

Burke, Ruth A

From: Jana Herbener <janaherbener1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:18 AM
To: DEP, Nordic Aqua Farms
Subject: Nordic Aqua Farms

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To the DEP:

My name is Jana Herbener, and I'm a resident of Searsmont, ME. I am contacting you concerning the Nordic Aquafarms salmon factory that is proposed for the town of Belfast. I am very concerned about the pollution that will be created by the factory, the impact on the fish and wildlife species in the bay, and the warming of our bay water temperatures.

According to Nordic, they will discharge 7.7 million gallons of effluent into shallow waters every day, which will be directly into lobstering grounds and endangered salmon and shortnose sturgeon habitat. I understand that Nordic has not provided information about the specific type of fish food they will be using, and does not plan to test their discharge water for pharmaceuticals or other contaminants often associated with fish feed and disease prevention. The vaccines, antibiotics, and other drugs that may be present, along with industrial cleaners, will not be fully filtered out by the filtration systems and are toxic to both fish and humans. Nordic predicts that water currents will take 14 days to move any discharge out to the Gulf of Maine; I'm very concerned about the direct effects that will have on our local communities.

I understand that Nordic's discharge will be on average over a year, 18 degrees (F) warmer than the bay. Frighteningly, this would add to rising water temperatures which are already impacting lobsters and marine life in general. Warm waters with effluent also promote the growth of viruses and pathogens. Climate change requires that we do not add any additional heat to the ocean and bays, so this fish farm will seriously head us in the wrong direction for meeting climate change goals for Belfast and the state.

I have learned that far better aquaculture systems exist that require less energy, recycle all of their waste, and do not entail the antibiotics, pesticides and caustic cleaners Nordic requires. Maine should instead welcome the corporations that use these fully closed systems which will protect our lobstering and fishing businesses, small-scale aquaculture ventures, and recovering wild fish populations from pollution, and not impact our bay temperatures.

Sincerely,
Jana Herbener