McNamara, Cade

From: Rafael Cuevas Uribe <Rafael.CuevasUribe@humboldt.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 17, 2022 11:36 PM
To: CEQAResponses
Subject: Letter of support for Nordic
Attachments: Letter of Support Cal Poly Humboldt .Aquaculture.pdf

Dear Cade

Please find attached my letter of support for Nordic Aquaframs.

If you have any questions please contact me

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February 17, 2022

Cade McNamara
County of Humboldt Planning and Building Department, Planning Division
3015 H Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear County of Humboldt Planning and Building Department,

It is with great pleasure to write this letter of support for Nordic Aquafarms' project planned for the Samoa Peninsula.

My qualifications are: MS in aquaculture and aquatic science from Kentucky State University, PhD in Fisheries and Wildlife from Louisiana State University. I have more than 20 years of experience in aquaculture. I have extensive experience in recirculating aquaculture systems. I took short courses and workshops to update myself, including the recirculating aquaculture technology workshop taught by UC Davis and Pentair, the aquaponics and tilapia course at the University of the Virgin Islands, and the recirculating aquaculture systems course by Cornell University. I have been working at Cal Poly Humboldt since 2014. It is important to mention that Cal Poly Humboldt has a long tradition of aquaculture dating back to 1939 by establishing a fish hatchery on campus and teaching a fish hatchery biology class in 1940. The fish hatchery on campus was one of the first hatcheries that adopted a recirculating aquaculture technology. Cal Poly Humboldt is the only university in California that offers a fisheries biology career with a concentration in aquaculture. This means that there is no other place where a student can get a career in aquaculture in California. Our students that graduated from our institutions have made substantial contributions to aquaculture. For example, Craig Tucker, known as the father of the catfish industry for his contribution to the farming of the catfish. Jim Parsons - previous general manager of Cooke Aquaculture Pacific, Eric Pedersen previous co-owner of Pacifico aquaculture, and the list goes on.

I have been in contact with Nordic since December 2018. Since the beginning, they have been clear, easy to approach, honest, and willing to answer any question or inquiry. During this time, I met and talked to their engineers and experts in aquaculture, including scientists from Europe. I have carefully evaluated their recirculating aquaculture system (RAS) and can testify that the RAS they are proposing to build is a state-of-the-art facility. Some of the technologies they are implementing are new here in the United States. We are falling behind when we talk about aquaculture production in the United States. We import more than 85% of the seafood we consume and are placed in #18 in aquaculture production in the World. We are behind countries such as Iran, Ecuador, and Myanmar. Compare this with the production of beef or poultry, where we are #1 and #2 in hogs and pigs production. There is an urgent need for the United States to start sustainably producing seafood. What a best place that here in California. California is the #1 agricultural producing state but #7 in acres used for freshwater aquaculture. Our largest crop is oysters, with more than 31.5 million pounds annually, most of them produced in Humboldt Bay. Humboldt is emerging as the leading County in California for aquaculture from oysters, clams, and the new seaweed industry, Humboldt hosts an excellent future for an aquaculture industry. With the proposed installation of a RAS to produce 27,000 metric tons of all-female Atlantic Salmon per year, Humboldt will strengthen their

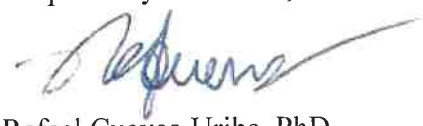
blue economy. Atlantic Salmon is a domesticated species with an excellent conversion ratio of 1 lb of meat per 1 lb of feed fed. Unfortunately, Pacific Salmon has not been domesticated partially because most of them died after spawning. I am not concerned about any escapes due to the robust and redundant system that Nordic wants to install.

As an aquaculture professor from Cal Poly Humboldt, I see great opportunities to collaborate with Nordic. Our students could do internships at Nordic and been employed by them. We can do research of any need that they could have. One example could be incorporating kelp in the diets of salmonids. Nordic has been receptive to starting a collaboration with us. I have invited to my classes, and they have been transparent in what they want to do. In fact, in my aquaculture class, Nordic connected Cathal Dinneen, Senior Vice President Operations at Nordic Aquafarms Inc. My students enjoyed seeing a real RAS farm and meeting a renowned scientist.

I appreciate all the public meetings that Nordic has been doing. They are not secretive about anything. I had the opportunity to tour the site last year, and I was impressed that they are willing to spend $100 million on clean-up, remediation, and demolition. They were conscious about wildlife and decided to postpone their work due to the nesting of some local birds. This talks about their ethics and welfare for animals.

Nordic is doing things right, and they will be installing a cutting-edge RAS facility that will attract the attention of the World. They will generate employment opportunities and stimulate our local economy. They are committed to environmental sustainability and fish welfare. I enthusiastically recommend Nordic for the installation of their RAS facility in Humboldt. Please do let me know if I can provide any more information.

Respectfully submitted,



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