



## BOARD RESOLUTION 2014-06

### A RESOLUTION OF THE SWAMC BOARD OF DIRECTORS SUPPORTING THE ALASKA MARICULTURE INITIATIVE

**WHEREAS**, The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations reports that, in 2010, world bivalve mariculture production was worth nearly \$24 billion – grown on food materials that exist naturally in their marine environment; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska banned finfish farming, but allowed for aquatic farming of bivalves and marine plants with the passage of the Aquatic Farm Act in 1988; and

**WHEREAS**, Since 1988, Alaska’s marine farming industry has struggled to grow with annual values between \$200,000 and \$600,000; and

**WHEREAS**, The Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development published a draft *Alaska Mariculture Development Prospectus* in an attempt to establish a formal initiative focused on expediting the development of the mariculture industry; and

**WHEREAS**, Alaska’s salmon enhancement program offers a comparison of the potential for mariculture to grow the economy of coastal Alaska, where In 2010-2012, hatchery salmon commercially harvested were worth approximately \$250 million, \$110 million, and \$150 million, respectively to fishermen; and

**WHEREAS**, Bivalve mariculture and farming of aquatic plants could provide diverse social, environmental, and economic benefits for Alaska residents; and

**WHEREAS**, Aquatic plant culture can produce healthy foods and supplements, increase and preserve habitat for fish and invertebrates, and assist with bioremediation efforts in areas that contain excess nutrient loads; and

**WHEREAS**, The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) is spearheading the *Alaska Mariculture Initiative* which will expedite the development of bivalve mariculture and marine plant farming; and

**WHEREAS**, AFDF is spearheading an *Alaska Mariculture Initiative* which will complete the following objectives: broaden the vision and constituency of the mariculture industry and marine plant farming, 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.

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**BE IT RESOLVED** that the SWAMC Board of Directors support the *Alaska Mariculture Initiative* as a method to facilitate expansion of commercial bivalve mariculture and marine plants farming, to increase jobs and economic opportunity for fishermen, farmers and support businesses in Southwest Alaska communities.

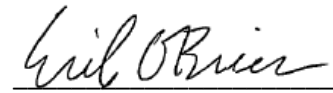
**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference Board of Directors this 15<sup>th</sup> Day of May, 2014.

IN WITNESS THERETO:

ATTEST:



Alice Ruby, President



Erik OBrien, Interim Director