



Marine Advisory Program

University of Alaska Fairbanks

School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences

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September 27, 2013

Shawn Carey, Grants Program Officer
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Alaska Region
Juneau, AK

RE: Letter of Support for S-K Grant titled, *Alaska Mariculture Initiative*

Dear Mr. Carey,

I am writing to express my support for the Saltonstall Kennedy grant proposal from the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) titled, *Alaska Mariculture*. The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) is spearheading the *Alaska Mariculture Initiative* which will complete the following objectives: broaden the vision and constituency of the mariculture industry from shellfish farming to also include restoration and wild fishery enhancement, coordinate efforts to develop the mariculture industry, convene a strategic planning conference in Alaska, develop a strategic plan, and gain a commitment by all participating agencies and stakeholders regarding implementation of the plan.

The Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program supports the effort by AFDF to lead a planning and development effort for the Alaska mariculture industry. With the recent rapid increase of shellfish farms, expanding application of farming practices, addition of four more highly marketable species, expansion of shellfish seed production, an industry-led strategic planning effort is vital for continued growth of an Alaskan mariculture industry. The AFDF proposal lays out a framework for developing a strategic plan that incorporates the expertise and experience of a broad coalition of partners toward developing comprehensive and effective strategies that will lead the industry into the future.

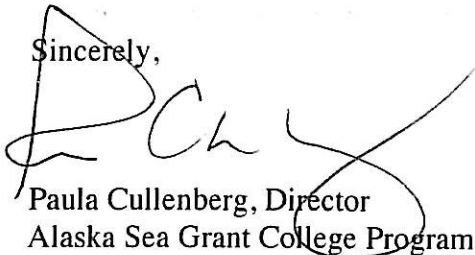
The mariculture industry has tremendous potential to provide new jobs in Alaska's coastal communities for farmers, fishermen, and those supporting the industry with research, seed supply, and infrastructure. Increased mariculture production is not only economically beneficial to these communities, but also ecologically beneficial to the marine habitat. Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program supports the *Alaska Mariculture Initiative* as a coordinated strategic planning effort with a sound methodology, clear objectives and a reasonable expectation that it will facilitate expansion of the mariculture industry, leading to increased jobs, increased seafood sales, economic growth, and a resilient industry.

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MAP has been engaged with the shellfish industry in research, education, development and outreach for over 20 years. We fully intend to work with and support this project if it is funded.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Cullenberg', written over the typed name and title.

Paula Cullenberg, Director
Alaska Sea Grant College Program