

Nothing Meek or Mild about Opposition to Nordic Aquaculture's Salmon Factory
by Susie O'Keeffe, Montville, ME.

In *The Camden Herald* on September 9th Sam Patten warns that if the Frenchman Bay salmon operation is allowed, "Penobscot Bay could be next".

The threat arrived 3 years ago.

Since 2019 Nordic Aquafarms has sought permits for a salmon factory in Belfast. Patten calls Nordic "mildly controversial". Three years of hearings, and 6 lawsuits is not "mild". Countless citizens' ongoing support of several organizations that have mounted relentless opposition, is not "mild". Years of careful research (see <https://www.upstreamwatch.org/research>) by top scientists is not "mild". The City of Belfast using Eminent Domain to take private property for the gain of a private, foreign corporation is outrageous, not "mild".

Nordic did not "earn positive environmental reviews" as Patten writes. Their applications are under appeal (see www.upstreamwatch.org/current-appeals) for potential violations of the Federal Clean Water Act, the Federal Clean Air Act, and numerous state statutes and local ordinances. It is essential to note that when the DEP's (Department of Environmental Protection) found that Nordic's discharge would illegally degrade the water quality in the Penobscot, doubling the allowable nitrogen loading, Nordic was permitted to provide new numbers to the DEP by phone, after the record had closed. Please see (*Waste Water Review* <https://www.upstreamwatch.org/research> at the bottom of the webpage.)

Nordic's proposal would permanently destroy fishing grounds, dredge mercury-laden sediment, and obliterate 50 acres of carbon sequestering forest and wetlands. Its filtration system also puts endangered wild Atlantic salmon in the Penobscot Bay at risk of contracting viruses that the system doesn't filter. As Dr. Brian Dixon, one of the world's leading experts on viruses wrote in his sworn testimony, "No filter is stringent enough to filter out viral particles. A 0.1 um filter would not filter viruses, which are nanometers in diameter and would clog even more frequently. Once a pathogen entered a larger recirculating system, it would be extremely difficult to clear it out and would probably involve euthanizing all the animals and bleaching the system at a minimum." (See *Dixon BEP Testimony* www.upstreamwatch.org/research).

The factory's outdated technology would demand 28 megawatts of power (this equals the power of every town from Belfast to Rockland), and 1,250 gallons of fresh water a minute, or 657 million gallons a year. It would belch diesel pollution from 8 industrial generators, each with a 67-foot smoke stack. In short, Nordic is another big aquaculture corporation hoping to dump its waste into the Penobscot Bay, exploit Maine's resources, weak laws, and submissive political and environmental leaders.

Patten states that Nordic doesn't pretend to be something it's not. Let's take a closer look.

Nordic claimed the effluent would be discarded far from shore. In fact, the pipes will dump 7.7 million gallons of discharge daily into 34 feet of slowly circulating water taking 10 days before making its way toward Islesboro and beyond. (See www.upstreamwatch.org/in-the-news "Close the Loop. Save the Bay".)

Nordic proclaimed it would run on solar power. The reality? Industrial generators, and massive amounts of power from the grid, built on soils that are so inappropriate they must be replaced at least 20 feet down. (This violates the DEP's soil suitability requirements, and represents a huge carbon and methane release.)

Patten got right that jobs in these factories would likely rely on importing labor. Like American Aquaculture's infrastructure, Nordic's power demand requires taxpayers dollars, while tax benefits remain illusive ...

The threat to Penobscot Bay is real, and here, and now. No one who loves the Penobscot Bay should be distracted from that reality.