

Mariculture Workforce Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

February 8, 2017

Attendees: Paula Cullenberg (Alaska Sea Grant), John Kiser (Rocky Bay Oysters), Eric Wyatt (Blue Starr Oyster), Julie Decker (AFDF) Kirsten Shelton Walker (McDowall Group) and Reid Brewer (UAS)

Action items:

- **Paula will contact Ray to find out what happened with apprenticeships in Kake.**
- **Paula and Julie will meet with Myrna to find out about the scope of CCTHITA workforce funds.**
- **Reid will send shellfish farming curriculum to Paula to circulate as well as some info on iPad classes.**
- **Next meeting will be in March, date not yet set.**

Notes:

1. The group first reviewed the progress made on earlier calls.

- We recognize that shellfish farming is a unique occupation and that hands-on exposure to the job is necessary.
- Incentives are needed to encourage more people to enter the business and incentives are needed to support farmers who are providing hands-on training to new people.
- Eric noted that some people are motivated by interest in Alaska or enjoyment of being in a beautiful setting. He has used the “Work Away” site to identify people who want to come to Alaska and work on the farm.
- John Kiser met a young ex-Marine who is going to come work with him this summer and document all the training he receives both in writing and by video to be used in future training.

2. We then focused first on the “first exposure to shellfish farming” training structure. It could look like – A month long program. Identify a small cohort – maybe 6 people. Their first couple of weeks would be spent on a farm that is being used for training as well as hands-on work. Potential sites could be Hoonah or Ketchikan for example. They would do some classroom training as well during those 2 weeks. Farmers could possibly be enlisted to be instructors. The next couple of weeks they would split up with a couple going to a few different farms to see the

variety. This would result in a certificate awarded to individuals and perhaps a longer apprenticeship with one of the farmers if someone likes the occupation.

Participants and farmers would be compensated in some manner. Other resources needed would be travel, room and board and a coordinator to pull it together.

(Note – something like this was developing in Kake several years ago, maybe a formal apprenticeship program with Ray RaLonde, Rodger Painter. Paula will contact Ray for some clarity on what happened).

3. We heard then from Reid Brewer from UAS. UAS Fisheries Technology Program has an occupational endorsement in salmon enhancement made up of 4 classes and a lab. His program did use Tom Henderson to teach a non-credit shellfish farming class a year and a half ago but they had only 3 participants. He'll share that curriculum with the group. Reid commented that it is possible to develop and offer non-credit or credit classes through his program depending on their resources and the demand. They have also loaded some PowerPoint and lectures on iPads and sent those to students. That might be another possibility.

4. Other comments – Eric noted that ongoing presentations in communities about the potential to start a farm would be good outreach. Paula noted that Ray did that quite a bit but with his retirement and inability to fill the position – capacity is limited. She did note that there will be a Seaweed Farming 101 webinar on Tuesday Feb 28 at 5:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 3:20.