

BEFORE SOUTHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

UNDER The Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER OF Applications by Jim Maass-Barrett and Zane
Smith for 16 ha of new mussel farms in Big
Glory Bay, Stewart Island

BY Sanford Limited
Submitter

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE BY PETER SCHOFIELD

10 SEPTEMBER 2019

INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Peter Lindsay Schofield.

BACKGROUND

2. I am a marine farmer in Big Glory Bay, and with my wife Denise we own Schofield Sea Farms ('SSF'). SSF owns own three marine farms; MLF 342 in partnership with Sanford Limited, and MFL 319 and MFL 318 where we are the sole owners. I have a Bachelor of Business Studies from Massey University.
3. I have been a fisherman, a salmon farm owner and operator and a mussel farmer. I have been a marine farmer for more than 30 years. I am currently employed by EEC (Eade, Eriksson and Cave) and work on their mussel farm barges in Big Glory Bay. I find working for a larger operator is the most convenient way to manage and have oversight on my own farms.
4. I am the elected chair of the Southland Marine Farmers Association that is based in Stewart Island. I am passionate about the place of aquaculture and the importance it plays to the Stewart Island economy. I write a monthly column in our local Stewart Island Newsletter promoting aquaculture. I want to see marine farming prosper in Stewart Island and Southland.
5. I live in Stewart Island and have been involved in marine farming in Big Glory Bay my whole life.
6. I am giving this evidence as a witness for Sanford. I did lodge a late submission with Council on the 26th of August 2019 but it was unclear to me whether I could attend the hearing, despite me explaining that I had not received any notification that the application had been lodged or seeing any public notification. I consider that I will be directly affected by this proposal and the only way that I can put my case forward is by supporting Sanford's submission and appearing as a Sanford witness.

7. I acknowledge that I am a trade competitor, but my evidence is not about the effects of the application on trade competition, it is about the effects of the application on the Big Glory Bay environment and how that might impact my livelihood and the marine farm consents that I hold.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

8. The purpose of my evidence is to set out:
 - 8.1. A description of my farming business and how it has changed
 - 8.2. A description of why I think the Bay is already fully allocated.
 - 8.3. Explain how the activities proposed by this application will impact on an existing, lawfully consented activities.
 - 8.4. Address matters raised in the applicant's evidence.
 - 8.5. Address matters raised in the section 42A report.

SCHOFIELD SEA FARMS

9. I have been marine farming in Big Glory Bay for the last 30 years. My company, SSF, owns three marine farm consents, one of which is in partnership with Sanford Limited. All three consents allow a range of species to be farmed.
 - 9.1. **MFL 318** is a 3 hectare block that is located in the top furthestmost northern site in the Bay close to the harbour entrance. The consent is 100% owned by SSF and is used to farm Greenshell mussels.
 - 9.2. **MFL 319** is a 3 hectare block that is located on the west side of the Bay, between MFL 322 owned by Ivan Gorton (a Greenshell mussel consent) and MFL 320 (a salmon and mussel farm site) owned by Sanford. MF 319 is 100% owned by SSF and is used for Greenshell mussel farming.
 - 9.3. **MFL 342** is a 3 hectare site that is located southward of MFL 318 and is authorised for both King salmon and Greenshell mussels. The consent is owned in partnership with Sanford. There are currently Greenshell mussel

lines on the farm, and its nitrogen allocation is used by Sanford. The farm is included in the Sanford salmon farm environmental plan and will likely have salmon pens in the future.

10. It is the long term aspiration of my family that our three consents are owned by Schofield Sea Farms forever. Denise and I have children who have a strong connection to Stewart Island and our land and marine farms. We will be applying to re-consent our farms in 2024.
11. **Figure 1 is a map showing all the farm consents in Big Glory Bay at 2015 (the sites of my farms have not changed since that time), SSF consents are those bordered in black and shown by the blue directional marker.**

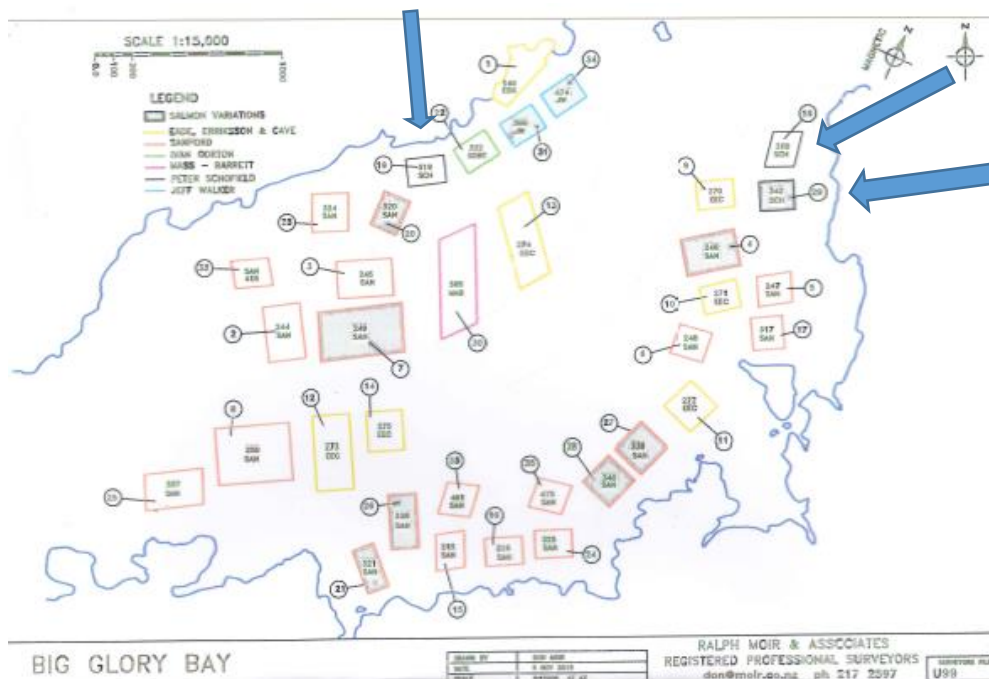


Figure 1. Consented marine farms in Big Glory Bay

12. Over the years I have helped many new local farmers establish their marine farms in Big Glory Bay, including Mr Maass-Barrett on his existing block MFL365. I have a good understanding of the Bay and the marine environment in which we all farm in.
13. I am concerned that this application for 16 hectares of new water space may undo the work, investment and goodwill built up in the community by marine

farmers over the years. I believe that the cumulative effect of adding 16 hectares of new water space to the Bay's existing aquaculture farms, and the effect on the natural environment, water column and to the special wildlife and sea birds in the Bay has not been rigorously tested.

14. The application appears to lack any modelling of potential future affects and has not considered the changes in the Bay as a result of the increased salmon farming that will happen as a result of the Variation granted to Sanford earlier this year and their planned new farm developments.
15. The bay already has nearly 162 ha of allocated water space for marine farming and in the top northwest corner there are also some dredging consents. Other than what this application seeks, most of the waterspace that is not covered by licences and farmed is because it is either too shallow, or within the navigation channel.
16. I am surprised that the effects of navigation for work boats that are outside of the main navigation channel have not been considered. For example the clear channel to my farm MFL 319 will be impeded. Marine farms boats travelling around the bay do not have to use the navigation path – we choose the quickest and most direct route to where we want to go.
17. Big Glory Bay is a slow moving, low flow semi enclosed bay that takes many days to fully flush. In summers like the one we have just experienced (2019) the Bay was unusually calm for nearly two months with low tidal swings, no wind and almost no swell. I am not convinced that the applicant has given sufficient regard to the changing climate conditions we are experiencing on Stewart Island now and coming in the future.
18. The mussels in Big Glory Bay take longer to reach harvest size than other places in New Zealand. The answer to this is not to put in more farms in and to compensate for their slow growth, what we need is a cap on new development and a selective breeding programme.

Consultation and Notification

19. If these applications are granted I am concerned that they will adversely affect the productivity of our existing sites because my consents MFL 342 and 318 are the last farms on the current before it flows back out to sea.
20. Based on my knowledge of Big Glory Bay, I am concerned that the Applicant's proposed new site, the farm at Site 1 of 6 hectares, will likely create localised eddies that could adversely impact on my site MFL 319. There has been no assessment nor modelling to show that this will not happen.
21. The first time I was aware of the application was on the 26 August 2019. I was not advised in writing of the application, and SSF has not had an opportunity to make a submission within the notified timeframe.
22. I live on Stewart Island, it is a small village with a community mail room, a library and a community notice board. I was not aware that there was any public signage posted on Stewart Island notifying people of the application. I understand that the application was notified in the Southland Times, but because I did not know to look out for it, I missed it.

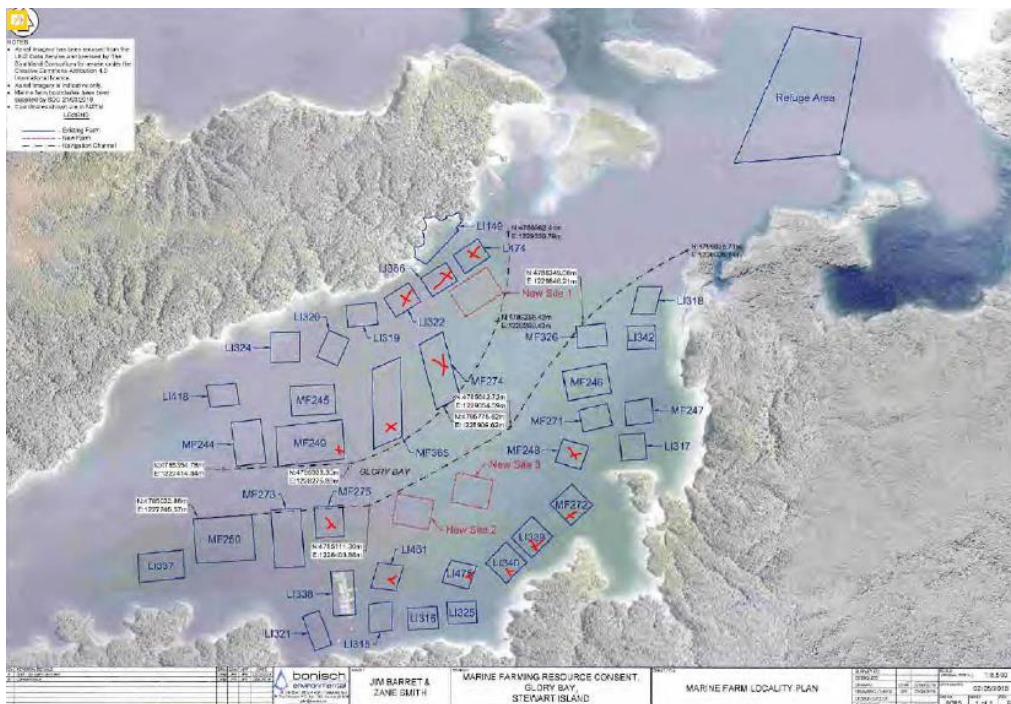


Figure 2. Parties notified about these applications

23. I understand that the farms marked with a red X on Figure 2 were sent written notification of the application. I did not receive any such written notification. Big Glory Bay is a semi enclosed water space, what one person does on their farm will affect all of us. All owners of marine farms in Big Glory Bay should be have been advised of this application and had an opportunity to submit.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

24. Big Glory Bay has long been viewed as spatially fully allocated. Several marine farms applications in the past were declined consent on the basis of there being no available space. This includes an application lodged by ourselves, SSF in 1997, an application by EEC and an application lodged by Mr Maass-Barrett. I understand and accept that these applications were made some time ago under a different planning system, but the factual situation has not changed.
25. However I also understand Sanford was successful in reconfiguring their MFL 246 in 2017, but only on the basis that they surrendered another one of their consents so that there was no net gain in the consented footprint. This is a very clear signal that the Bay was considered fully allocated.
26. I am not convinced that the applicants have done sufficient work to prove that their proposed farms will not adversely affect those of us already consented.
27. I am concerned that the ecological carrying capacity of the Bay has not been sufficiently considered, nor has the cumulative effect of introducing another 16 hectares of mussel lines and the subsequent depletion of plankton.

MATTERS RAISED IN THE APPLICANT'S EVIDENCE

28. As an Islander and a marine farmer in Big Glory Bay biosecurity is an important issue for me. My thesis is a healthy environment to create a healthy industry to support a healthy community. While I am no expert in biosecurity I consider the notes on the Biosecurity Plan attached to Mr Maass-Barrett's evidence short in detail and specifics.

MATTERS RAISED IN THE SECTION 42A REPORT

29. All of marine farming consents in Big Glory Bay are set to expire at the same time, on 01 January 2025. It seems extraordinary that the Officer would recommend that these applications not be part of that, and has recommended that they essentially be given pre-emptive use rights over established farms in the Bay.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

30. In summary Schofield Seas Farms is opposed to this application and seeks that it be declined.

Peter Schofield

10 September 2019