



ALLIANCE™

[.https://www.globalseafood.org](https://www.globalseafood.org)

Intelligence

NWAA sues Washington Department of Natural Resources over its net-pen ban

28 February 2025

By Responsible Seafood Advocate

Lawsuit alleges that ban violated legal procedures and that DNR stepped beyond its statutory authority

The Northwest Aquaculture Alliance (NWAA) on Thursday filed a lawsuit against the state's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for its ban on commercial net pens in state waters.

NWAA President Jim Parsons said the department, under former Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz, "conducted a predetermined and inadequate rule-making process that ignored the best-available science and ignored the intent of the State Legislature when it set forth a new law allowing for the production of native species in commercial net pens."

The lawsuit alleges that by banning of commercial finfish net pen aquaculture in state waters, "DNR failed to satisfy Administrative Procedure Act procedures; stepped beyond its statutory authority; promulgated arbitrary and capricious rules; and violated State Environmental Policy Act requirements."

According to Parsons, DNR submitted its own science into the record and ignored that of agencies like NOAA and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.



The Northwest Aquaculture Alliance is suing the Department of Natural Resources for its ban on commercial net pens in state waters. Image from NWAA website.



(<https://link.chtbl.com/aquapod>).

“This ban was rushed through. NWAA hopes that a more thorough Judicial Review of the rule will result in a decision to invalidate the rule banning commercial net pens so we can return to what we have been doing in this state for more than 40 years: Growing nutritious, high-quality fish that consumers can afford,” Parsons said.

NWAA members include producers of freshwater and marine finfish and shellfish in Hawaii, Oregon, Idaho, Washington and Alaska. Representing NWAA in its litigation is the Pacific Northwest firm, Northwest Resource Law PLLC.

Author



RESPONSIBLE SEAFOOD ADVOCATE

editor@globalseafood.org (<mailto:editor@globalseafood.org>)

Copyright © 2025 Global Seafood Alliance

All rights reserved.