

From: [Shelley G](#)
To: [Sonja Cady](#)
Subject: Objection to Geoduck Aquaculture Project #2022103702
Date: Friday, January 12, 2024 2:22:18 PM

Dear Examiner Rice c/o Sonja Cady,

I attended the public hearing for Geoduck Aquaculture Project #2022103702 on Johnson Point Loop until I lost power Tuesday. I am writing in my objections to the proposed application during this grace period offered for those of us with technical problems that day.

I live in Oregon and as a writer, my curiosity spans a wide range of topics. The relatively new cultivation of geoducks by commercial shellfish companies first caught my interest in 2017 when the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program downgraded Pacific Geoducks farmed in Washington state from green, best-choice to a yellow rating where it has remained ever since. The downgrading is related to plastics and how they are escaping into our environment, concerning both debris and microplastics. The downgrade is also related to the mortality of intertidal organisms. Along with many others, I await true solutions to these important issues before any more permits are granted.

Another geoduck issue that captivates me is the migration of California sea lions from their home south of me to the fertile grounds to my north in Washington State. These animals have been studied for a long time in part because of their impact in reducing the number of Chinook salmon that endangered resident orcas depend on in Puget Sound. New observations have found the creatures eating large populations of cultivated geoducks planted on the near shore. With Puget Sound being the world leader in quality and quantity of geoducks, it is no surprise to see an increased number of sea lions arriving to eat this increased supply of food. One thing that needs further study is determining the residual effects of the increased sea lion presence on the numbers of native salmon.

State lines are arbitrary, as sea lions, geoduck farming companies, and plastic waste take no heed in staying in the lines. Until science has had enough time to thoroughly study the detrimental effects of commercial geoduck farming aquaculture further and until the Thurston County regulations are brought up to date, I join many other citizens in concluding that the proposed permit should not be allowed.

Thank you for your work and your time.
Shelley Gaske