



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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Main Office Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA

MITIGATED DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (MDNS)

Name of Proposal: MDNS 19-056: RAISING STERILE ALL-FEMALE TRIPLOID RAINBOW TROUT/STEELHEAD AT EXISTING MARINE NET PEN SITES IN PUGET SOUND

Description of Proposal:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) proposes to issue a five-year Marine Aquaculture Permit to Cooke Aquaculture Pacific, LLC (Cooke) to culture all-female triploid rainbow trout/steelhead in existing commercial marine net-pens in Puget Sound. Once the five-year Marine Aquaculture Permit is issued, the permitted net-pen facilities are authorized to receive fish through the Finfish Transport Permit process.

Cooke is a Washington company that since June, 2016, operates commercial marine net-pens in Clallam, King, Kitsap and Skagit Counties, and two freshwater hatcheries in Thurston County. The facilities currently owned by Cooke have been commercially raising and harvesting farmed salmon in the Puget Sound region since the 1970s. The net-pen farms initially raised various types of salmonids including Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Donaldson Rainbow Trout and steelhead trout. By the early 1990s, the Washington industry transitioned to raising primarily Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*). Cooke is proposing to change the fish species being cultured from Atlantic Salmon to domesticated stocks of all-female triploid rainbow trout/steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). All-female triploid rainbow trout/steelhead have been selected to be raised in the existing net pen facilities because the use of mono-sex and sterile stocks of fish is recognized as means to significantly reduce potential genetic interaction with natural populations.

WDFW proposes to issue a five-year Marine Aquaculture Permit to Cooke to culture all-female triploid rainbow trout/steelhead at existing Fort Ward, Orchard Rocks, and Clam Bay; and Hope Island facilities. In the event that the Department of Natural Resources restores or issues new leases to Cooke for their other existing facilities, WDFW plans to extend the five-year Marine Aquaculture permit to include these facilities.

The proponent shall incorporate the following mitigation measures into the project:

Mitigation measures include Operations; Escape Prevention, Response, and Reporting; Triploidy Error Rate; and Finfish Pathogen Reporting and Biosecurity requirements and provisions, as listed under "Mitigating Provisions" in the attached "Summary – Key Issues" document.

Proponent/Applicant: Cooke Aquaculture Pacific, LLC
Contact: Kevin Bright, Permit Coordinator
PO Box 669
Anacortes, WA 98221
(360) 391-2409

Location of Proposal: Floating commercial marine net pens owned by Cooke Aquaculture Pacific, LLC that are located in the following areas in Washington:

Facilities with valid aquatic lands leases from Department of Natural Resources:

- Fort Ward, Orchard Rocks, and Clam Bay – All three sites are located in Rich Passage in Kitsap County between the south end of Bainbridge Island and Clam Bay near Manchester State Park; Township 24 North, Range 2 East, Section 15.
- Hope Island – Kiket Bay (Skagit Bay) in Skagit County on the northeast side of Hope Island; Township 34N, Range 2 East, Section 28.

Existing facilities without valid aquatic lands leases from Department of Natural Resources, in the event that the leases are restored or new leases issued:

- Cypress Island 1 – Deepwater Bay in Skagit County on the southeast side of Cypress Island; Township 35 North, Range 1 East, Section 4.
- Cypress Island 3 – Deepwater Bay in Skagit County on the southeast side of Cypress Island; Township 36 North, Range 1 East, Section 33.
- Port Angeles – Port Angeles Harbor in Clallam County on the south side of Ediz Hook; Township 31 North, Range 6 West, Section Gov. Out Lot 8 (former federal BLM land without a designated section number).

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

The following document is incorporated by reference:

“Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement: Fish Culture in Floating Net-Pens,” dated January 1990.

Agency that Prepared Document Being Incorporated: Washington Department of Fisheries

Description of Document (or Portion) Being Incorporated: The entire contents of the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement: Fish Culture in Floating Net-Pens, dated January 1990.

If the Document Being Adopted has been Challenged, Please Describe: N/A

Name of Agency Incorporating the Document: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Documents are Available to be Read at:

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - Natural Resources Building,
1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA, Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

These documents are also available for review online at:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/open-comments>

WDFW has determined that this proposal will likely not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, state law¹ does not require an environmental impact statement (EIS). WDFW made this mitigated determination of nonsignificance (MDNS) after we reviewed the environmental checklist and other information on file with us.

We issued this MDNS according to state rules.² We will **not act on this proposal for 21 days** from the date we issued the MDNS. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or MDNS. We must receive your comments within 21 days of the date of this letter. The comment period will end at **5:00 pm on October 22, 2019**.

Method of Comment: The following procedures shall govern the method to comment on agency SEPA proposals. Comments received through these procedures are part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.

You can submit your comments any one of the following ways:

- Email to SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov
- Online at the WDFW SEPA website comment link at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/open-comments>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946
- Mail to the address below

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Habitat Program, Protection Division

Address: P.O. Box 43200, Olympia, WA 98504-3200

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/sepa/closed-final>. Once the status is posted as final, applicants and permittees may take action on the proposal. When a proposal is modified or withdrawn, notice will be given in accordance with state law.¹

If you have questions about this MDNS or the details of the proposal, contact Lisa Wood at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call her at (360) 902-2260.

DATE OF ISSUE: October 1, 2019

SIGNATURE:



Footnotes

1. RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c)
2. WAC 197-11-350

SEPA Log Number: 19-056.mdns