

Mr. Robert Duschene, Presiding Officer
Bureau of Environmental Protection
17 State House Drive
28 Tyson Drive
Augusta, Maine 04333-0017

February 18, 2020

Re: Comments for the record on permit applications by Nordic Aquafarms, Inc.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the public hearings that you, your fellow Board members, and the staffs of the state agencies held in Belfast last week. I want to commend you personally for the even-handed way in which you managed the proceedings, and the assistance you received from senior staffer Bertocci and attorney Bensinger from the Office of the Attorney General. I attended all three and one-half days of testimony and the public comment session on Tuesday evening. I believe your deliberations on the permit applications from Nordic Aquafarms, Inc. (NAF) will truly be precedent-setting decisions.

I am deeply concerned that NAF failed to show that it has met the DEP requirement for financial backing. If the current application criteria include a requirement that an applicant demonstrate it has firm financial commitments equal to 20% of the stated costs of the project and NAF representatives only provided evidence that they have, at most, approximately 12% of the project cost firmly committed, how can BEP rule in favor of granting *any* of the requested permits until NAF provides conclusive proof that it has received the additional 8% needed?

If the Board does rule on any of the permits before Nordic provides such proof, and Nordic ultimately loses its argument that it has actual "title, right, or interest" (TRI) to construct its pipelines through the intertidal zone it must cross, then Nordic will be "dead in the water" – literally – and Belfast will be left with an abandoned, 50-acre construction site.

Do not let that happen. Condition any permits you decide to issue on the substantiation of 20% financial support and the resolution of all outstanding court cases in favor of NAF.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important permitting action. I hope you will adopt these suggestions as part of your rulings.

Sincerely,

Andrew E. Stevenson
143 Head of the Tide Road
Belfast, ME 04915