



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement by Cooke Aquaculture Pacific on Port Angeles lease termination notice by DNR

December 17, 2017

(SEATTLE, Washington) – Cooke Aquaculture Pacific was surprised to receive the Department of Natural Resources’ notice on December 15, 2017, terminating the company’s lease for the Port Angeles salmon farming site. We believe it is likely the result of some miscommunication with DNR. Prior to receipt of the December 15 termination notice, Cooke Aquaculture Pacific had already addressed and completed, or was addressing, each of the inspection items cited by the Department of Natural Resources as the basis for its decision to terminate the Port Angeles lease.

We do not believe DNR understood that we were aware of and in the process of addressing these items and we do not believe the facts support DNR’s decision to terminate the lease.

Specifically, preventative mooring work had been under way to replace any worn equipment as part of our ongoing inspection and maintenance schedule; prior to the default notice being received, we had already completed replacing anchors and removing line components. Replacement anchors were already in place before we received DNR’s December 15 default and termination notice.

Similarly, we had scheduled replacement of a single metal plate. That metal plate is part of a system that encapsulates the Styrofoam float. There is no sign of Styrofoam being released from the float.

DNR has known about the location of the anchors outside the lease area for close to twenty years, and raised the issue to us for the first time in November, after which we proposed a solution to the department but have yet to receive a response.

We look forward to discussing the notice of default with DNR officials to ensure that they are fully aware of all the work completed prior to their notice, and the enhancements we have scheduled. DNR has acted punitively without fully understanding the facts or reaching out to us for constructive dialogue.

Cooke Aquaculture Pacific follows a regimented maintenance schedule so that our operations meet the requirements of all our leases, and we will look forward to working with our State regulatory partners to improve communications.

This farm has operated safely for more than three decades, providing working-wage jobs to Clallam County, and revenue to the state that is used for enhancement of state-owned aquatic lands. We will use all means at our disposal to protect our ability to continue to operate at this farm site and to maintain these jobs.

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