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(HANSARD)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE

Port McNeill

Tuesday, June 27, 2006

Issue No. 18

ROBIN AUSTIN, MLA, CHAIR

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE**

Port McNeill
Tuesday, June 27, 2006

Chair:

* Robin Austin (Skeena NDP)

Deputy Chair:

* Ron Cantelon (Nanaimo-Parksville L)

Members:

Gordon Hogg (Surrey-White Rock L)
* Daniel Jarvis (North Vancouver-Seymour L)
John Yap (Richmond-Steveston L)
* Gary Coons (North Coast NDP)
* Scott Fraser (Alberni-Qualicum NDP)
* Gregor Robertson (Vancouver-Fairview NDP)
* Shane Simpson (Vancouver-Hastings NDP)
* Claire Trevena (North Island NDP)

**denotes member present*

Clerk:

Craig James

Committee Staff:

Brant Felker (Committee Research Analyst)

Witnesses:

Tricia Fawkes (Foenix Forest Technology Inc.)
Gerry Furney (Mayor, Town of Port McNeill)
Brian Gunn (President, Wilderness Tourism Association)
Gordie Graham (Telegraph Cove Resorts Ltd.)
Bruce Lloyd
Marilyn MacArthur (Regional District of Mount Waddington)
Tanya Romas (Englewood Packing Co. Ltd.)
David Schmidt (North Island Biological Consultants Ltd.)
Gary Stoner (Gulf Trollers Association)

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MINUTES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE



Tuesday, June 27, 2006
6 p.m.
Main Hall, Community Hall
473 Broughton Blvd., Port McNeill

Present: Robin Austin, MLA (Chair); Ron Cantelon, MLA (Deputy Chair); Gary Coons, MLA; Scott Fraser, MLA; Daniel Jarvis, MLA; Gregor Robertson, MLA; Shane Simpson, MLA; Claire Trevena, MLA

Unavoidably Absent: Gordon Hogg, MLA; John Yap, MLA

1. The Chair called the committee to order at 6:03 p.m.
2. Opening statement by the Chair, Robin Austin, MLA
3. The following witnesses appeared before the Committee and answered questions:
 - 1) Englewood Packing Company
 - 2) Wilderness Tourism Association
 - 3) Gulf Trollers Association
 - 4) Regional District of Mount Waddington
 - 5) Town of Port McNeill
 - 6) North Island Biological Consultants
 - 7) Foenix Forest Technology
 - 8) Bruce Lloyd
 - 9) Telegraph Cove Resorts

Tanya Romas
Brian Gunn
Gary Stoner
Marilyn MacArthur
Mayor Gerry Furney
David Schmidt
Tricia Fawkes
Gordie Graham
4. The Committee adjourned to the call of the Chair at 8:44 p.m.

Robin Austin, MLA
Chair

Craig James
Clerk Assistant and
Clerk of Committees

TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 2006

The committee met at 6:03 p.m.

[R. Austin in the chair.]

R. Austin (Chair): Good evening. I'd like to call this meeting to order. My name is Robin Austin, and I'm Chair of the Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Aquaculture Committee's public hearings here in Port McNeill. It's a real pleasure for us to be in your community and to hear directly from you about this important topic.

For your information, today's meeting is a public meeting, which will be recorded and transcribed by Hansard Services. A copy of this transcript, along with the minutes of this meeting, will be printed and will be made available on the committee's website at www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/aquaculture.

In addition to the meeting transcript, a live audio webcast of this meeting is also produced and available on the committee's website to enable interested listeners to hear the proceedings as they occur. An archived copy of the audio broadcast will also be retained on the committee's website.

Let me also, for the benefit of the presenters, read out the mandate that this committee has. The Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture was reissued the following terms of reference by the Legislative Assembly on February 20, 2006: that the committee be empowered to examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to sustainable aquaculture in British Columbia and in particular, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to consider the economic and environmental impacts of the aquaculture industry in B.C.; the economic impact of aquaculture on B.C.'s coastal and isolated communities; sustainable options for aquaculture in B.C. that balance economic goals with environmental imperatives, focusing on the interaction between aquaculture, wild fish and the marine environment; as well as B.C.'s regulatory regime as it compares to other jurisdictions. The committee is to report to the House no later than May 31, 2007.

[1805]

This evening we have a number of people working with us. On my left we have Adam Wang and Wendy Collisson from Hansard Services. They record what is said during the hearing and then, as I've already mentioned, make sure it's on the Internet. We also have staff here from the Office of the Clerk of Committees. To my right is Craig James, our Committee Clerk. Our researcher, Brant Felker, is at the information table at the entrance to the room.

I would now like to invite the members of the committee to introduce themselves, starting on my right.

D. Jarvis: Good evening. I am Daniel Jarvis and I'm from the North Vancouver-Seymour area. For those ladies over there with children, there are about five or six chairs over there beside the mayor that you can go

and sit on. Don't be afraid of him; he's rather a nice guy. Aren't you, Gerry?

R. Cantelon (Deputy Chair): My name is Ron Cantelon. I'm the MLA for Nanaimo-Parksville, and I'm glad to be here in Port McNeill tonight. Thank you.

C. Trevena: I'm Claire Trevena. I'm the very proud member for North Island.

G. Robertson: I'm Gregor Robertson. I'm the MLA for Vancouver-Fairview.

G. Coons: Gary Coons. MLA North Coast.

S. Fraser: Scott Fraser. MLA for Alberni-Qualicum. Thanks for having us.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you members.

I would just like to begin by letting everybody know there has been a little controversy here in regard to us and our schedule tomorrow and our attempts to try and get to two sites that are very close to each other. I've spoken with Blaine and Tanya, and what we will do tomorrow is that half our committee will come to see your operations and where you work, and the other half will go to the Alpha plants. Then we will confer and exchange our experiences with each other. I want to put that out at the beginning so you know that we will be there to visit you tomorrow morning.

I encourage presenters this evening to throw as much light as they can on the mandate of this committee to help us in our important work. To begin with, I would like to invite Tanya Romas to come forward to the witness table to make a presentation on behalf of the Englewood Packing Company.

Presentations

T. Romas: Hello. My name is Tanya Romas. First of all, I'd like to welcome you to Port McNeill and to thank you for coming. Second of all, I would like to thank all of Englewood Packing for taking the time out of their gruelling schedule to come here tonight. Some of them have been working since five this morning.

Down at Englewood Packing I am the manager of the value-added operations, and today I'm here to tell you a little bit about Englewood. Englewood was built in 1996. Our first day of operation happened on December 6, 1996. We started with 30 people. On our first day we harvested, cleaned and packed about 1,000 fish. Most of the process was done by hand because we did not have the equipment we do today. The plant was built with the intention of processing up to 17 million pounds, and our filleting operation was not yet planned. We are now processing over 40 million pounds of whole fish and 5.5 million pounds of fillets.

We have 130 people working full-time, 12 months a year. Our employees are among the highest-paid employees in the industry, earning an average of \$17.75 per hour. They also enjoy a range of benefits, including

medical, dental, extended health, life insurance, group RRSP package and EFAB counselling. Last year alone our payroll injected \$4.6 million into the community, and our accounts payable was \$3.3 million.

What makes us successful is a dedicated, well-trained crew, a dedicated customer and a market that is in high demand. It's very important to us to take care of our employees, because the north Island does not have a large employment pool to draw from. We do many things for our employees: ergonomic specialist on site once a week; disability management program; job-share programs; massage therapy twice a week; stretching twice a day; nutrition counselling; EFAB counselling; scholarships; a wellness committee, which will do things like sponsor free skates, free pool time; Christmas hamper collections, which support a family every year; golf tournament; family picnic; year-end party; ice cream days and barbecue days — that's where management will flip burgers for the whole crew.

We believe our employees are the best-trained in the industry, with each employee being trained to do each one of the many complex jobs in the plant. This extensive training allows for full job rotation, which prevents boredom, reduces repetitive strain injuries and allows everyone to have input into how the jobs can be done better. We strongly believe in the wisdom of the workforce.

Englewood came along at a time that was good for the north Island. The copper mine had shut down, logging was going through a trying time, and the fishing was not what it once had been. We have many wives of loggers who were able to keep their families going through tough times. We have single mothers who have good jobs, have bought their own homes and have been able to afford to keep their children active in sports.

[1810]

We have many university students we employ every summer, and we carry them through the duration of their program.

This brings me to the next subject of the participation that we do in the community of Port McNeill. We sponsor kids' soccer teams, hockey teams, baseball teams, stock car racing, and every year for Orca Fest we barbecue salmon for the entire town of Port McNeill. All this is done by donation, which goes to salmon enhancement, which is Marble River and Kokish Hatchery.

Most of the people that work at the plant are from Port McNeill. However, there are also some from Port Alice, Port Hardy and Woss.

We recently did a count of homeowners in the plant. In 2002 we were at 22 homes. Now we're at 56. We have approximately 50 to 60 newer-style cars sitting in our parking lot at any given time. And children? There are 118 children, approximately, that depend on their parents working at Englewood. We also have gone so far as to have our own form of stork parking, which we call smolt parking, in front of the plant for our expectant mothers.

These are real people, real jobs. But you have chosen not to come see for yourselves. Of course, that has changed.

This is British Columbia's largest agricultural export. Aquaculture provides well-paying jobs. It takes the pressure off wild stock, and it plays an important role in feeding the world's growing population.

I will be more than happy to take any questions that are related to Englewood Packing.

G. Coons: Thank you very much, Tanya. Nice seeing you again.

I'm just sort of wondering: what types of fish do you process — Atlantics or...?

T. Romas: We process all Atlantic salmon — only Atlantic salmon.

G. Coons: Only Atlantic. What company do you process for?

T. Romas: Marine Harvest via Pan Fish. They've just merged.

S. Fraser: How are these shifts set up? Are they eight-hour shifts, ten-hour, 12-hour shifts or what?

T. Romas: We've got two shifts. We've got actually three shifts. We've got two day shifts — one's primary; one's value-added — and we've got an afternoon shift that's value-added.

We usually try and get them to eight hours, but lots of times it's until the fish are done. Sometimes they're ten, sometimes 12, sometimes seven, but the majority of them are all eight-hour shifts.

S. Fraser: Okay, thanks. Are you at capacity? Could you do more?

T. Romas: Oh, no. We could go a little higher.

S. Fraser: You could go a little higher.

T. Romas: Yeah.

S. Fraser: You've got a certain flow of product that comes through right now. That's obviously keeping a lot of people employed. Is that something that could be expanded? Could you run another shift?

T. Romas: Yes.

S. Fraser: How much could you do?

T. Romas: Well, we've only had the one shift running on the primary. We could double their production by putting an afternoon shift.

S. Fraser: How many people would that involve?

T. Romas: About 45 comfortably.

S. Fraser: Okay. What do you do for value-added?

T. Romas: Filleting and steaking.

S. Fraser: Thank you.

T. Romas: I'm interested that you said that, because one of the reporters asked me outside.... I guess in So-intula today they said that they don't have anything to do with the plant and there's no employment over there involved with us. That kind of strikes me as funny, because we are just dying to get people employed in the plant.

We have been putting ads in the paper. We have never had one person apply from there, but we'd be more than happy to have their applications come in.

G. Robertson: Thanks, Tanya, for your presentation.

A question about where your product goes. Do you market your product?

T. Romas: We don't do our own marketing. No, we don't. We process for our customer. Our customer is Marine Harvest, and they take care of all their marketing down in Campbell River.

G. Robertson: Okay. It goes all over from there?

T. Romas: Eighty percent is exported to the U.S. But my filleting operation mostly fillets for Canada.

D. Jarvis: Thank you very much for your presentation.

I don't know if I really have a question here. I was looking over the benefits that you say you give. Actually, they are better than working for government. It's pretty good.

From your little presentation I understand that you said that you do all for the fish farm area. So all your work is done through the fish farms.

T. Romas: All of the fish that we process is farmed Atlantic salmon, yes.

[1815]

D. Jarvis: What would happen if we had a slow-down in there? How long would you be able to exist if, say, we had a moratorium on fish farms — by putting new ones in and just closing them down? Would you just die? The whole industry would?

T. Romas: If the fish farms were to be closed down? Yes, I do believe that Englewood would die.

D. Jarvis: It sounds like you've been doing a good thing on your own, keeping going. Glad to see you're successful.

T. Romas: Yes, we believe so. We're a very successful plant.

R. Cantelon (Deputy Chair): I've just got new glasses, but I think I see His Worship Gerry Furney here — don't I?

A Voice: Yeah.

R. Cantelon (Deputy Chair): Yeah, I do.

Just a question about shipping: where do you ship? Do you ship from here directly all over the world, or where does it go?

T. Romas: Some 80 percent of the fish goes into the U.S. We also ship to Asia and Canada.

C. Trevena: I didn't actually have a question. I just wanted to say that I have been to Englewood on my very first trip as MLA to an industrial complex and was very impressed by it. I'm very pleased that the committee will be able to go, as I'd hoped they would be able to go. It was one of the suggestions where they should go, because you are obviously an employer for Port McNeill. So I'm very happy. It's nice to have your presentation, and people will be able to see on site just what you are doing. I'm glad that it's all being resolved.

D. Jarvis: One more question. I think you said you were able to increase your capacity, so what do you think is holding up, with the fact that you're...into Canada? Do you know if it's a psychological thing?

T. Romas: That would be a really good question for the marketing department, because a lot of that depends on price. I can tell you that in the past few months just in Canada, specifically with my orders that we do, we've had to put a cap on them because we can't supply the market with enough fish right now.

D. Jarvis: Is that right?

T. Romas: Yes. If they've ordered 400 cases, we've had to cap them at 300 so that we can have enough to go around.

R. Austin (Chair): Great. Thank you very much for your presentation, Tanya.

T. Romas: Thank you very much. I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

R. Austin (Chair): You bet.

Next I would like to invite Brian Gunn up to the witness table.

B. Gunn: Good evening. My name is Brian Gunn, and I'm president of the Wilderness Tourism Association of British Columbia. I'm pleased to be here tonight to present the views of our association.

You've heard a lot about jobs, particularly from the open-net-cage salmon farm companies, their workers and economic development folks. I'm here to tell you about the jobs and dreams from entrepreneurs of the wilderness tourism industry.

The B.C. Wilderness Tourism Association is a hundred-member organization. It represents nature-based operators and their sector associations in British

Columbia. Many of our businesses and operations completely depend on healthy wild salmon stocks. If the wild salmon stocks are depleted, then there is an immediate effect on the food chain and the wildlife like whales, bears and eagles that depend on them. Our businesses, in turn, depend on the health of B.C.'s super, natural attractions for all visitors.

Tourism is B.C.'s largest land-based employer, with 117,500 full-time direct jobs and gross annual direct revenues of \$9.5 billion. Within B.C. tourism, wilderness tourism is the fastest-growing sector. Wilderness tourism generated \$900 million in direct revenues in 2001. Adding in spinoffs and indirect revenue generated from travel to and from nature-based operations, total revenue in 2001 was \$2 billion — 21,000 full-time jobs.

[1820]

Wilderness Tourism Association members include the B.C. Lodging and Campgrounds Association, the Commercial Bear Viewing Association and the B.C. Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association.

I estimate that about one-half of this revenue and employment is associated with, or is in some way dependent on, what happens to the fishery on the west coast of British Columbia. Those who are directly involved in this fishery are the lodges and charter boats who sport-fish and wildlife-view, and those depend directly on the wild stock. We then have the large inland fishery that depends on the wild stocks successfully surviving in the oceans and coastal waterways and then making it back to fresh water to feed the wildlife and provide the fish for the sport fishermen.

You can see that nature-based operators all over this province are particularly concerned with what has been happening to the wild stock, particularly in the Broughton Archipelago and with regard to pink salmon, and the clear link between the farms on the migratory route and the resulting devastation of critical runs by sea lice.

I was first made aware of the problem in early February 2005 by our tourism operators in the Broughton Archipelago. I visited the Broughton Archipelago in March 2005 and met with Alexandra Morton and Marty Krkošek, two independent researchers, in the company of my partner and her daughter, who is a marine biologist. I saw first hand the effect of sea lice on juveniles in the Fife and Tribune channels and visited the Burdwood farm, where I saw significant sea lice on the farmed salmon. These lice were about to have their eggs hatch.

I organized a trip in May 2005. It was an information trip and a get-together trip with tourism operators, farm people, scientists, folks from the packing plant, scientists from farms and independents, and government folks from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the Department of Fisheries. Also, we were honoured to have John Fraser, chairman of the Pacific Salmon Forum, come as well.

I again visited the Broughton Archipelago early in May 2006 with tourism industry people to see the work of CAAR and Marine Harvest and to visit the independent researchers at Echo Bay. Again I saw significant lice on the juveniles sampled — about three per juvenile — and was told that these juveniles came from

the vicinity of the Burdwood farm. About 70 percent of the juveniles sampled had been infected by sea lice.

It is clear to me and to my tourism operators that the farms incubate the sea lice and make it possible to transfer them to the juveniles, who then become diseased and die. It is also clear to me that the farms recognize sea lice as a problem because of the effort made with the chemical SLICE to kill them. Although the actual moment of transfer of sea lice from the farm fish to the wild has not been documented, the weight of evidence — peer-reviewed science and observations — clearly points in that direction.

It is also clear that following the migration routes during out-migration has allowed many runs to rebound temporarily, only to have them fall off again when the farms are in operation during the out-migration of juveniles.

We believe it is up to the government and the farms to correct the problem that they have with open-net-cage farms and the wild stock, and to restore the river systems that have been devastated. We have yet to be shown that the farms are not having a severe impact on the wild stock in the Broughton.

We are extremely concerned at the lack of understanding and misuse of the 2005 returns in the Broughton Archipelago. A careful examination of the Department of Fisheries 2005 area 12 report clearly shows the devastation occurring in all of our five classified systems except the Glendale, which has an artificially enhanced spawning channel and had a much less fettered access to the larger bodies of water.

The Kingcome and the Wakeman river systems, once mighty, wild salmon rivers, have just about been wiped out for the odd-year escapement, and the trend for the even-year escapement shows downward since the placement of the farms. This data correlates with what our operators see for themselves in the Broughton Archipelago.

[1825]

It is time to set about restoring these rivers. Unlike the Glendale stocks, wild salmon from the Kingcome and Wakeman systems must navigate a much more intense complex of fish farms.

We are appalled at the lack of support from the farm industries for Agrimarine's floating concrete tanks closed-containment pilot project. Only two major farm fish companies have supported Agrimarine's request for Western Economic Diversification funding. We are most particularly dismayed by the lack of support from folks like Rivercorp, Campbell River's economic development body, who are not willing to support the north Island's own floating concrete closed-containment system trial and the necessary funding from Western Economic Diversification to kick off the project.

I believe this project will help us find a way to raise farm salmon in an economically and environmentally sustainable way. If this project is successful, then it could pave the way for vastly improved aquaculture and provide significant employment and investment opportunities for B.C. coastal communities, plus put the north Island on the map for sustainable aquaculture.

Finally, I wish to make it clear that the Wilderness Tourism Association and its members are not opposed to salmon farms. We do, however, want them to clean

up their act and stop the lice transfer to the juveniles and take care of other environmental problems. It is increasingly evident that the problems associated with the farms can't be fixed as long as open-net-cage technology is the norm.

Therefore, Wilderness Tourism Association opposes any new farms or expansion and supports a transition to closed containment. We are, however, excited about north Island's own Agrimarine-proposed closed containment system. We applaud Mainstream and Creative farms for endorsing the Agri proposal. We applaud Marine Harvest and CARR for their agreement to work together to resolve the problems of sea lice in the Broughton Archipelago.

We are strongly upset by the recent approval of the Grieg farm at Bennett Point, as we think it will have a detrimental effect on the out-migrating pinks from Knight Inlet, particularly the Glendale, where there's a very important commercial bear-viewing operation. We believe that Glendale's runs survive because of the clear alternative escape route of the juveniles at their critical life stage compared to the gauntlet of farms that pinks have to run in the Fife-Tribune Channel.

We ask you, the legislative committee, to make recommendations that would mandate the fish farm industry to stop harming wild salmon stock or fallow their farms during the out-migration, to support closed containment — with particular regard to the Agrimarine proposal — and to ask for cessation of the expansion of open-net-cage farms until the problems they are causing have been resolved.

In particular, I'm asking if it's possible for an interim recommendation from your committee to ask for provincial government support of the Agrimarine proposal. I think it's necessary to support a proposal like this because of all the questions around closed containment and partial closed containment, the amount of research that has to be done and the cooperation required from environmentalists as well as from the farm community. I think that's a very good reason as to why there should be government funding for this proposal.

As you know, the turnout of tourism operators to your hearings is low because we are into our busiest season. We have asked you by separate letter to allow operators the opportunity, in the fall, to be heard in person and in written submissions. I understand that the written submission request has been extended to October — thank you — and that you are still considering a second visit to many coastal areas. I hope that you will grant this request. Thank you for your attention.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, Brian.
Do members have any questions of Brian?

G. Robertson: Thanks, Brian, for your presentation. I'm curious. You mentioned a hundred members of the Wilderness Tourism Association. How are they spread out, particularly around the coast here? Are there a specific number in this region, or is that provincewide?

[1830]

B. Gunn: That's provincewide. We have about 80 direct members and about 20 that are through associa-

tions. Some of the associations have as many as 500 or a thousand members. I'm here because of our operators in this area that contacted me a year ago in February to have a look at this situation. They're vitally concerned about their business future and their jobs, and I'm sure that many of them probably have a partner or something that works in the farm industry, as well, to survive, just like these people do.

G. Coons: Thank you, Brian. Again, when we look at the issue here of sustainable aquaculture and how it interacts with wild stocks and the marine environment, we're sort of looking at the coastal concerns. You represent people from the north coast also. Approximately how many members would that be?

B. Gunn: Up on the north coast we have a number of people in wilderness tourism. That's the lodges. There are a number of fishing lodges and luxury lodges. There are also all the people in the inland fishery.

I was just up on the north coast area a week ago visiting folks on the Babine River system, and they're vitally concerned about the survival of their steelhead, if the farms were to be installed up north. They feel that the sea lice problem could affect their industry and, in fact, destroy it. Some of the operators are talking about getting out of the industry completely, if in fact the farms go north. That's how much concern and how much fear there is about this problem.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you very much, Brian, for your presentation.

A Voice: Can somebody in the audience ask you a question?

R. Austin (Chair): No, I'm afraid not. Not in this process.

I'd like to invite Steve Burg and Gary Stoner to the witness table.

G. Stoner: Steve's not home.

R. Austin (Chair): Steve's not home. Okay. You're Gary, right?

G. Stoner: I'm Gary Stoner. I've been a commercial fisherman since 1977. I run my own hatchery right here in town. I'm basically what you'd call "one with the salmon." I know every aspect of a salmon, from the time its egg drops until the time somebody harvests it. They've been an integral part of my life. I'm on the water every day; I work on the boom five days a week. When I'm not booming, I'm fishing, so I observe salmon every day.

May and June are the biggest months for outgoing salmon fry, and what I can tell you is what I've seen. I'm not going to spout a bunch of numbers off, but I can tell you right now that I don't see any outgoing salmon, as far as the small ones go. Salmon fry go out in different stages. Some salmon stay in the stream for 18 months; some stay for up to two years. Some

migrate out, like the pinks and dogs, right away. As soon as they hatch and come out of the gravel, off they go to sea. They're the ones that are really susceptible to sea lice.

When I look around me this year, I've never seen anything like it in my life. There are no fish going out, so I can only say that if there are no fish going out, there are none coming back. It's just that simple.

I was hunting up in Kingcome Inlet this year with a jet boat. We went 40 kilometres up the Kingcome River. There are eagles in the trees; there are seagulls in the trees; there are bears looking for fish — but there are no fish. I couldn't find a single spot anywhere on the river where one carcass had been taken or left. Same thing with the Wakeman; same thing with Bond Sound — they're wiped out. They're not going to come back magically, and this is just going to spread unless we do something about this sea lice problem.

Another thing I'd like to speak on is the inequities that exist between the aquaculture industry and, say, logging or fishing or mining. If I go into an area as a logger, and there happens to be a stream in the area.... They have different classes for streams. You've got class A, B, C, and down the line, whether it contains salmon or whether it just contains trout. Either way, when a logger approaches this area, he has to make sure not to just minimize the risk — he eliminates the risk of destroying any salmon habitat. He's not allowed to disturb any soil; he's not allowed to put any timber in the creek. He has to leave the integrity of that stream completely intact.

[1835]

The loggers have worked alongside the fish for 100 years. There have always been fish, and there have always been logs. Same thing if we apply for a booming ground. If we take away a little bit of habitat for a booming ground, we have to put twice as much habitat back. There is supposedly a law out there that says there is no net loss of habitat. Somehow the aquaculture industry seems to sneak under this little plateau.

As a fisherman, when I go on the grounds I have to be able to.... My fish are counted 100 times. I've got an observer on my boat. They've got cameras these days — cameras on every boat. You've got to have a licence for every species. There is no way that you're allowed to catch a fish that you're not allowed to. There is just no way you can affect the health of a run. As a commercial fisherman you've got to have live tanks on board the boat. You've got to do everything you can to minimize the risk of harming an incidental bycatch species, as it be told.

Same thing with the mining industry. Utah Mines Ltd. worked in that inlet for 20 years, and the salmon-bearing stream at the head of that inlet was just as strong when they left as when they started, because they follow the guidelines. They neutralize the heavy metals. They take the time and do what it takes to make sure that they do not impact the wild salmon.

Somehow the aquaculture industry seems to be sneaking under this. There has been a huge effect on the wild salmon. The commercial industry has been put out of business — suspiciously, I think. Some of the

biggest runs I've ever seen in my life, and we never even got to touch them. Tell me why. Tell me why, when 25 million sockeye swim by, we're not allowed to catch one, when obviously, there are 20 million that could be harvested — sustainable surplus fish that would come back time and time again.

Yet there goes \$250 million or \$300 million from the coastal communities year after year after year from the commercial fishery because, my thought is, the politicians up there figure: "Every single sockeye we can keep off the shelf is a farm fish we can sell."

Interjections.

G. Stoner: Well, tell me how else. Why don't we fish these runs?

A Voice: Sport fishermen.

G. Stoner: There won't be soon. When this crunch comes down, and it's coming down soon, when the Broughton Archipelago pinks go on the endangered species list, and they will be on there very shortly, what will happen then is that no one will be allowed to fish in this area, because you might inadvertently catch one. So your sports fishery will be down. Your ecotourism will be down. All the people who make a living from wild salmon will be gone.

If you have a run that's at risk, and it goes on the endangered species list, and that could happen to the whole Broughton here by the year after next.... I see no fry going to sea. They're not there. So something's got to be done. The sea lice problem has to be dealt with. I'd like to see these same companies that were responsible for the elimination of these fish put the cost of putting them back. The taxpayer is tired of it. Taxpayers had to pay for salmon enhancement last time — \$100 million into the study of how to make fish farms go, and stuff like that. Taxpayers are tired of paying it.

I put 20 years of my life in enhancing salmon for nothing, just to see them gobbled up by sea lice. It doesn't matter where you go on our south coast now. Your fry have to go by a farm. When they leave Port McNeill, there are farms in Hardy. When they leave the Broughton, there are farms all the way out. Our salmon on the south coast here cannot exit to the seas without encountering a farm.

We need to either go to containment pens, and eliminate the risk, or get them right out of the water; I'm not sure. Our wild salmon belong to the people; they don't belong to the minister. They don't belong to you guys up there to scratch them off for somebody else who's got better campaign contributions. These salmon belong to the public, and the public does not want to see their wild salmon destroyed.

Thank you very much.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, Gary. One second, Gary. Scott has a question for you.

G. Stoner: Oh, shoot.

[1840]

S. Fraser: Sorry about that, Gary.

You're talking about there being at least two runs that you figure, within the next couple of years, could be species at risk.

G. Stoner: I don't see any going to sea. I think, in Port McNeill.... Most of the fish migrate north. As they leave the systems, they go north. Species going by Port McNeill, there might.... We don't really see Fraser sockeye going by the inside waters here. Some of them do but not a lot. Most of the stuff you see going by here are local fish.

I do see some coho and spring salmon and maybe the odd sockeye. They're bigger fish. They jump. What I don't see and what.... Usually, on any given year I'm slowing my boat down steady so that I don't impact these little schools of fish swimming around. I drive around and slow down, make sure I don't impact them, kind of thing, because I've been enhancing salmon for 20 years. I don't want to hurt any. But I don't see the little guys. I don't see any.

S. Fraser: Okay. But just for my clarification of it, you're referring to....

G. Stoner: Pinks and dogs — they're the ones that go out and....

S. Fraser: And they could be under that SARA designation, like at Cultus Lake?

G. Stoner: No, no, no. The pinks and dogs that are going by here would be local stocks — would be Broughton Archipelago, would be....

S. Fraser: But you were talking about the fact that that could shut down a whole fishery because you got to protect those that are.... That's that SARA, that species at risk.

G. Stoner: That's right.

S. Fraser: That's like the Cultus Lake? Is that the scenario that you were....?

G. Stoner: That is bound to happen in the Broughton.

S. Fraser: I just wanted to clarify that.

G. Stoner: Like, as these populations plummet, somebody, whether they accept it or not.... I mean, there it is right there. I mean, these fish are gone. I went all the way up the Kingcome River, all the way up Bond, all the way up Wakeman, and Christ, you can't find a fish. If that ain't species at risk, then what is?

S. Fraser: Yeah, I just wanted that clarification. Thanks, Gary.

C. Trevena: Gary, I would like to thank you very much for your presentation. I think we're getting a

good snapshot of different aspects of the industry with Englewood and then Wilderness Tourism and now fishing, so I thank you for your presentation. I just wanted to know: how much does it cost you a year to get your licence to run your boat to work as a commercial fisherman?

G. Stoner: As far as the salmon goes, I sold my salmon licence last year because they just wouldn't let us fish no matter how many fish went by. I couldn't take the stress. It didn't matter how many fish went by, they wouldn't let us fish. I can't make a living on eight days a year, so I sold my salmon licence.

C. Trevena: How many members are members of your association now?

G. Stoner: What was that?

C. Trevena: How many members in the Gulf Trollers Association?

G. Stoner: Oh, it's probably down to about....

Interjection.

G. Stoner: No. Christ, I bet there's a hundred, maybe a hundred — 95, something like that.

There are also south coast gill-netters and south coast seiners that are all down. But along with it, the sports fishery is going to go too. All somebody has got to say is, "That system is at risk," and all somebody else has got to say is, "Okay," and put it on the paper, and that's it: species at risk. No one is allowed to intercept one. If you're not allowed to intercept a pink out here, fishery's down.

C. Trevena: So you've still got your salmon enhancement work. Are you doing that still?

G. Stoner: I don't get paid for that.

C. Trevena: But you're still doing that then.

G. Stoner: Oh yeah. I've been doing it for years. Yeah. We built it.

G. Coons: Thanks for your presentation. Claire asked a couple of questions I was going to ask. I was just wondering. As far as fishermen right now.... I was in Prince Rupert, and when we were up there, they requested that we come to a meeting last Saturday. I attended, on our behalf, with about 50 or 60 fishermen who expressed their concerns, the same concerns that you're expressing right now as far as the future of the wild stocks and where DFO is going on this or where they haven't been going and where they need to go. I hope recommendations come out where we start looking at those aspects.

Again, this committee, we're here because we need to build confidence in the aquaculture industry to

make it sustainable with wild stocks and to try to get that input. I think it's valuable that we recognize — we've seen it in Tofino, here and in Port Hardy — the importance of the industry to jobs and employment in the communities. It's going to be a tough job, I think, but as we move along, it's valuable to listen to the trollers and the gill-netters and the seiners. My question is: are most of them out fishing right now? Or what's the story with...?

[1845]

G. Stoner: No. There are some openings up north right now, but the south coast is still completely closed.

D. Jarvis: Thank you very much for your presentation.

This is not an easy job on our part either, because there's so much misinformation on both sides and information from both sides. It's tough to make this.... I appreciate what you're saying, and I agree with what you're saying. At the same time, the worst year of pinks ever in the Broughton Archipelago came before salmon farms were even in there. Hopefully, in answer to your question, Gary, it doesn't sound like a statement I'm making.

You know, the Nimpkish in '74 — that collapsed as well. The scientists say that the pinks are coming back this year. You're out in the field. Who knows who's right? We'll find out, unfortunately.

G. Stoner: There could be pinks coming back this year, but next year....

D. Jarvis: The other aspect of this whole equation is the predation on salmon by everyone else in the world, including our own fishermen and our own aboriginal communities. All the animals out there at sea are all just gorging themselves full of everything we've got. They're just waiting for our fish to come out and go to sea. Every other country has got driftnets out — all these things that....

G. Stoner: It's the funniest thing, you know. Not more than ten years ago there used to be 700 seiners. There used to be 2,000 gill-netters. There used to be 1,500 trollers — guys like me. I used to make over \$100,000 a year on salmon, and I used to pay tax on up to 225,000 bucks on wild salmon. That's just crashed.

My best years were in the '90s. That's with the El Niño effect going on, on the outside, when predation is at its highest. It's the funniest thing. As soon as El Niño went away and the cold pool in the ocean became big and a huge amount of fish started coming into our coast because of the cold pool on the outside, they just pulled the money from salmon enhancement, shut down the commercial fishery and put \$110 million into aquaculture.

D. Jarvis: I hope you're wrong, because I've always believed that the salmon industry in this province is ostensibly a cyclical business.

G. Stoner: Salmon enhancement works. I can tell you for a fact.

D. Jarvis: I don't know if it was Monday or Tuesday, but last week we were in Rupert, and we got a report from the fishing association up there or from the Nimpkish band — I can't remember who it was — telling that the.... For example, the commercial fishery out of the Skeena River amounted to something like \$14 million to \$16 million.

Through the science that they used and all the rest of it, they had a report that the Alaskans were taking \$36 million out of the Skeena River. There again, we can't control the Americans and what they fish. To a certain degree, it seems that....

G. Stoner: Let's get back to the Broughton.

D. Jarvis: I was trying to say that there are a lot of pressures up there.

G. Stoner: These runs are dead. The commercial fishery has been axed, but let's go back to the Broughton. Let's go back to where the fish are missing. That's what we want to talk about.

D. Jarvis: But they have been missing before salmon farming came. Salmon farming probably is having an effect on them. I agree with you on that.

G. Stoner: There's a really funny coincidence. You could probably look it up yourself, if you like. George Weston used to own B.C. Packers. The Weston family and Galen Weston owned B.C. Packers for generations, basically.

We guys in the commercial fishery used to joke that if the B.C. Packers boats were there, it was going to open. They knew more about whether it was going to open or not than Fisheries and Oceans did. As far as we were concerned, they had Fisheries and Oceans in their pocket.

The funniest thing, the funniest coincidence is.... It's probably just a coincidence, but the day that George Weston sold his wild salmon interests and bought into fish farming is the day that the salmon industry crashed and all the money went into aquaculture.

[1850]

D. Jarvis: Anyways, I'm not pro-farm, or I'm not against farming either, but I'm pro-fish. We've got to find a reason why we can keep it going for this province.

G. Stoner: Yeah. Our wild salmon — we want them.

R. Austin (Chair): Okay. Thank you, Gary, for your presentation.

I would now like to invite Marilyn MacArthur up to the witness table.

M. MacArthur: Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to present to this group today. My name is Marilyn MacArthur. I live in Port McNeill. I'm the manager of economic development for the regional district of Mount Waddington. I've been in this posi-

tion since November 2005, and yes, I'm relatively new to the north Island.

To those of you who just arrived to the north Island today, I welcome you here. I'm sure, for some of you, it may be your first trip north of Campbell River and into the regional district. I hope you're enjoying your tour in the communities and the people you see here. I hope you spread the word that we have a lot to offer on the north Island, including a decent highway, plenty to see and a thriving region. We have a modest population, as you're well aware. We have a large geographic area, and this summer we're celebrating our 40th year as a region.

I've worked as a professional economic developer since 1990. I received my professional designation from the Economic Developers Association of Canada, and I've been very active in my professional associations in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. It's on behalf of the regional district of Mount Waddington that I'm making this presentation today.

I may have been born and educated in the Prairies, but I know that what is needed to keep regions healthy is thriving industry and jobs. That's what I'm here to speak on and answer to. Currently there are over 200 businesses registered in the district of Port Hardy, the villages of Alert Bay and Port Alice, the town of Port McNeill as well as in Coal Harbour and Telegraph Cove which directly deal with the aquaculture industry. I think it's actually 220 businesses that do business because of and with the aquaculture industry.

Whether they're electricians, welders or other trades, dive companies, transportation providers, financial services or health services, the impact of aquaculture on the overall business sector on the north Island is very significant. In Port McNeill alone, where we have 211 registered businesses with the town of Port McNeill, 98 of those businesses rely on aquaculture.

There's been a lot of economic hardship on the north Island, without a doubt — in fact, all over Vancouver Island and British Columbia. But we're talking about nearly 50 percent of approximately 200 registered businesses that rely on fish farms. In the region there are two packing plants that are dependent on farm fish. The combined workforce of those two processing plants is 320 people at the last estimate I received.

Like all workforces, these people represent a variety of families. There are single moms. There are second incomes. There are sole-income earners in some cases. They have a variety of backgrounds. They're aboriginals; they're non-aboriginals. They have a cross-section of educational history. Some are very educated. Some are what may be deemed unskilled workers, but it's quite a skill, if you get a chance to see them doing their jobs. I had the opportunity to tour Englewood, and I was very impressed with the level of skill of their workers.

These people live here. They school their children here. They buy their groceries here. They pay their taxes here. They support charities. They support minor sports and the arts. They come out and volunteer to festivals. They're a very integral and critical part of our community.

[1855]

We've a very small population here. I believe the 2001 census rated us at approximately 14,000 people, and that goes up and down as the economy goes up and down. They constitute, in my mind, a significant portion of our overall skilled workforce. Nearly 3 percent of our workforce are people who work only in the packing plants. That does not count the fish farm technicians or the dive companies that are working — for example, the Hardy Bay Dive Company.

The unemployment rate of the regional district in 2001 was 10.7 compared to 8.5 percent. This workforce of 300 people currently constitutes an annual payroll of \$8.6 million, which is a lot of money on the north Island. Again, this isn't taking into account the fish farm technicians or the dive companies. Those are also significant jobs. It gives people something to be proud of. Every one of us likes to think that we can contribute to our family and to our communities. I solidly support the kind of support that we have received as a community from the people who are employed in fish farming.

As you're also well aware, we're primarily dependent on forestry on the north Island, and also dependent on fisheries. Twenty percent of our dependency on the north Island in terms of employment is on public sector or government jobs. We have an emerging tourism industry. There has always been tourism.

If these processing plants should shut down because this committee makes a recommendation that there should be no fish farms, I only hope that you have a really strong answer for where to put those 320 people from the packing plants. I'm not talking about retraining or down the line another industry will emerge, or we can all wait for the rich tourists to come here and we'll take care of them.

Tourism will emerge, but we can't rely on what could actually become Club Med economics providing us minimum wage jobs so everybody can start cleaning rooms. That's just not an option for a lot of the people on the north Island.

What I'm hoping is that this committee will give a lot of thought to the recommendations. They'll think of a way to support a viable industry and to support the families on the north Island, as well, who are involved in aquaculture. I think they have a lot to contribute, and I hope you stand by these people because they are your constituents. They're who you represent.

That's about all I can speak to, to this point. There have been other excellent presentations, and I've read some of the information that was handed out to you. My peer in Campbell River, Patrick Marshall, referred to some excellent studies. He made some good recommendations on whom, if you were going to do continued studies of the statistics.... I think his last name is Horn. He did an excellent study that he referred to. If you request a special report from him to qualify the changes in our economic picture from the aquaculture industry over the past decade....

There may be better ways to have fish farms. I don't believe that it's economically viable to take them out of the water and put them on land. If that is the decision

and the recommendation of this committee, I can tell you right now that all of those land fish farms will not be located on Vancouver Island. They'll be located in Chile, in Vancouver, in Seattle. They'll be located where the market is, because we then lose our advantage.

That's my presentation. Thank you for the time.

S. Simpson: Thank you very much for the presentation.

I'm interested, of the number of people in the region who work in the industry generally — you talked about the processing jobs — what percentage of those jobs do you think are related mostly to processing versus working on the farms versus the indirect jobs that are in the support industries? Do you have a sense of that?

M. MacArthur: I can only speak in terms of the facts that I know. There are 320 people employed between Alpa and Englewood in the processing end of it. In terms of fish farm technicians, I don't have those figures.

S. Simpson: Thank you. That's great.

[1900]

C. Trevena: Thank you very much, Marilyn. Thank you for your presentation.

I think I speak on behalf of the committee when I say that it's highly unlikely, and I would be extraordinarily surprised, if we end up with a recommendation that says everything's going to be closed down and people are going to be out of work. I've made it very clear in my comments very publicly up to today — and will continue to do so — that I'm very aware that we have a lot of jobs depending on aquaculture. I think that my constituency is where most of the jobs are, and I'm very concerned about maintaining and increasing economic opportunities in the north Island and will work very hard with people like yourself and others to do so.

I think our issue is to try and find that balance, to try and see where we're going to go, where possibilities are to improve the industry, where we can go to protect the wild stock. I mean, I think my colleague Dan said it just right: fish is what the issue is. That's what we've really got to look out for in all aspects. That's why I'm so pleased we've had Englewood, ecotourism, fishermen and you yourself presenting.

I have a couple of questions. One is: in your statistics on employment, you don't know the fish farm technicians, but what about...? I know from Campbell River that there's lots of business for water taxis and so on. Are you building those into your figures for the economic impact of aquaculture here?

M. MacArthur: Yes. I'm talking about everything from transportation to the trades. For example, there's an electrician's business in Port Hardy. I believe when he started, he was a small business. When the fish farms started, he started doing business with the fish farms. The fish farms have actually become probably 95 percent of his overall business, and he's managed to

grow his business and employ more people directly related to that. I mean, the aquaculture industry requires many different services, like any other industry. It's all related, whether it's repairs, financial services, insurance services.

C. Trevena: My other question is.... Obviously, logging is still very important for Port McNeill. Tourism is growing. Do you have a sense of percentages? How many people are still working in logging and its ancillary industries, how many in aquaculture, and the proportions that are moving into tourism in the region?

M. MacArthur: In terms of tourism numbers and who's employed with tourism, I think you'd have to clarify who is a direct tourism operator versus a supporting industry — just as with the supporting industries that go along with forestry or aquaculture. In 2001 the census profile showed that agriculture, forestry, fish and hunting for the regional district of Mount Waddington employed 1,760, or 24 percent, of the overall workforce. So you'd have to make a split from there, but I think agriculture — since we don't have a lot of agriculture here — could likely be determined to refer to aquaculture.

C. Trevena: May I ask whether the regional district will be doing any of its own study to get those figures? I know there are lots of changes with Western Forest and so on.

M. MacArthur: Ideally, we will. We've actually just completed a north Island post-secondary education needs assessment, and aquaculture was a sector that was included in that study. I just received the first draft of the final report on Monday of this week. As that report is finalized and we work with the committee, we should be able to provide some of that information to you.

S. Fraser: Thanks, Marilyn, for the presentation. Your role is the officer...?

M. MacArthur: Manager of economic development.

S. Fraser: Economic development. Is it an economic development commission?

M. MacArthur: Yes.

S. Fraser: And that's responsible to the regional district of Mount Waddington?

M. MacArthur: Yes.

S. Fraser: Which has, give or take, 14,000? This is the population of Mount Waddington region?

M. MacArthur: Yes.

S. Fraser: How is the makeup of the regional district board set up?

M. MacArthur: The regional district board is represented by the four electoral areas and the four districts within the region, so that represents Alert Bay, Port Alice, Port McNeill, Port Hardy and areas A, B, C and D. On the board of directors there are two representatives from Port Hardy, one from McNeill, one from Alice, one from Alert Bay and then each of the electoral area representatives.

S. Fraser: Is that eight or ten reps?

M. MacArthur: Eight.

S. Fraser: Eight all together. Okay. Do you represent all of them for economic development? Are they all inclusive in that?

M. MacArthur: Yes.

S. Fraser: Okay, because sometimes some group pops out. It can happen that way.

M. MacArthur: No. This is the first year in 40 years, actually. I'm happy to say that since I ran, for the first time in 40 years we have full representation throughout the district on our economic development commission.

[1905]

R. Austin (Chair): I think the final question is coming from Gary.

G. Coons: Thank you Marilyn, and nice to see you again.

Marilyn used to be the manager of the chamber of commerce in Prince Rupert just a while ago, so we got to know each other.

You are sort of saying that you wouldn't want this committee to be seen to put in closed containment or shut down the whole industry. Again, we recognize the importance of it, as you're seeing. But I would like to put you on the spot for a second, coming from the prairie provinces and Prince Rupert down here. Obviously, there is a concern with, as you say, supporting the viable industry and making it sustainable. There's also a concern out there for the wild stocks and the sea lice, etc. How do you see us making a decision as far as getting back the public confidence in the industry? What do you see?

M. MacArthur: Well, I'm not sure how much influence you have over DFO, but I know that they're a pretty key player in this that is beyond my influence. You may have much more luck with them.

I know that recently I've been dealing with other processing plants that are not directly tied to aquaculture. When we were speaking about this, they did refer to the fact that there are millions of salmon going by us that they cannot have access to because of DFO's decision to have destination fishing, which means that those salmon have to go further before they're allowed to be fished.

I'm not an expert in this, so I only know enough to get myself into trouble in terms of the wild fishery. But to me it doesn't make sense that if there are millions of salmon going by us, we would have to wait so they get closer to, say, Steveston, when they're not in as good shape. Coming from the prairies, it wouldn't make much sense to me for any kind of agricultural livestock to be let go to a point where it's not as attractive to the consumer. If you can have them address some of those issues, I think that would be wonderful.

I understand the concern of fish farm pens being within certain sensitive areas. I know they've relocated two of them, or there was talk to relocate two. I think that's wonderful, but I want to see the industry continue to thrive and grow in the north Island. I think we have a lot of room for continued development.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, Marilyn, for your presentation.

At this time I'd like to call up Mayor Furney from right here in the town of Port McNeill.

A Voice: Still around, eh, Gerry?

G. Furney: Here I am.

Thank you for the invitation to address you this evening, and thank you for coming to the north Island. On behalf of all the citizens of Port McNeill, I welcome you to our community and thank you for including Port McNeill in your itinerary. Your committee has been given a daunting challenge, which offers each of you a wonderful opportunity to learn first hand what our coastal economy is all about.

It also presents you with the challenge of dealing with the dichotomy of environment versus economy. That is a challenge that we the people in small coastal communities have dealt with for the past 20 years as the preservationist movement homed in on our people who worked in the forest industry and the mining industry.

The aquaculture industry appears to be the current flavour of the month with the well-organized and well-funded groups that have little or no concern with the damage they do to our workers or employers and our communities. It has become a profession for some of these people to harass our industries.

[1910]

A good example of the attitude that they have towards the businesses that drive our economy was the disgraceful e-mailed remarks by Lynn Hunter about how much fun they were having in David Suzuki's office harassing the salmon farmers. Her remarks were the tip of the iceberg. They showed utter disdain for the working people who earn their living in all aspects of aquaculture and, by implication, utter disdain for the coastal communities where those people live.

The preservationist movement and its gurus appear to have no respect for the 14 percent of our provincial population that lives in the rural areas and small towns of British Columbia. They choose to ignore the fact that our contribution to the economy of our province is massive in relation to our population. Over 70 percent

of our province's total international exports are produced by that small number of people — the 14 per cent.

Our resource communities have suffered considerably from the ongoing damaging campaigns that have been waged against us for the past 20 years. We have devoted much effort to diversifying our economies in seeking added-value opportunities and have not had much success. The fact is that there is terrific competition for new investments, and the reality is that communities closer to the large markets are more desirable for would-be investors.

Tourism is often cited as the answer to the economic woes of communities that face economic setbacks. But tourism is only a minor contributor for most small communities, and then only for a very short season. We are strong supporters of all aspects of tourism but are realistic about its limitations.

We are very aware of the huge changes that have taken place in the fishing industry. When I first came here, it was common to see hundreds of gill-netters and trollers along the coast, along with dozens — in fact, hundreds — of table seiners. Many people made a good living by fishing in the summer and logging or mining during the winter.

With the modernization of the fishing fleet and the advent of highly mechanized fast drum seiners, the commercial fishing industry employs much fewer people. Overfishing and warmer ocean temperatures have also had a drastic effect.

The only new industry to come along in the last 20 years that has a potential to employ people in our coastal communities is aquaculture. The industry has proven its worth as an employer, a supporter of local service businesses and an earner of valuable export dollars for our provincial economy.

I went to Norway, Scotland and Ireland about 25 years ago to see for myself what was happening in the aquaculture industry there. I was highly impressed with the potential that it had for all the people of coastal British Columbia, and I have been a proponent ever since. I trust that you as responsible legislators will produce a positive report on your findings, which will encourage all our communities to support and benefit from the industry.

The 130 people who work year-round at the Englewood plant are a boon to their families and to our community here. They participate in all aspects of our community and have been a stabilizing influence on our social life. Before aquaculture there were very few jobs for women in a forestry town. This is the best type of economic and social development that we could possibly have, and I urge you to support the people and the industry. Thank you.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, mayor. Ron has a question for you.

R. Cantelon (Deputy Chair): It's good to see you again, Your Worship, and good to be back in Port McNeill — too many years' absence.

On your tour in Europe. We've heard much about negative aspects, but you seemed to be impressed. Did you say Ireland as well, or no?

G. Furney: Yeah. I picked up this accent in Ireland, on my trip there.

R. Cantelon (Deputy Chair): But you have been abroad. Lately we've heard quite a few really negative stories about it, but you seem to have been impressed by what you saw overseas.

G. Furney: Essentially for the same reasons that the industry has helped our area here. I went to one place in Norway that still sticks in my mind to this day. There was a dairy farmer at the head of a little inlet, and he had a salmon farm in the ocean beside his dairy farm. We chatted with him on his dairy farm when he was bringing the cows in for milking, and then we went out and looked at his pens. They were homemade pens. He was doing terrifically well with that combination of farming. It was agriculture to him — just that one happened to be in the ocean, and one happened to be on land.

[1915]

The other people that I've met — the people in the processing, in the sales end, the service end — were all impressed with the industry, because it had a huge effect on the economy of Norway.

If a committee like this comes around looking for information on oil and gas, I'll probably be here witnessing the fact that I noticed a little bit of that activity there as well. Resource industries are very, very important to small communities like this. Otherwise, we wouldn't be here.

R. Austin (Chair): Gary has a question for you.

G. Coons: Thank you, Gerry, and thank you for presenting. Again, if you want to ask Marilyn, you know what she thought. She mentioned DFO and relocation of the pens. You've been involved for quite a while in this, and one reason we're here is because there are concerns.

As I mentioned before, there's that public confidence that we need to try to either regain or get out there so that we can continue a sustainable industry. I'm just wondering what changes you see that need to be made by the government and/or by industry so that we can move forward and make it sustainable and so that it's working with wild stocks and working with the marine environment.

G. Furney: It's everyone doing their very, very best to get the maximum benefits from the resource for all the people. That's going to require continuing work by the Department of Fisheries. They're theoretically the experts. The research station at Nanaimo is one of the best in the world. They certainly have the capability to answer a lot of the technical questions with regard to rearing salmon and whether there's a transfer from wild salmon to farmed salmon or vice versa.

I don't know that there's enough real information at the present time, but I think more information is being gathered all the time. I do trust the scientists who are involved, because they've taken that as their profession. They're going to follow through and do the very best they can.

I believe there's enough peer group review of the work of any of the scientists in DFO or in the industry to ensure that it stays as close as possible to the truth and that exaggerations are not allowed to creep into any of the claims made by some of the opponents, especially of the industry.

Thanks for that question, Gary. I appreciate that.

S. Fraser: I acknowledge your statements about the importance of jobs and economic activity for your community. It goes without saying. This room is a testament to that. That being said, neighbouring communities, first nations communities.... We've heard from hereditary chiefs — selected chiefs and councillors — on the trips we've done throughout the region, too, who also are very concerned about their livelihoods and their futures and their pasts.

They have great concerns about the level of consultation for aquaculture within their traditional territories. My question would be: have you engaged in discussions with the local leaders of the area to try to come to some sort of reconciliation with that?

G. Furney: I believe very strongly that the first nations people in this area for many, many years depended on the fishing industry during the spring, summer and fall. Then in the winter they went logging. I worked beside them many, many years ago here, right in Port McNeill, but the first time a salmon jumped in the ocean out there, they were gone in the spring. They went back fishing.

I believe there is potential to employ every single first nations person on the coast in this industry, the ones that are no longer in the commercial fishing industry, if they would like to participate in the way that Chief Percy Starr has with the Kitsoo band. I think that is the prime example of a very, very capable leader of a first nations group utilizing the industry, this aquaculture industry, for the improvement of his people.

I believe that one of the statistics they proudly tell people is that at one time they had close to a 100-percent unemployment rate, and it's down now to less than half of that. That's a terrific claim for Percy Starr to be able to make. He's one of the chiefs I have huge respect for, and I'd like to hear.... I'm not too sure whether your committee is actually meeting with him and his people, but certainly, that's the kind of person that could give leadership to many of the other first nations leaders who are a bit tentative about standing up and supporting aquaculture.

[1920]

S. Fraser: Thank you, Your Worship. I wasn't necessarily referring to whether or not there was support for being involved in the industry. I'm talking about

pretty strong opposition from first nations in the region for what they perceive is their traditional territory being infringed upon — clam beds being damaged; their traditional uses being damaged; and the wild stock, potentially, being put at risk, which, according to even the courts, they have a say over.

It's a tough reconciliation. From our discussions, their interest there is not to become involved in the industry; it's to protect what they've had, what is rightfully theirs, in their minds and according to the court cases also.

G. Furney: For many years, I have lived here. I've lived here since 1956. In fact, I have been here now 50 years and 12 days, you'll be glad to hear. I was here probably while some of you were still in diapers, as a matter of fact, and I'm not holding that against you.

However, the fishermen that I worked with at the time in the woods — in the late '50s, early '60s.... Those fishermen were very proud. They fished with trollers, with gill-netters and with seine boats. As I mentioned in my comments, the table seiners were the main fishing boats of the time. During the last 30 or 40 years there has been an increase in the mechanization and capabilities of the commercial fishing industry to catch fish.

One of my friends in the fishing industry, along with some of his first nation friends who were also captains of seine boats, combined in one group, where they had half a dozen seine boats, drum seiners, and they had their own floatplane. I flew with them in their floatplane, spotting fish, to determine where the fish were. We flew in down Johnstone Strait, and there was virtually a wall of nets all the way down Johnstone Strait. No stock can stand that kind of pressure.

The sad reality is that it was let happen. The fishermen themselves let it happen. They knew what they were doing, but the attitude, generally, among fishermen has been: catch as much as you can while you can. That's fine, and it's survival for the fishermen, but unfortunately, it's not survival for the salmon. I believe that overfishing has been one of the major reasons why there have been problems with the industry.

One other point that was touched on earlier: the seals. In fact, Gary mentioned seals, I believe. The amount of seals that actually take fish and live off fish on a steady basis, 12 months of the year, is another major source of problems for us in the fishing industry. There's an obvious solution to that, but everybody is too nice about it to say that the real solution is that there should be a penalty if you don't shoot the next seal you see.

There should be a cull of the herd. At one time there was a cull. There was a regular cull. In fact, the Bella Bella native people actually harvested seals as a food source. I have talked to their people about that. They still, I believe.... There's the odd one that does still go out and catch a seal for food purposes, but it is not an industry in the way that it could be if they actually harvested seals. That would help the fishing industry considerably.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you.

The final question is from Gregor.

G. Robertson: Thank you, Mayor Furney, for your words. The committee has had a lot of discussion around the science with DFO, with other scientists and researchers who worked on many aspects of interaction between farm fish and wild fish and the sea lice, specifically. What we have learned in recent weeks is that, actually, the only published peer-reviewed science on sea lice identifies them as a problem for the wild fish, and particularly here in the Broughton, where sea lice numbers are enhanced by the presence of the farms.

[1925]

We're in a situation now where we need to get all these scientists together in a room and hear them duke it out — that's how we're putting it — so we can figure out what is actually happening.

G. Furney: Good idea.

G. Robertson: To this point, it looks like the only stuff out there, in terms of research that's been published and peer-reviewed, identifies that link as a real concern — and a real impact, particularly on the pink salmon here in the Broughton.

What we've heard, as Scott alluded to, from first nations is that they're no more interested in being involved in the aquaculture industry than loggers are interested in growing Christmas trees. The analogy is that it doesn't come naturally to them. They want to be in the open sea and with the wild fish, and that's their way. So we have a very difficult thing again there, where there's not a lot of room for flexibility or interest among the leadership and among many of those people.

Again we end up in a situation where, from what we're gathering right now in terms of feedback, there are irreconcilable differences. We've got to find a solution that's balanced here, one that respects all parties.

The question around siting of the farms and trying to get the farms away from the small fish, which the research shows die when they're impacted by sea lice.... Do you have any hope that there's a possibility for relocating farms, moving them away from the rivers more, trying closed containment closer to the towns to bring those jobs closer to the towns? Are you hopeful that those kinds of solutions are possible?

G. Furney: I am very hopeful. I would like to believe that most of the people managing the industry would also like to accommodate the concerns that you've mentioned. I agree with your concerns. They're worthy concerns.

Hopefully, as your work continues, you're bringing more and more spotlight to the challenges that exist for the industry and for the levels of government that have to work with the industry. I have a lot of faith in DFO. I'm probably one of the few, but I believe that DFO does a heck of a good job. There are scientists on both sides of the question in DFO, as there are scientists on both sides of the question outside it.

I would hope that the magnifying glass that your committee is bringing to this right now is going to be a very useful tool for coming out of this situation with an ideal solution for workers, for the first nations people and for the commercial fishermen. I'm just as concerned about the commercial fishermen as I am about any of the other people who live and work in this area. But I'm also a realist.

I'm not sure whether I asked you whether you had met with Percy Starr and his people, but he would be a great person to talk to if the committee hasn't already met with him. He's a shining example of leadership.

D. Jarvis: To preface, I just want to say that I've known Gerry for 15 years in Victoria. He's the only mayor in B.C. that's down there every year pounding on the door for jobs, whether it be mining or forestry. I always thought that accent was French.

Was it too early in the period when you were in Norway to find out how the feces and the food that was falling onto the ground in that ranch that you were at...?

G. Furney: There was no issue raised at the time I was there which touched on anything such as the pink problem right now and the sea lice issue. It didn't come up.

There were lots of scientists giving lectures, which I attended. I attended the AquaNor conference, which was held in Trondheim, as part of this visit. I went to as many of the conference sessions as I could. Most of them were in English or translated. I found it very interesting that there were so many bright people gathered together in Trondheim on this very issue — the whole issue of the potential to supply a food that is second to none in the fish world and do it economically and intelligently and with the least amount of harm to the environment.

[1930]

There's a bit of harm to the environment in every single industry that we have. When I go into a restaurant and see, "We only serve wild fish on our menus," I tend to ask for wild chicken and wild pig. There is no wild chicken, wild pig or wild beef anymore. I find it tough to figure out why we have to have wild salmon. It has been remarked on more than once in the last little while that the wild salmon can be protected by having enough farmed salmon available to people who require salmon on a regular basis.

D. Jarvis: Their aquaculture industry now is up to approximately \$9 billion a year. It's number one in the world.

G. Furney: One little interesting statistic, if I could, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate very much the fact that you've given me so much time. One little statistic that I got from one of our local farmers when they were boasting about the production here in Englewood and at Brown's Bay is they're producing something like a million six-ounce portions of salmon every day. So they could feed a million people with a six-ounce portion of salmon, which is an adequate meal, every single

day that those two plants are producing. That, to me, is an amazing statistic, and we have to recognize that as an important contributor to our economy.

Thank you ever so much.

R. Austin (Chair): You have peaked the interest of the entire committee, so the entire committee is going to end up with a question.

G. Furney: I thought I was getting off easy.

R. Austin (Chair): No, no.

C. Trevena: Gerry, thank you very much for your presentation. I just wanted to let you know that on our tour we will be going to Klemtu, so we will be meeting the first nations who are involved in aquaculture there. I think that will be very enlightening for all of us.

I just had one very quick question. You've been talking about your previous trips to Norway, and I know there is a trip to Norway being planned for this summer involving many mayors and elected officials from the north Island. I wondered whether you're going to be on that trip as well.

G. Furney: I have said that I would be willing to attend if it was going to be worthwhile. I believe that anything we can do to increase our information and knowledge is worthwhile. But I haven't had any details on it since then. If you're on the trip, I'll see you in Norway.

C. Trevena: I also wanted to wish you a very happy 50th anniversary and, obviously, for the town of Port McNeill, a very happy 40th anniversary.

S. Simpson: Thanks very much, Gerry, for your presentation. It's a bit of a follow-up on Claire's comments. My question was going to be that.... I thought you had said it was quite a while ago the last time you made the trip to Norway.

G. Furney: It would have been about 25 years ago, Shane.

S. Simpson: Right. So the question was whether you had any dialogue or discussions with anybody there since then about issues they've had or how they've dealt with this or what's happened in comparable communities to McNeill around any of these issues just to keep up to speed.

G. Furney: I haven't had any.

S. Simpson: Maybe you'll get a chance on this trip this summer.

G. Furney: I believe we can certainly benefit from having another visit there, but there are a couple of things that stick out in my mind about my trip there. One of them was, very simply, that I went to one of the shows they had. There was salmon that was laid out in

different kinds of packaging, and it was run by a young man from Trondheim. He was the son of a family that was in the business. He spoke fluent Dutch. I said to him: "How did you learn Dutch?" He said: "We looked at the marketplace where there was a possibility of us selling additional quantities of salmon because they were producing so much."

So he moved to Holland and lived there for two years working for an importer in Holland. He went back, and most of his sales were to Holland as the result of the fact that he was a Norwegian who was fluent in Dutch. That still sticks in my mind as being such a great way of merchandising yourself and getting your product out to the widest possible marketplace that you can do.

Apart from that I haven't had any other connections with anybody. I have a lot of connections with people who were also on the trip from British Columbia and who were looking at getting into the business at that time and becoming involved. I look forward to going there again if it all works out.

[1935]

S. Simpson: I know I've talked to a number of people in the industry here who will tell us that the practices of the industry today are dramatically different than they were five or six years ago in terms of a number of the issues that are currently on the table. People in the industry will say: "We deal with those in a much different way now." I was wondering what the experience was from 25 years ago when this was a pretty new industry in Norway to what it is they're doing there today, now that it's the most established place for fish farming in the world.

G. Furney: And one of the most wealthy countries in Europe for a variety of reasons.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, Your Worship, for your presentation this evening.

G. Furney: Thank you very much, Robin. Thanks, everyone.

R. Austin (Chair): Now I'd like to call David Schmidt up to the witness table.

D. Schmidt: First, let me thank you for giving me the opportunity to be here. It was kind of a surprise when I got invited to present this topic. It's a project that's been underway between Quatsino First Nations and Stolt Sea Farm for quite some time. We're not quite finished, but they wanted this presented tonight.

I really wish I'd gone before Gerry, because he's a hard act to follow. But thank you for the time.

Basically, this is a clam beach study. You had actually alluded to it in one of your comments to Gerry. One of the concerns of the first nations was that clam beaches were being destroyed. I guess the most obvious and most poignant thing to point at was the fish farms. It was a concern of our Chief at the time, and

since the clams were important to the Quatsino people, they wanted to find out some more information about this. There were concerns that the salmon farms were polluting the beaches, polluting the clams, killing off the beaches and whatnot.

[1940]

Stolt Sea Farm actually approached the Quatsino First Nation in about 2000, trying to open dialogue and, I guess, get a working relationship with the nation. As time has progressed.... In the recent past here first nations support has become a very big issue for industry, and that was one of the reasons why Stolt Sea Farm approached the nation. Basically, Stolt Sea Farm wanted to alleviate any concerns that the Quatsino Nation had, so they were willing to support just about anything that the Quatsino might want to start up and study about the salmon farms.

It came, too, that we were going to do some sort of clam studies. Quatsino Sound presented a very good opportunity. There had been no commercial fisheries, so the clam stocks would kind of be at a wild level — no effects to their natural fluctuations.

We really didn't know where to start from or where we actually wanted to end up, so as this study progressed, we added more and more as these things popped out in the media. The outline of the survey was to see if there was any effect on clam biomass — how many clams are on the beach. We did the study close to some farms, so we hoped that if there was an effect, we'd see some in the number of clams showing up.

One of the topics that came up in the media was the heavy-metal contamination of various organisms, so we added that to the study. Then one of the more recent ones, which hits on a larger issue, is the sea lice and the use of SLICE, the pesticide they use to get rid of it. We wanted to find out if there was any residue or effect on the clams by these beaches.

Of course, since it was in the Quatsino's territory, we had to have the Quatsino's crew up there. If you're not sure exactly where Quatsino is, it's on north Vancouver Island on the west coast. It's in the Quatsino First Nation's traditional territory.

The study area was fairly concentrated in Koskimo Bay. Three beaches were chosen, two very close to farms — Monday Rocks and Koskimo Bay — and we also added a third control beach, hoping to see any relationships between fluctuations. Basically, we went out and mapped the beaches with GPS so that we could actually go back the next year and follow up on the survey — repeat it and get some nice long-term data. We followed the Fisheries and Oceans survey, whether good or bad. That's a matter of view, I guess. Again, we used the Quatsino First Nation's crew.

For our contamination testing, we sent them to BCL Biotechnologies Ltd., actually here in Port McNeill. Just a quick note on the samples that we took for the contamination testing. The farms had actually been fallowed for eight months, both in 2002 and 2004. This study went over three years, so we did cover two fallow sessions and a full-operation season.

The first beach was the largest, and it is extremely close to a farm. Thirty metres before you come to a

cage, I think, is the closest it comes, so this was a very good beach to study. The second one was a little bit further away, on the scale of 100 to 200 metres away. Then we had the control beach, which was 1.5 kilometres away. We tried to pick beaches that were similar in nature. In this area you do get some swells, so we had to pick beaches that were somewhat exposed to the tides.

[1945]

Over the three years, these are the results of the biomass surveys. When you look at them, they don't really tell you a whole heck of a lot. That's one of the problems with biology and, especially, clam surveys. It's the variability in the data that comes out of the biomass surveys. These are trend lines showing the trend over the three years, and all three beaches actually showed an increase in biomass over the study period.

This kind of flies in the face of fish farms having negative effects on beaches. I'm not willing to say that this applies to every beach in every area on the coast, but in our particular little area the fish farms didn't seem to really have an effect on the biomass of the clams.

For the metal studies, basically, we've studied for cadmium, copper and zinc. These are present in any clams wherever you may find them. In comparing the three sites, the control to the two farm sites, there's very little difference. In some cases the control site actually had higher levels of metals than the farm sites. Again, I would use caution when applying it to other areas, but as a general note, it probably does not really have an effect on these clams.

For the SLICE results, again, it's used as a sea lice control. The farms tend to use it very little, as it is a very effective pesticide. There was concern whether it would actually show up in clams, whether it would kill them off or just what would happen. Basically, in all the samples we sent in, there were no detectable amounts of SLICE in the clams. As the biomass showed, there was no detrimental effect on the growth of these clams.

From our little study and for our little area, there were no effects that could be directly linked to a fish farm. Biomass, in fact, actually had a general upwards trend. Metals showed similar levels to the control sites, with some cases lower than the control. For SLICE, again, there was no trace found in the clams.

Going through this study and thinking about all the effects that could potentially affect these beaches, I was going to add another 20 slides — I had ten minutes — looking at the average rainfall, the water temperature, the salinity and whatnot. Just as a general observation, when we were out there with my crews, there's so much that can be attributed to the changes in the populations of these clams that you can't point your finger at a single industry.

I've had the fortune to work on the inside around the Broughton Archipelago, looking at some of the beaches that had been reportedly killed off. From my standpoint, I'm not going to point fingers at another industry, but I think it definitely is a result of another industry's impact on these beaches. I guess if there's anything I want you to take away from this, it's that

you have to look at the ecology of these sites, not specific finger-pointing at specific cause-and-effect relationships.

[1950]

R. Austin (Chair): Thanks, David, for your presentation. Dan has a question.

D. Jarvis: Thank you for your presentation. Interesting because — I don't know if it was yesterday or the day before or when it was — we were out over in the archipelago and were taken to some clam bed areas. Their opinion was that it was completely different. They were showing us where there was black sediment, which....

Well, let's put it this way. The first layer was a granulated sort of sand with little bits of shells and big rocks and clams in it and also some red worms going through it. I'm used to seeing black worms where I dig clams, so I don't know. Then below that, they said it steadily got worse into a black sediment that was just plain.... You know, like some of the beaches that are just black, for lack of a better expression.

Is that just because of the area they're in or not? They said that now eelgrass was growing there. This is all because of the fact that there was excrement coming from the salmon farm, which was about a mile and a half away. I'm putting you on the spot. I really appreciate that.

D. Schmidt: Yeah, you are. Without knowing the specifics of the case, it's hard to actually put an answer to it.

I have been on some of the beaches over on the mainland in that particular area. The clam capability survey done in, I believe, 1997 had listed a number of beaches as very good for clam farming. I was asked to take a look at some of these beaches for another first nations to possibly develop as aquaculture sites — clam farming. It was actually quite amazing to see the number of beaches that had thick layers of sand and silt sediment with actually very good growths of eelgrass, which is supposed to be going the other way.

I have my own theories as to why this is happening, and like I say, I'm not going to point a finger at industry. One of the problems when you do go out onto these beaches and find a problem, or go out into a bay and find a problem, it's just human nature to look around and point your finger at one of the first things you see. If there's a fish farm in the area, well that's got to be the problem.

Like I mentioned in my talk, you have to look at the ecology of the area and not just the specific beach or bay. Logging has been pointed out as being one of the contributors to the downfall in the wild salmon. I think in this case it could possibly be affecting some of the clam beaches.

D. Jarvis: Other thing in that first sort of layer where they were digging.... I wasn't doing the digging myself, but someone else. I don't know if anyone on the committee was out there digging. There were several

clams in there that were very dark in colour, blackish. I've eaten clams that colour. They were saying these were bad clams, so I was a little apprehensive. Maybe I'll get sick tomorrow. It was quite surprising.

Also, they said we're extending away from, for example, the fish farms. They said the same thing was happening in the clam beds. There's a green algae growing on all the rocks. That was from sediment, theoretically from the fish farms.

As I say, I don't know whether it's mis-science or it's actual science.

Are you a biologist, sir?

D. Schmidt: Yes, I am.

D. Jarvis: So I guess we should hire our own biologist to go in there.

[1955]

D. Schmidt: That's one thing you could do. From my own experience in Quatsino Sound, it's actually quite a unique area. There are two major divisions. One is fairly brackish water in the winter. It experiences very high rainfall. Then the other side of the inlet is fairly fresh sea water. You see some significant differences between the two.

In our travels and clam beach surveys and whatnot, we have come across similar situations as to what you're talking about in the Broughton, or wherever it was that you went, where you get these black layers of smelly sediment.

D. Jarvis: It stinks.

D. Schmidt: Yeah. In our particular area I know it is a result of the fresh water. In the past five, six years, we've had extremely high rainfall events in Quatsino Sound so that the salinity in the ocean water actually drops to four parts per thousand, where it averages about 30. Clams can't survive in this, and we have seen some massive die-offs. The death of these clams causes smelly beaches, for one. The excess sediment brought in by the rivers from the rainfall builds up that black, silty layer you find.

At least for Quatsino Sound, I know this is what's causing the die-off there. There are no fish farms in that particular area, so they can't really point their fingers at that.

D. Jarvis: One last little question, and then I'll let someone else talk for a change. Those little red worms: are they really that bad? What are they? Do you know what I'm talking about?

D. Schmidt: Yeah. You find them on most beaches.

D. Jarvis: On most beaches, eh. I've dug eating clams on the mainland side all up and down there, and ostensibly, they're black.

D. Schmidt: They occur more when you get the silty conditions.

D. Jarvis: Okay. Good. Thanks for your time. Much appreciated.

G. Coons: Thank you, David. So in your research in 2002, 2003 and 2004, the two farms were fallowed in 2002 and 2004?

D. Schmidt: They were fallowed from September 2001 to June 2002. When we actually took the samples in 2002, there was a period of fallowing there and similarly with 2004.

G. Coons: Okay. In the year where there might have been SLICE put through the farm.... How often was SLICE used during that one year of 2003 when you did this study and for the next year?

D. Schmidt: I believe it was used once in 2003 and once in 2004 on some of the other farm sites in the area. I haven't completed the report yet. You guys took me by surprise.

G. Coons: Either we took you by surprise or.... You took us by surprise also. When you get the report, you're going to submit it to us so that we can see the final results of that.

D. Schmidt: Definitely.

G. Coons: Okay. Thank you.

R. Austin (Chair): Great. Thank you very much, David, for your presentation.

I would now like to call Tricia Fawkes.

T. Fawkes: My name is Tricia Fawkes. I am from a company called Foenix Forest Technology. Everybody in town knows us, though, as the composting facility out at Beaver Cove. We've been around for about 12 years. The purpose of our organization was to take the waste from the fish farm industry and the debris from the logging industry, combine the two of them and make a viable product that we could then resell to the public. Finally, we actually have succeeded in that.

[2000]

We have created a market for our product called Sea Soil. We sell it through B.C., Alberta and Manitoba. We bag it. We make it into three different types of soil. We've actually created a great market for our end product.

It took us a while to actually get the right process. Our process is a two-year process, and because of our great process, and because of our inputs on the north Island, we have an organic standing, so we are approved North America-wide for certified organic production. Our end product is a very safe product. We can guarantee our consumer that. We are very proud of that.

We screen all the wood waste produced by four different dry-land sorts on the north Island. We're pretty proud of that. We are, in a lot of ways, a sustainable waste management facility. We are open 365 days

of the year. We are available for blooms in the fish farm industry. We are available for processing waste. But we also, on the other side, are helping the logging industry find a safe and effective way to get rid of their waste products as well.

We chip the wood waste. We combine that with the fish waste. We have created our own process. Like I said, we mix that for two years. That's how we make Sea Soil.

On the north Island we employ roughly 12 people year-round, so we're mostly just a family business. But we are the largest composting facility on the Island. We are an excellent contingency plan for the whole fish farm industry. We are the only composting facility that has managed to stay open throughout the years. We are the only composting facility that has never turned away a load of fish waste. We have done that in a way that is cost-effective to all sides — to our consumer, to the fish farm industry and to the logging industry.

The reason why we have done so well is that we have worked really hard for the past six years to create a sustainable market and market share for Sea Soil. Without that market we would have no way of getting rid of the by-products. We can take as much fish waste and as much logging waste as we want to, but that would just, obviously, be stockpiled and added up. So we have created a great market for that product.

Our product is unique, unlike any other product out there, just because of the two inputs we get on the north Island. That is why we are here, and why we can basically sustain a market when most others have failed.

Most of our fish waste is generated by Englewood Packing, which is local, obviously. We use very little wild stock, even though we make an OMRI-listed product. Our product, like I said, is approved North America-wide. It is really not a common thing to have a certified organic product when you are using fish waste by-product from the fish farm industry, but we have managed to do that. Our product is thoroughly tested and maintained at all levels.

Well, basically that's about it. I could get into great detail as to what Sea Soil is and why it is unique, but....

R. Austin (Chair): Don't worry. The questions are still to come.

T. Fawkes: Basically our whole point is that we have been around for quite a while. Our family has taken pride in the fact that we have maintained our facility, that we follow all the rules, and we have a great site. It's a little smelly at times, but it's great that we're on the north Island and we're away from all residential areas.

We've always been open, and we've always tried to work with the fish farm industry and just make a place where they can have a viable option — as well as the logging industry — to dispose of their waste stream.

That's pretty much it.

[2005]

R. Austin (Chair): Great. Dan has a question for you.

T. Fawkes: All right.

D. Jarvis: Yes, I have a couple of questions. I've been told in the last couple of days that everything down there is just full of good and bad medications and bacteria and all the rest of it and that it's destroying our clam beds and our bottom fish and rockfish. There's mercury going down there. And this is all waste from the salmon pellets and whatever they're feeding them with — i.e., SLICE, etc. — and it's destroying and killing all our groundfish and ground plant life down below.

You really surprised me. What kind of testing do you do that cleans this waste to the point where it's viable for people to use to grow vegetables and all the rest of it?

T. Fawkes: Right, okay. Basically, if you buy certified organic produce on Vancouver Island, you are buying produce that's grown straight in Sea Soil. In order for our company to maintain a certified organic standing, they have to use an OMRI-listed product, which means that it is safe. OMRI is the be-all and end-all. It is better than being certified organic.

We got that standing through rigorous testing. Our product, before it is put into a bag, is tested by an independent lab. We are not allowed to do our own testing, so we have to send it either to Vancouver or Seattle. It is tested for everything from heavy metals to fecal coliform to antibiotics to.... Well, you name it. It's a massive list that it's tested for.

We don't test the inputs. So we don't test the fish farm wastes. We don't test anything like that, so I'm not going to speak for that side of the industry.

I can tell you that our compost has to be heated up to a certain temperature. It heats up on its own, and it stays at that temperature for two years. We have employees that take the temperature of those products, if you can imagine, every single day. That is recorded and sent back to Oregon.

We believe that if there was anything.... If, let's say, an antibiotic does come in with the fish farm waste, it is proven that within 30 days of being heated up in our process that is all taken out. If we didn't compost properly, we would be high in fecal coliforms. We don't have that. Heavy metals are something that can never be composted out.

Our heavy metal levels are not even traceable. Therefore, they didn't even come in with the farmed fish. That is one thing I can say. The inputs we are getting from Englewood and from other places do not have heavy metals in them.

If we were to use wild-stock salmon, on the other hand.... There is the slightest trace, as scientists have proved, of heavy metals in wild stock. It just accumulates. If there were heavy metals in the waste we are getting from Englewood, it would just accumulate. It would never be composted out. It would be transferred into, let's say, the organic growers' root vegetables, and we would consume it. So it's a huge deal.

It is so thoroughly tested that.... We wouldn't even be allowed to sell our product with that label. That

testing goes on monthly, and that label will be pulled at the drop of a hat.

D. Jarvis: Thank you very much.

C. Trevena: Thank you very much, Tricia. It's a great use of both sorts of waste.

I just want to know a little bit more. You have 12 people working on site. I just wondered about transport and how you factor that into your business.

T. Fawkes: Sorry if I said 12; I meant 16. There are 16 people who actually work directly for us. We hire out, usually.... On average, throughout the spring and summer months we have four or five semitrailer loads of our product leaving town. Each of those is a private trucking company.

Anything as far as business cards to anything else that we do is all subcontracted. We don't count any of that in. We also have, on average, four or five seasonal bagging employees that we hire for a few months throughout the year that we don't include in those 16 employees.

C. Trevena: Do you ship it out in trucks, or do you bag it? Or both?

[2010]

T. Fawkes: We do it two ways. Sea Soil has its own big, green truck that travels up and down the Island every day. We ship it out in bulk on the Island and in Vancouver. We also use two private companies for shipping bulk as well. We go through a lot of bulk; usually about 300 yards a day throughout the spring months gets shipped out.

Then we also have a fully automated bagging system here in town. We bring the product in, and we bag it. We make three different products as of this year. Next year we'll have four new products on top of that. We bag them in town, and then we ship them out palletized. We ship them out with a private trucking company, usually a local one: Van-Kam or Overland.

C. Trevena: I just wonder what the annual turnover for the company was.

T. Fawkes: As far as employment?

C. Trevena: Financially.

T. Fawkes: Oh, financially. Whoa. That is not a question that I would even know. I actually don't even know that. If Don was here, he would know the answer to that one, but I'm just the marketing director. They don't tell me those numbers, but I know that this is a year that we've done really well.

It took us five years to really get that name out there, to really tell people what Sea Soil was. We do 45 garden shows a year — just attending them; they're usually three to five days — just talking to people about our product, the north Island, the industry, telling them why it's safe to use a product that is made with fish-farm fish.

We had to really overcome that. Once people use the product and they know that it's safe, and now that the whole OMRI-listing label is getting out there too, we have a lot of return customers. This is the first year where we really just saw it take off on its own without a lot of effort on our behalf. Our work is finally paying off. I know that this year we did quite well, but I have no clue how well.

C. Trevena: Just one last question, if I may impose.

T. Fawkes: Sure.

C. Trevena: You say you've had resistance because of where the products come from. How have you overcome that? What sort of resistance was it, and where from? In what ways did you overcome it?

T. Fawkes: Okay. I sit on the fence with a lot of issues regarding the fish farm industry. I'm a very open-minded person, so I don't just sit here and denounce any sort of accusations on either side. I just know what I've seen. I know the test results that our product has at the end; therefore, I know that our inputs are not as bad as what everybody says.

I think that in a lot of ways, especially throughout the lower mainland, protesting and being against things is a fad. It's a trend. People jump on the bandwagon whether they're educated or not. Therefore, it's not too hard to go to a garden show like the VanDusen garden show, which attracts 35,000 people.

People say.... The first thing out of their mouths is: "It's made with fish. Where did you get your fish from?" Before I even tell people that it's from a fish farm, I try to tell them the other side of it, which is the safety issues of our product.

That standing was so hard to get. It took me so long to get that standing, and so much work. It would just be thrown out in a flash if there was something bad in that product. I think, just in the end, the test results and the label.... I mean, it does it on its own.

S. Fraser: I pretty much have been answered. Dan touched on the organic rating that you've got, and I applaud you for that too, as everyone else has. I've worked with the oyster growers in trying to get the official organic status for food. It's the same thing with, I know, Creative Salmon on the west coast — trying to get that designation for their farm fish. No one's been successful so far, so getting it through your product is well done. Good work.

S. Simpson: A couple of questions. You're saying that the bulk of your raw product comes from either wood waste or the fish waste from the processing plants. It's a combination of the two?

T. Fawkes: Yeah, we actually only have two inputs. If you've ever been out to Telegraph Cove, you'll see a large, new chipping plant out there.

[2015]

Before the wood actually goes into the chipping plant — and I'm kind of not super-educated on the

machinery itself — we have a trommel screen. We screen off all the bark and the debris. That makes up 50 percent of our product. The other 50 percent of our product is pure fish waste. We mix those two 50-50, and we put them in, basically, in-vessel composting, so the compost is composting inside of old compost. That way it heats up really, really hot.

We have about ten different holds that it actually has to go through and a certain number of days in each one. Then it's taken up to another side of our facility, and it's windrowed, and those windrows are rotated constantly. Also, their temperature is taken throughout the process.

It is a simple process and simple ingredients. It's just that we obviously need both those ingredients to continue with our business. We've been really lucky to work with a lot of great people on the north Island who have supplied us with those inputs.

S. Simpson: So the products, the fish waste products, come from a couple of the processing plants?

T. Fawkes: Yeah. Currently we mostly just get Englewood. We used to take all of the processing waste for the whole north Island. There is a new company down in Nanaimo that does a 30-day composting process, and they are willing to take fish waste for free even though they have not established a market for it. So a lot of fish waste gets taken there.

There's also a plant up in Port Hardy that can take fish waste as well.

S. Simpson: How much fish waste will you get in a year?

T. Fawkes: We're allowed to take on average, I believe, 8,500 tonnes. We've come close to getting over our amount.

S. Simpson: So 7,000 to 8,000 tonnes. Somewhere in there is a reasonable number?

T. Fawkes: Yeah. With the Ministry of Environment we're not allowed to go over 8,500 unless we apply for a permit. We used to have to apply for permits all the time. We don't have to do that anymore. I mean, we can have an algae bloom, and we can take 500 to 1,000 tonnes.

That's the one thing about our facility. We are the only contingency plan on the Island for a bloom. There's no other facility that can handle such a large amount at one time. That's what sustained us.

S. Simpson: Thank you.

R. Austin (Chair): Great. Thank you very much for your presentation, Tricia.

I would now like to call Bruce Lloyd up to the witness table.

B. Lloyd: Good evening. Thanks. I expect my presentation to be short and matter-of-fact. Thank you for

the privilege of letting me present here tonight. I welcome you to the north Island.

"Everybody wants to save the world; nobody wants to help Mom do the dishes." With that great quotation from the irrepressible and irreverent P.J. O'Rourke in his great eco-exposé book, *All the Trouble in the World*, I begin my plaint thusly to this, yet another legislative committee.

I bid you welcome to a lovely part of the province that has people who are skilled with a very rare talent that is so much in demand these days: the ability to actually do hard, blue-collar work. With it we pay the wages of this province and its government, and with it we bring riches beyond measure to a province whose government unfairly returns us a small portion of our generated wealth. However, we love it here, and our biggest fear is not that we will continue to be ripped off. Nay, rather our fear is that our legislators will be so sadly stupid as to listen to the many who bewail nearly every occupation known to man other than tourism and tofu farming.

We fear rightly that as a result of legislative initiatives like these, our jobs will end and we will have to move to the big, ugly city. Yes, God help us survive any more legislative fixes that end with politicians shaking hands and smiling to the world's elite while even more rural workers pack their bags to join the crammed and degenerate urban ghettos of this age during this era wherein pseudo-science seems to reign supreme and nearly everyone's job is threatened by the typically rampant eco-apocalyptic hype.

[2020]

Aquaculture. In every part of the world it is now practised with enthusiasm and diligence to feed healthy food to a hungry world, but here in Lotusland we're subjected to the most bizarre kind of politics — often well beyond reason, it would seem. As one who has completed a few diplomas and degrees, I marvel at the people who the major media morons choose to lead the masses towards hysteria.

Certainly, one oft-quoted gal here smacks almost of academic fraud when she, with a simple bachelor's degree from the U of T — in political science, of all things — confuses herself with the real scientists by pronouncing, in all apparent seriousness, that the fruit of aquaculture here is somehow "unfit for human consumption," contrary to Health Canada, the FDA and a host of others. In a similar vein, I suppose my BA in history makes me an authority in biology too.

Another girl, with a bachelor's degree from an American university, has managed to convince many that she's some kind of scientific prophet, despite the fact that similarly she only holds a bachelor's degree, and even attempted a public smear on fish farms in the late 1990s by proclaiming that a dead juvenile male orca died from flesh-eating disease caused somehow by fish farms.

Her hocus-pocus-style of story was published as fact by the *Victoria Times Colonist* until publicly corrected by none other than the chief veterinary officer of British Columbia, who also took the unusual step of saying that he had been the person who did the au-

topsy on that deceased whale found in the Powell River area. He further revealed that he had found the pathogen to be a naturally occurring bacteria, often present in herring and other native life forms, which had entered the orca's system through a cracked tooth that had occurred as a result of congenital malocclusion of its jaw.

Our dear eco-prophetist neither apologized nor acknowledged her mistake and continues to throw out such stuff to this day. One could go on forever about the many others who practise this same sad sophistry.

The question this panel is dealing with is: what should be done about aquaculture? Anti-aquaculture people have stated to you such things as: "Just put it in closed containment onshore, and everything will be all right." Not true at all.

As you well know, former Greenpeace member and founder Patrick Moore, who hails from this area, has done the eco-analysis there and found the energy analysis and other aspects of that plan not necessarily beneficial to the environment. The further fact that there exists a good example in the Saltspring Island scenario, wherein a dedicated aquaculturalist has done a good job of raising sablefish, a.k.a. Alaska black cod, in closed containment and yet still found that the sablefish producers gave 60-something-thousand dollars to an environmental group to battle his production, tells us all something.

Alas, despite all the promises you hear, it will be the same with salmon. The main impetus of a number of those commercial fishermen who are left, certainly not all, is to fight farm fish to the end with all sorts of silly scare stories, primarily because they feel threatened and defeated by market share. Those are the straight facts in my opinion.

To our MLA, I would say that if, by some sleight of pseudo-science and sophistry combined with government error, there is a forcing-out of this industry in these waters, which as a result goes offshore or to land-based tanks, don't think for a moment that the many jobs which exist here now and feed and clothe the many of your constituents will be here at all in this remote end of the Island after such a policy change. The industry will move to tanks in the southern Island and mainland, since it is no longer welcomed on these waters for want of reason. By so doing, there will be no impetus to continue business here, so very far from markets and the transportation infrastructure.

I simply ask you to honestly and intelligently consider all the associated costs of extra transport to and from our riding. They are more than substantial and certainly would bode the end for those who are employed here. It is so easy, indeed, for the dreaded species known to us as urbanis ignoramus to come from the big city and impose their half-baked ideology on us, as has been done to our detriment in the past. There in Point Grey and the like, they ignore their footprints but spend eons, it seems, ironing out all our problems in their Kitsilano coffee klatsches, as they've done so well with such things as fast ferries, the spirit bear and a hundred other dreadful programs.

These are your real constituents, Ms. Trevena, who I've worked with and enjoyed. I come to admire them in my various times at the fish plants. I've worked at Alpha and Englewood. You can't miss the sacrosanct nature of their ongoing livelihood, when you take a moment to look across the table at a young, working single mom cutting a fillet there, with a returning post-secondary student beside her, and then look to your left and to your right to see another single mom and yet another. Or perhaps it's another of the many young kids starting out on his life career.

[2025]

When you do that, you get a bit of a shudder, when you think of those who would come in with flippant opinions of their industry or, worse yet, a priori reasoning — that is to say, with their minds already made up. God save us from those kinds of people.

In summary, there are a whole lot of both union and non-union jobs at stake here tonight, and there are really good, hard-working people holding those jobs whose families rely on them for a half-decent living wage. I only hope you all fully realize the sacrosanct nature of their livelihoods and submit your reasoning to the most intense scrutiny one could imagine. People's livelihoods are potentially being messed with, and in the B.C. I grew up in, that was a grave and serious matter. I really don't think that's changed. Thank you very much.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, Bruce, for your presentation. Do members have any comments? No; I think you spoke plainly.

Now I would like to call Gordie Graham.

G. Graham: Hi there. That thing that says "Telegraph Cove sport fishing" — it's actually Telegraph Cove Resorts. I've been on northern Vancouver Island since 1963. I was in the logging industry in Port Alice up to 1996. In 1978, despite all of the advice from everybody that nobody would ever come to northern Vancouver Island, we started a resort at Telegraph Cove. We went there. It was an old town. The mill had shut down. We started a program of restoration. Today we would have probably in the neighbourhood of 60,000 people visiting a year, and it is probably one of the most recognizable names in Europe for people coming to the Pacific Northwest.

We have been there since the beginning of the introduction of fish farming in the Broughton Archipelago, so I've seen the whole thing that has happened there. Half of our business is sport fishing, and half of it would be what I would call eco-type tourism: whale watching, bear tours, kayaking and nature viewing.

We use nothing but farmed salmon. A lot of people that come to Telegraph Cove find this kind of hard to believe because they think: "Well, this is this big eco-centre, and they should be using nothing but wild salmon." I believe very strongly that if we are going to have wild salmon, you have to farm the majority of fish that we are going to use. There's no other way around it, when you see the amount of salmon that is going off northern Vancouver Island today. If that was taken out

of the wild stocks, in probably three months there would not be one single wild fish left. Over the years I've spoken to many very intelligent people, and they concur with this idea.

I am not so naïve as to believe that everything is perfect in the fish-farming industry, but that is the only choice we have. With the limitations of DFO and funding and resources, wild stocks are never going to get back to pre-European arrival levels. That is a definite. There's no sense going there. When you go to many other countries in the world, aquaculture is viewed as a very smart, valuable resource. It takes the pressure off the wild stocks.

[2030]

I have been very concerned by what has happened in this whole issue about fish farms. Different factions have manipulated the media, and the media have manipulated these different factions that are all trying to do their part.

Anybody that knows anything about studies... Most studies are done to prove your own point of view. I think back to when I was younger, there was a great study heralding that nobody should eat butter — it was just terrible, and there was all this terrible cholesterol — and that we should eat margarine. Then it came out that we shouldn't eat margarine, that butter is the best thing you can have. How did these two factions with all of these scientific facts come up with these two diverse ideas?

I really firmly believe that that is what is happening here now. I laugh. One time there was an article or a story on the evening news about PCBs found in farm salmon. Oh, there was a great hue and cry about it. After testing, the PCB levels in the Bristol Bay sockeye run way up in northern Alaska were found to be three times higher than the average of farm fish. Anyway, this was all very conveniently forgotten. The PCBs in the famed Copper River chinook salmon, the most expensive salmon you can possibly buy in North America, were over double what they were in the farm salmon that had been tested by this same group.

There isn't much happening in coastal British Columbia. As a person who logged for 30-some years, that opportunity is gone. There is hardly anything. There's a little bit of logging happening here. All of this area of the west coast of Vancouver Island and north to Rupert, where there used to be a lot of viable small towns, has basically all gone now.... I think aquaculture of all different kinds — not just salmon farming but all different kinds — offers a huge opportunity for people to move back into this magnificent area.

The solution is not to shut down fish farms. The solution, in my belief, is that we stop the partisanship that has been going on and try to come up with facts and studies to support what you want. We have to all get in the same room.

I urge you as a committee to recommend that rather than having this person saying that the fish farms are bringing all these lice and then the other side saying, "No, they're not" — all of this — there has to be the proper funding and there has to be the will to look at the issue in a true scientific manner, not in a biased,

fix-the-facts-to-support-my-case manner. I'm talking about both sides of the fence.

Until the true science is done, we will never, ever solve this problem. Absolutely anything we do, we can always do better. It isn't to kill fish farming. It's to have a situation where we know at the end of the day that we're going to have our wild stocks of salmon, we're going to have a vibrant aquaculture industry, and we're going to preserve the integrity of this coast. But you're not going to do it the way we're doing it now. When people get up and say, "Well, my study proves this," or "My study proves that," they are proving what they want to prove.

[2035]

We have a federal organization called the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, or whatever it is. We cannot expect them to carry the ball. They do not have the funding. They do not have the ability to go into all of this.

As a committee, I hope at the end of it you urge that these studies be funded by both the federal and the provincial governments. Don't just look into salmon farming. Look into the possibilities of farming crustaceans, clams, mussels and everything else in this area. I think that is the one chance for us to revitalize the central coast.

R. Austin (Chair): Thank you, Gordie.

Do members have any questions or comments?

S. Simpson: Thank you for your presentation.

It's interesting. When we started this process back many, many months ago, somebody who had been a political leader in the province for a long time said to me when I was chatting to them: "You can be assured of one thing here. The science will not be definitive enough to solve your problem of what is the right answer to these issues. It will be other factors that come into play." Having said that, so far they're probably right.

I do agree that getting as precise an answer as possible out of the science is something that we need to do. We're told at this point, the science that is most accurate is the science that scientists and academics call peer-reviewed science. I take it that is a process where whoever does their science, then somebody gives it to a couple of independent scientists — separate academics — and they review it and decide if it is good or bad or if the method is proper — all of those things academics do.

We're trying to gather up all of that from all sides of this, whatever view — whether it's Fisheries and Oceans, Alexandra Morton or somebody else. It doesn't matter.

With your advice, other than collecting all of that which has been independently reviewed, what do you suggest we do around determining the science? Part of the problem is that if we funded it — and let's just say we did, and we probably don't have the resources to do that either — there would probably be someone suggesting that we put a biased spin on it too.

G. Graham: That is very true. We always hold up science in this lofty role that is never questioned. When most scientists send their information to peer reviews,

they usually send it to peer reviews that they know will be supportive of them. I am not an academic, but I've spoken to many people about this. At Telegraph Cove we deal with the aquaculture salmon-farming thing on an absolutely daily.... We're asked about it, and people come and tell us.

I don't really know what would be the best way to have it examined by a non-biased group of scientists, but you have to try that as much as possible. I'm afraid that the way it is now, we hear one story.... I mean, you can listen. Tony Parsons will come out with one story on the evening news, and then three days later there's another person just as credible, or some organization comes along and refutes it. Because of the importance to this coastal area, we cannot be making decisions that are done in the media. I believe that is what has been happening so far.

[2040]

S. Simpson: Just to follow up on that. This is in terms of getting the data that's available today, setting aside for the moment creating new science. We all know that people say it'll take five years to do that study, and we don't have five years as a committee.

One of the things we've been thinking about is saying to the different parties to this debate — and there are leadership organizations on both sides of this debate that are credible organizations and play an important role — and saying to DFO as the lead government organization at the federal level, "Give us a list of all of the science that you see as most credible," so that we're asking those interests to tell us what they have and then trying to see what's what.

One of the things we've also talked about — I think Gregor made the comment when the mayor was here — is the notion of how we're going to want to get a group of those scientists in the room that have that spectrum of views and have credentials and say: "Okay, sit down and talk to us, and talk to each other." We want to hear this discussion.

G. Graham: It's unfortunate that here in B.C. we have this polarization that goes back and forth. DFO, I believe, probably has the best marine science force in British Columbia. I am aware of all these different groups and individual scientists that are here. But as you're aware, when they come out with some of their findings, then these are challenged. It's said that DFO is in aquaculture's back pocket.

My office manager and her husband moved to Tasmania. He is managing two fish processing plants there. In my conversations and e-mails with her since then, she says that in Tasmania there is no "this side" and "that side." She said all factions work together to come up with the absolute best thing. They recognize that there's going to be aquaculture. They farm tuna, grayfish, shellfish and all these other things. It's all done in an area of cooperation, not one side trying to prove the other one wrong.

This is what is desperately needed in B.C. Our politics are this way, our views of the environment. Every

thing else in this province is this black or white. That is really unfortunate, and hopefully your committee can somehow try and get the message across that if we're going to solve the problems or the potential problems of this happening, we've all got to be working together. The way it is now, and the way it's going, we're never, ever going to accomplish anything meaningful.

S. Simpson: Well, potentially, just the last comment. If we could solve that problem, which has nothing to do with fish farming and aquaculture, around those divisions, we'd probably have a whole other.... That would be a thing to solve rather than this.

Anyway, thank you very much.

R. Austin (Chair): That is the final submission for this evening. I would like to thank everybody for coming here today and all those who have taken the time and trouble to make presentations to the committee this evening and, also, all of you who have come as observers to witness the discussion on this very important topic.

At this time I'd like a motion to adjourn. These hearings are now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

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