hope that the precautionary principal will be held to by any permitting authorities, and that this company will not be granted any "benefit of a doubt," leniency, special favors, or fast tracking. We very much appreciate your time in taking into consideration the many well-researched testimonies offered by a significant number of deeply concerned citizens and we look forward to all assistance in securing environmental protection for our region.

Sincerely,

