



Photo by Beth Comeau

## Industrial Aquaculture Farm Not Appropriate for Frenchman Bay

Frenchman Bay is a beautiful and spectacular natural resource, supporting a wide range of uses from commercial fishing to activities important for a vibrant tourism economy. The proposal by the Norwegian company American Aquafarms to build Maine's largest ocean-based Atlantic salmon aquaculture project in Frenchman Bay raises serious environmental and economic concerns.

NRCM opposes the project for a number of reasons, including its proximity to Acadia National Park, threats it poses to the region's clean air and water, and the negative impact it would have on local aquaculture farmers and fishing families.

### Too Big, Too Risky, & The Wrong Place

- The American Aquafarms proposal is risky because of the unprecedented use of a new technology at an unprecedented scale—much larger than what could be permitted in Norway.<sup>1</sup> The proposed project would include two sixty-acre semi-closed, floating net pen sites; a processing facility in Gouldsboro; and other facilities.<sup>2</sup>
- An industrial-scale fish farm threatens the viability of small-scale seafood producers, like lobstermen, fishermen, and kelp farmers who rely on a healthy coastal and marine environment for their living.
- The Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce says the proposal would “detract from the scenic beauty of our area and imperil the existing tourism economy that provides jobs to more than 4,300 people and generates thousands of tax dollars for the state of Maine.”<sup>3</sup>
- The project would easily be seen from Acadia National Park, a national treasure with tourism that provides significant economic benefits to the region. It would also be visible from six islands protected by conservation easements,<sup>4</sup> spoiling the viewshed of our iconic national park.

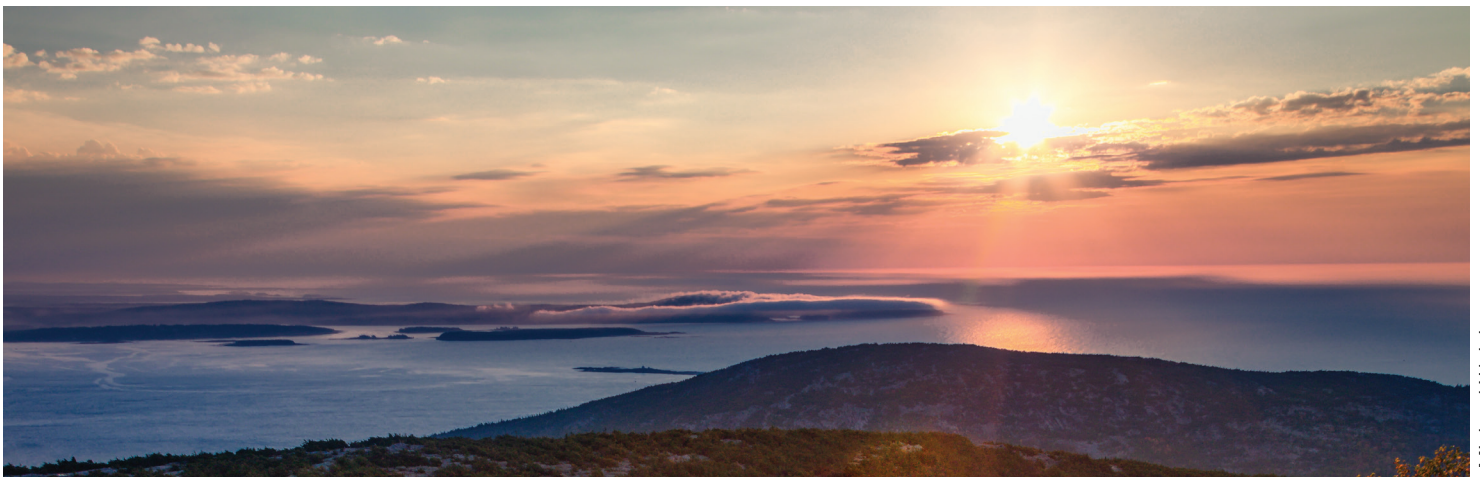
**“The proposal to build one of the world’s largest industrial salmon farms in this beautiful bay next to Acadia National Park is a grave threat to area jobs, the environment, and the quality of life residents and visitors have enjoyed for generations.”**

**—Frenchman Bay United**

## Industrial-scale Pollution Threats

- Ocean-based salmon farming creates massive amounts of pollution and spreads infection and disease.<sup>5,6</sup>
- At full capacity, American Aquafarms would produce 66 million pounds of salmon annually.<sup>7</sup> Every day, 4.1 billion gallons of untreated effluent would be discharged into Frenchman Bay, introducing excess nitrogen, phosphorous, and other chemicals to the water. This could harm native fish and lobsters and cause algae blooms.<sup>8</sup>
- Constant noise from the operation would likely cause harm to marine mammals including seals, porpoises, and whales.<sup>9</sup>

NRCM joins a chorus of organizations, businesses, and individuals opposed to the American Aquafarms proposal, including Frenchman Bay United, local fishermen, local towns, Maine-based environmental groups, and national conservation organizations. Maine has little to gain and a lot to lose from the proposed industrial-scale, ocean-based salmon farm.



Michael Walsh

- 1 10 million pounds is the maximum allowable biomass per year per license in Norway, and American Aquafarms is proposing ~33 million pounds of Atlantic salmon per site for the Frenchman Bay project. [Mowi Salmon Farming Industry Handbook 2020](#) (page 81)
- 2 [DMR Draft Standard Lease Application](#). See Cover Sheet and Executive Summary-Bald Rock (page 1)
- 3 <https://www.mdislander.com/opinions/letters-to-the-editor/to-the-editor-not-appropriate-for-our-community> Frenchman
- 4 Bay United [Public Comments on American Aquafarms' MEPDES Applications](#) (page 1)
- 5 Upton, Harold F. & Buck, Eugene H. Open Ocean Aquaculture, report, June 12, 2008; Washington D.C. (<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc93997/>: accessed November 22, 2021), University of North Texas Libraries, UNT Digital Library, <https://digital.library.unt.edu> (page 14 of report)
- 6 Center for American Progress, [American Aquaculture](#)
- 7 [American Aquafarms General Application for Waste Discharge License \(WDL\)/Maine Pollutant Discharge Elimination System \(MEPDES\) Permit](#) (page 22 of application)
- 8 Id. (page 53 of application)
- 9 [National Parks Conservation Association, American Aquafarms Fact Sheet](#)

