From:	Peter Blackwell
To:	Tasmanian Salmon Study Secretariat
Subject:	Salmon Industry Study - Protect Our WaterWays submission
Date:	Sunday, 5 July 2026 6:32:48 PM

I write on behalf of Protect Our WaterWays Inc (POWW) to highlight some gaps in the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Draft Study Plan.

Please note that I have included my address in the signature block to demonstrate authenticity, but I ask that this address not be published or released, as critics of the salmon industry have things happen to their homes.

The draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan identifies 'Regional and coastal communities' as key stakeholders. Protect Our WaterWays Inc was spontaneously formed from a community uprising of anger and anxiety in the 'Southern Beaches' region of South East Tasmania upon hearing of Petuna's intention to move a salmon lease where it is likely to impact our coastal communities and the habitat of critically endangered species including the Red Handfish and Live Bearing Seastar and the vulnerable Weedy Seadragon. Within a few months of hearing of this threat, thousands of locals dressed in red formed a 2 km long 'red line' along Park Beach and Carlton Beach to express their alarm.

POWW should be directly consulted (via my email address [redacted] or postal address [redacted]), as it represents the views of these communities.

We have experienced and witnessed the expanding fouling of the waters of the Huon, the Channel, Storm Bay, Long Bay, White Beach and the River Derwent and its tributaries. In the areas surrounding existing aquaculture leases, amazing underwater biodiversity and abundant fisheries have been replaced by foul smelling slime and sludge, jellyfish, algal blooms and, most recently, fat balls, decaying fish and a risk of antibiotic resistant infections. Peaceful bays have become noisy factories mostly operating throughout the night, disturbing the sleep of those in hundreds of neighbouring homes. Our small, winding roads are busy with heavy, road-damaging trucks carrying tanks of water and fish, or dead fish. Rural properties stink from rotting fish dumped at night. Tasmanians have lost so much of their quality of life, livelihood and health to enable a small elite to become rich while paying almost nothing for what they have taken.

I will briefly note points not mentioned under the 6 topics listed for your study:

Topic #1: The description of this topic includes the 'Contributions to global and local demand for protein' and 'Role [of salmon farming] in food security'. This concept that salmon farming increases protein availability and contributes to food security strikes us as ludicrous. Salmon is an expensive, luxury product obtained by inefficiently feeding protein to a species high in the food chain. Producing salmon requires using much more protein than it produces. To produce farmed salmon also requires intensive fossil fuel consumption to build and service the pens, transport young salmon in water tanks between remotely positioned facilities, manufacture the feed, etc., all to harvest less than 40% of the grown salmon, as over 60% die in the pens, are extracted by giant vacuum pumps and then are trucked to disposal sites halfway across the state. The salmon feed comprises harvested wild fish, at a cost to wild fisheries and natural ecosystems. We ask you to examine the impacts of the salmon farming industry on net protein availability and food security.

Topic #2: We ask that your study examine the environmental impacts of current disposal methods for the large quantities of dead salmon, the carbon emissions of this very

inefficient industry, the impacts on marine and freshwater (polluted by effluent, chemicals and antibiotics from 'instream' hatcheries) habitat, threatened species, other fisheries, recreation, tourism, general amenity and quality of life.

Topic #3: We ask that your study examine the health impacts on workers in the industry. We hear stories of frequent injuries to insecurely engaged workers who work in dangerous conditions with poorly maintained equipment; 'neighbours' kilometers away across still water having sleepless nights due to noisy operations through the night; and harassment and targeting of people who complain. In addition, there are the potential harms from algal blooms, jellyfish explosions, massive antibiotic use risking producing and spreading antibiotic resistance, rendering water based recreation a health hazard. The salmon industry considers the volume of its pens generous for the contained salmon, ignoring that fouling and lower oxygen levels at depth, and higher temperatures closer to the surface stress the salmon and drive them into a narrow 'least worse' band where they are overcrowded and the majority die. We note that animal welfare is not mentioned in the study's plan, despite this being an industry whose model is based on more than half of the farmed animals dying agonising deaths before they can be harvested, and it deafening, shooting, 'relocating' and otherwise impacting wildlife. Please examine the animal welfare aspects of this industry, including how it is regulated.

Topic #4: The regulation of the salmon industry is grossly under-resourced, under-skilled and opaque. It has taken persistent questioning for the regulators to share scant, belated details of wildlife deaths (both permitted and 'accidental'), pollutants, antibiotic releases and detection, death rates of farmed salmon, unauthorised scaled up stocking rates, and many more impacts and consequences. The regulators often say the information the public should know is not even available to them!

Topic #5: While the heading of Phase 1B includes 'costs', Topic #5 only mentions 'the ... contribution of the salmon industry to the Tasmanian economy ...'. There is no mention of the cost to citizens, the economy and taxpayers of lost quality of life, health impacts (including the toll on the public health system of injuries to salmon farm workers), road damage, government supplied aeration of the Macquarie Harbour salmon pens, carbon emissions (salmon aquaculture is very carbon intensive), fouling of our rivers and freshwater supplies, subsidies, peppercorn permits, royalties and (almost non-existent) taxes. A classic example of cost to citizens is Glamorgan Spring Bay Council being forced to build a dam to supply fresh water to the new Okehampton Bay salmon lease, only to have the industry abandon that lease, leaving ratepayers to bear the cost of the dam and associated infrastructure.

Topic #6: We request that you provide resources, support and ample opportunity for members of the Palawa community to provide input to this study. We will not attempt to speak for them, but are acutely aware of how the salmon industry impacts them. One impact of the industry on Tasmania is how its accelerating expansion has transformed it from a widely supported and welcomed homegrown industry, to a massive, wealthy, foreign owned hegemony that is under-regulated, takes far more than it contributes, has state and federal governments of whatever party pander to it, and responds with deep hostility to anyone raising concerns and so is extremely divisive, pitting those who rely on it for income against any who suggest changes to make it a sustainable industry.

Yours sincerely

Peter Blackwell
for Protect Our WaterWays
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