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January 30, 2020

Maine Board of Environmental Protection
17 State House Station
28 Tyson Drive
Augusta, Maine 04333-0017

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Riverence Brood and Riverence Farms, sister aquaculture operations located in the Western USA, I am writing to direct the Board's attention to several resources that may help to inform your deliberations regarding the future of land-based aquaculture in Maine. Riverence Brood is a salmonid breeding company based in Washington and produces Rainbow Trout/steelhead, Coho Salmon, and Atlantic Salmon eggs. Riverence Farms, second largest producer of Rainbow Trout/steelhead in the USA, is a collection of trout farms and processing facilities based in Idaho. As the Director of Science for both operations, I am responsible for managing our strategic science portfolio and helping to shape our positions regarding aquaculture practice and policy.

The aquaculture industry is beset by considerable misinformation and outdated views of its principles and practices. **But perhaps the most dangerous myth about aquaculture is that it isn't necessary.** Many capture fisheries are well-managed and productive, but they cannot sustainably satisfy growing demand for fish and shellfish. Even the most optimistic assessments tell us that we're not going to get any more wild-caught fish from the ocean—if anything, in the future, we may get less.

Seafood shortages aren't other people's problems or something we can deal with later—food insecurity and the future of our seafood supply is something we need to think about here and now. More than half of the fish we eat now comes from farms—aquaculture is and will continue to be the world's most important source of seafood. We must decide whether we will cultivate wholesome seafood ourselves, relieve pressure on marine resources, and ensure a safe, sustainable seafood supply. Or we can let others decide where and how the fish we eat are produced.

Most of the American seafood supply comes from somewhere else, meaning that most of the economic opportunities in fisheries and aquaculture are being realized overseas. It also means that most of the seafood we eat has traveled a long way and left a sizable carbon footprint on its way to our tables.



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Developing the domestic aquaculture sector has the potential to make seafood more available and affordable and to improve American lives and livelihoods.

The [American Fisheries Society](#) hosted a [‘myth-busting’ congressional briefing about aquaculture](#) during Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2019. Internationally recognized experts addressed some of the most controversial topics in aquaculture, including the sustainability of feeds, use of antibiotics and other medications, pollution, and escapement. In short, many of these issues are misrepresented and overblown. My [introductory remarks](#) as then-president of the Society are available online, along with a [factsheet](#) summarizing the content of the briefing.

You may also be interested in, [“Is Aquaculture Sustainable?”](#), a presentation that addresses hot-button issues in aquaculture made available by the [Fish Culture Section](#) of the American Fisheries Society.

I urge you to review these materials and consider their content. Growth of the aquaculture sector—particularly land-based operations—in Maine and elsewhere in the country is essential to securing American seafood security. Please contact me if you have questions.

Best,

Jesse Trushenski, PhD