

Stakeholder Analysis Worksheet

This series is brought to you by the Maine Aquaculture Innovation Center in collaboration with thirty Maine shellfish and seaweed farmers who shared insight into practical ways of earning community support.

What is a stakeholder?

A stakeholder is anyone who is affected by or who could affect your farm. Stakeholders can be part of a community of place, which includes people/groups from a local, geographically discrete community, or a community of practice/interest, which includes people/groups that are connected through interest but are geographically dispersed. For Maine farmers, the most common stakeholder groups were local aquaculture farmers, other ocean users (lobstermen, commercial and recreational fishermen, boaters/kayakers etc.), town officials, riparian landowners, and interested local community members. There are many different stakeholders related to aquaculture and this varies from farm to farm. It is important to be exhaustive in your list of stakeholders. Neglecting stakeholder groups, whether intentional or not, can be detrimental to earning social license[1].

Why is this important?

In planning and permitting, going above and beyond with outreach demonstrates that you respect and care about your community and also ensures that folks won't be surprised by a formal notice. Yet outreach doesn't end with a lease approval. Farmers in Maine said that social license is built over time through consistent and ongoing outreach and engagement.

This exercise is a way for farmers to analyze their unique stakeholder network. This is essential during planning and permitting, but can also be helpful for farmers already in operation.

[1]Thomson, I. and R. G. Boutilier. 2011. Social license to operate. In P. Darling (Ed.), SME Mining Engineering Handbook (pp. 1779-1796). Littleton, CO: Society for Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration.

Stakeholder Group:

Rate your relationship with this group:

1-poor

2-needs improvement

3-no relationship(yet)

4-weak/positive

5-strong/positive

What is this group primarily concerned with regarding your farm/aquaculture?

What is this group primarily supportive of regarding your farm/aquaculture?

Where do your company's values align with their values? Are there ways you can connect with this group with these shared values in mind?

Do you have positive connections with anyone from this group? List your gatekeepers.

How could your gatekeepers help you build relationships with the broader group (if necessary)?

Do you have any examples of successful connections with members from this group? What did you do for outreach and why do you think it worked?