

La Jolla Town Council Meeting and Fish Forum Feb 11,2021

FISH FORUM

Aquaculture proposed off Ocean Beach. Fish pens 720 acres in scope, anchored to the sea floor- within the Federal sea boundary but beyond state control. Proposal to National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration (*NOAA) currently pending..

Participants invited:

Matt O'Malley, Coastkeeper Exec. Director

Bill Busch, Shore fisherman extraordinaire

David Frazier, Ocean Harvest Aquaculture ? attending?

Peter Halmay, Commercial Fishing

Hubbs-Sea World declined

NOAA declined

Port of San Diego declined

Introduction-

The fishing industry in San Diego continues a steady decline since Environmental Laws were passed to protect dolphins, turtles, pinnipeds and whales .Americasn fish fleets particularly Tuna boats, established in the Port of San Diego have been decimated since 1970's. Our ocean as a source of locally sourced sea food continues to change. The fin fish aquaculture proposed off Ocean Beach in wire cages or pens is similar to other installations off Baja California. Aquaculture can increase the amount of fish harvested from the ocean. Fish farms can be seen as a passive way to increase food supplies No hooks, no gaffs.Fewer human risk of injury from equipment and weather conditions. The ocean has traditionally bveen viewed as a resource-ready to to serve as a source of food along the coast.

Ocean Beach location is characterized as the best available sighting for fin fish growing.It is likely to be visible from some points along SD Coast.The Ocean (Beach?)Protection Council developed a coastal plan that excludes fin fish proposal.The state of California is robust in fish and game law enforcement. The Feds lack meaningful enforcement along So Cal coast.

Problems that come with fish farms include: diseases spread from the high concentration of fish, predation by wild animals and changes in behavior of wild predators -mammal and pelagic birds and fish; water quality and contamination with fish feces and food; escape of non-native species into the wild; ratio of protein artificially supplied to the size of fish and protein as food produced; use of resources esp. anchovy bait; carbon footprint of activity-installation, monitoring, maintenance. If native fish stocks require replenishing hatchery methods on shore eliminates many of the hazards to the ocean and humans.

Matt O'Malley - How does the public obtain information . NOAA is "scoping" NEPACT Natural Environmental Protection. State of California has no jurisdiction. NOAA claims it has authority to regulate and permit offshore fisheries.This is rightly a Congressional power. Congress needs to grant authority.

Peter Halmay ,Commercial Fisherman- Suggests that the fish farm be moved away from OB if it is no good . It is No Good. The good food argument is persuasive but- fish farms produce lots of problems along with lots of food. The price point of fin fishery is notgoing to address and remedy hunger in parts of the world where hunger is concentrated. The fish being grown are for restaurants.Farmed fish are expensive fish.There is a socio-economic risk to address perhaps with a hired lawyer. We need to understand and explain the problems that attach to farmed

fish: Fish viruses, Pollution of ocean water with antibiotic medicines and food and the dissipation of those byproducts through all levels of the ocean waters, parasites that can infest other fish species and humans. The whale migration by ways are offshore in So Cal. Whales have been trapped by Dungeness pot lines in Norf Cal resulting in delays to crab season Danger to whales is a possibility.

The competing uses of the ocean waters needs to be considered and balanced. Shipping lanes are established .The Navy needs open waters for ships. What are the navigational hazards to small boats, or Coast Guard interdictions for smuggling and rescue? Large industrial uses in the ocean are not well studied.Study needed to know what is an optimal yield. Proper and well funded management is needed. Who takes the fish pens out if the company goes broke? What is the average repair costs for fish pens?What business model is in use? These are concerns for scoping meeting. NOAA staff seems supportive but information is nebulous.

Bill Busch, shore fisherman. Questions about the project. What type of antibiotics are fed to the fish in pens to keep them healthy? How many acres are affected? What is the ratio of fish food to fish growth? .

The Port of San Diego should have input regarding navigation and effects on Port businesses.Tourism in SD is a billion dollar industry- Sport fishing -deep sea and off shore boats are a part of it. The pinniped population feeds off of fin fish. Raw fish is their food. What happens to the bait industry? How many metric tons of bait to produce how much penned fish . Ratio is not 1 to 1.

Aaron Brennan- A City Council resolution could oppose the proposal. Congress needs to establish jurisdiction and citizens can comment to and about NOAA .

Public money being spent to study and process this proposal. The application is like a subsidy to private industry.NOAA is publicly funded.

Douglas? The tuna Harbor has already suffered adverse effects over time in relation to decrease in fishing boats.

The fish farm is a huge facility as currently proposed .If it is commercially successful (and what social costs are included in the definition of success?) it will grow bigger. Is there a tipping point? Should the ocean, or how much of the ocean. be privatized and commercialized? Who decides how it is apportioned? Who decides who makes a profit and who benefits- Fish farm? Fisherman? , fishing charter boats? Tourists? Oceanographers? Whales? Pinnipeds?

Submitted,
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Reporter