

MADE IN ALASKA

MARICULTURE

ALASKA DIVISION of
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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ROAD TO OPPORTUNITY

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COMMUNITY
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DEVELOPMENT

Alaska Mariculture Task Force

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 23, 2019 @ 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM AST

ADCCED Conference Room A, Floor 9, State Office Building

333 Willoughby Ave, Juneau, AK 99801

1) Roll call – Chair Decker calls meeting to order at 8:36 AM.

- Decker - new MTF member – Jim Andersen, ADCCED

MTF Members Present:

- Julie Decker – AFDF (in person)
- Heather McCarty – Central Bering Sea Fishermen’s Association (present)
- Sam Rabung – ADFG (in person)
- Ed Douville – Shaan Seet Corp, Craig Alaska (phone/internet)
- Eric Wyatt – Oyster farmer, nursery owner, Board of OceansAlaska and ASGA (phone/internet)
- Angela Drobnica – APICDA (in person)
- Jim Andersen – ADCCED (in person)
- Heather Brandon – Alaska Sea Grant (in person)
- Jeff Hetrick – Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery (in person)
- Mike Stekoll – University of Alaska (in person)
- Kate Sullivan – SARDF (late by phone/internet)

Public Participants Present:

- Flip Pryor – ADFG (in person)
- Michelle Morris – ADFG (in person)
- Julie Scheurer –NOAA (in person)
- Bill Heinz – NOAA (in person)
- Steve Whitney – NOAA (in person)
- Jon Moller – Governor’s Office, Policy Advisor (in person)
- Wanetta Ayers – PWSEDC (phone/internet)
- Brittney Smith – ADNR (phone/internet)
- Kim Stryker – ADEC (phone/internet)
- Justin Sternberg – Alaska Ocean Cluster (phone/internet)
- Patrick Simpson – PKS Consulting
- Bobbi Hudson – Pacific Shellfish Institute (phone/internet)
- Tamsen Peebles – Blue Evolution (phone/internet)
- Mike Rust – NOAA (phone/internet)
- Steven Phillips – PSMFC (phone/internet)
- Karen Cougan – ADNR (phone/internet)
- Cynthia Pring-ham – ADFG (phone/internet)

- Riley Smith – AFDF (phone/internet)
- Kristin Ciciel – NOAA (phone/internet)
- Chere Klein – Office of Senators Murkowski & Sullivan (phone/internet)
- Tommy Sheridan - Sheridan Consulting, Native Village of Eyak (phone/internet)
- Glenora (on behalf of Charlotte Levy) – Aleutians East Borough (phone/internet)
- Bill Hines – NOAA (in person)

2) Review and approve agenda

- McCarty – add section to agenda to hear from John Moller (Governor’s policy advisor).

Motion (McCarty/Rabung) to approve agenda as amended. Motion passes with no objections.

3) Review and approve minutes: March 27, 2019

Motion (Rabung/McCarty) to approve minutes. Motion passes with no objections.

4) Jon Moller – policy advisor for the Governor

- Moller - Scope of duties include policy advocacy for commercial fish along with rural Alaska.
 - Governor is supportive of AO 297 that re-established the MTF, including efforts moving forwards to continue to push departments in the right direction to amend legislation to benefit the growth of mariculture industry and others.
 - Regulation reform is large part of Governor’s mission – will be reaching out to industry for feedback.
 - Portfolio includes over 150 different regulations that are being rescinded or amended in order to bolster industry.
 - Administration is committed to creating new opportunities for Alaskans.

5) Public introductions & comments

- Rabung – Jim Andersen is a great addition to team, input from commerce is important and assesses a gap with MTF. Jim brings a lot of financial expertise to the MTF.
- Moller – Regulation reform that affects industry is very important in connection to MTF, administration/government and industry. Commerce and different divisions within are very important asset to development of mariculture in Alaska.
- McCarty – developed the plan with last administration, this new administration is serious about helping and will have their mark on the implementation part.
- Peeples – wrapped up commercial harvest in Kodiak for the year last Friday - 125,000 lbs of kelp harvested. This is the last meeting calling in to MTF as representative of BE. Lex Meyer will be taking over my position with BE.
- McCarty – Peeples, do you have any information on how the product was processed and what markets it will be sold to?
- Peeples – This year BE worked with Ocean Beauty for processing, blanched frozen product, targeting domestic exports primarily to the West Coast. Grocery stores next year or two. Current initiative is online drive – large scale catering companies, universities, etc.
- Brandon – BE worked with Alaska Sea Grant to put out media on BE harvest, picked up by the Washington Post.

6) Updates

A. Legislation (state)

- Decker – SB 22 & HB 41; legislation has made good progress this year, however, seems stalled until next year.
1. **SB 22** – sponsors Stevens & Micciche; still in S-Finance & contains amendment requested by KRSA.
 2. **HB 41** – sponsors Ortiz, Vance & Story; passed to S-Finance & joins companion SB 22; contains amendment regarding application fee.
 3. **HB 116** – sponsors Story, Kreiss-Tomkins & Vance; passed to H-Rules & awaiting Floor vote.
 - Decker- good response from legislators on mariculture, presentations on opportunities, seems like positive perception and movement to get them passed
 4. **HB 76** – signed into law in 2018; ADCCED is promulgating regulations.
 - Andersen – we are currently working on regulations, hoping to see enhancement becoming legal. Would work well with its companion bill (SB 22) passing at the same time. Revolving loan fund receiving a lot more interest from seaweed farmers, etc. Currently have \$1 M out from the loan fund – \$4 M remaining. People are interested in diversifying into seaweed. Cash flow from seaweed will help sustain longer grow-out time for oysters.
 - Andersen- commercial fishing loans, commonly 2 year loans, commercial fishermen seeking to transition into mariculture may be eligible for the commercial fishermen loan fund.
 - Decker – great progress from 3 years ago. Understanding is that there is a requirement for 2 years of experience in the industry before loan application? How does that work with such a new industry?
 - Andersen – ADECC believes that knowledge/experience is instrumental. Experience in commercial fishing transfers to mariculture (i.e. experience with vessels, gear, etc). Applicants must demonstrate effort and understanding of industry. We determine this on a case-by-case basis.

B. Grants

1. New RFPs issued:

- Decker - Upcoming SK grant pre-proposals in July.
- ### 2. Grants Submitted:
- ARPA-E Phase 2; PSMFC Mariculture Pilot Projects – OceansAlaska, MaricultureMap Version 2.0; NSG – King Crab enhancement economic feasibility study, Alaska Seaweed Market Assessment; NFWF – MaricultureMap Version 2.0, Improvements to Mariculture Site Selection & Productivity
- Stekoll – two grants in with Sea Grant: 1) working with Kake, looking at growing black seaweed and alaria and 2) working in Sand Point with out-planting kelps .
 - ARPA – E, Phase 2: no word yet, we will hear back at end of May/June.
 - McCarty – King Crab Enhancement Economic Feasibility Study grant submitted. Keith Kittle submitted it to many funding opportunities. AKCRAB as co-pi, submitted to Sea Grant.
 - Wyatt – OceansAlaska, Sea Grant, Alutiiq Pride were given the go-ahead on a pre-proposal on PSMFC Oyster Consortium – submitted a full-proposal.
 - Part of grant proposal included forming oyster research consortium with advisory board – which is part of the MTF priorities and Plan
 - Brandon – ASG proposal submitted to NSG (\$1.3 M over 3 years), match mostly came from industry.
 - Classic extension with mariculture specialist based in Juneau. Support the MTF. Workforce development at hatcheries and farms for kelp, oyster farmers. Kelp, processing and market research/development. Find out in July/August.
 - Decker – ASG did a great job of reaching out to industry for priorities with the proposal. Input is extremely important. Also, brings resources to the State from the outside.

3. Funding awarded: USDA RBDG – Spawning Mariculture in SW Alaska (\$115,000); ADNR Specialty Crop Block Grant – AK Seaweed Product Development and Market Assessment (\$30,000).

4. Other comments:

- Brandon – conducting a Connecticut Sea Grant site review. Will reach out to Charlie Yarish, GreenWave.
 - 2-day mariculture conference in Kodiak (August/Sept). Conference will be about a comprehensive look at mariculture for region and tribes.

C. Communications

1. Past presentations: Wrangell High School – Fisheries of Alaska class presentation (5/13/2019); Fish 2.0 – Aquaculture, Seattle, April 30-May 1, 2019; ADNR presentation to Senate Finance Committee on March 28, others.

- Stekoll – presentations over the last 2 months in Korea on seaweed mariculture in Alaska (International Symposium for North and South Korea Marine Global, International Seaweed Symposium)
 - McCarty – what is the experience with seaweed in Korea?
 - Stekoll – China, Japan and Korea hundreds of years ahead of us in seaweed industry. Rank No.2 in terms of seaweed production.

2. Future opportunities: North Pacific Fisheries Management Council; Mermaid Festival, Sitka, Aug. 31-Sept. 1; others.

- Decker – Heather, do you have an update on presenting to the Council in October?
- McCarty - Council presentation is set for October. Homer, AK. Possible field trip to visit oyster farm. First full week in October (September 30 – October 8).
 - ED will put it in his report with loose/longer timeline (10-15 minute maximum). Lots of representation from Federal fisheries at these meetings.
 - Brandon – must be the 1st day of Council meeting
 - Scheurer – should there be someone from the NOAA Office of Aquaculture to come to Council meeting and present alongside with the MTF?
 - McCarty – Great idea, would give a broader scope of what is happening on the State and Federal level. Person in charge was closely associated with Mike Rubino as well.
- Wyatt – FLUPSY construction finished and in operation in Ward Cove.
 - Decker – nursery phase is an important piece of infrastructure between hatchery and farm.
 - Wyatt – mariculture revolving loan fund funded FLUPSY.
- Brandon – two-day conference in Kodiak, funded by USDA grant – comprehensive look at mariculture and the opportunities it may present to AK region, tribes and native corporations. Focus on bivalve, kelp farming, permitting and site tours.
 - Decker - USDA is an asset we need to utilize.

D. NOAA Updates

1. Job announcement – Alaska Regional Aquaculture Coordinator.

- Whitney – two positions opening up with NOAA: 1) Alaska Fisheries Science Center Aquaculture Scientist and 2) NOAA Regional Aquaculture Coordinator

2. NOAA workshop – dates; ideas for agenda & attendees; steering committee.

- Hines – funding has been approved for workshop and for job position with Sea Grant (\$75,000, will pay for half of it). Waiting to hire the NOAA Aquaculture coordinator.

3. NOAA promotional film about mariculture in Alaska.

- Whitney – Ketchikan, Hump Island to Barnacle Seafoods production of oysters and kelp. Parallels other recent media coverage, however, will reach a different audience – from different aquaculture regions to Capitol Hill. Will be finished in October. Cindy Sandoval is the lead.

7) Old Business: none.

8) New Business:

A. Review ADNR/ADFG report regarding 2017-2019 farm apps.

- Decker – Brittney, can you give a verbal overview of this? Also, thank you for your work getting this together (Karen & Cynthia).
- Smith – list of all 2017-2019 applications and current status, including proposed project and organism proposed for culture.
- Pring-ham – 52 applications over last 3 years.
- Decker – regional distribution more widespread across the state. Juneau, Haines, Cordova, Sand Point, Kodiak, etc. Size of farms varies from 3 – 100+ acres. Applicants: individuals, corporations, companies, etc.
- Moller – would be interested to having conversation on whether a 2+ year timeframe to get applications through is appropriate for this growing industry. Conversation for after the meeting.
- Brandon – which applicants also have to comply with additional regulations at the local level or borough level in addition to state level (city and borough)?
 - Cougan – Juneau does have additional requirements. Federal component as well for permitting and regulation for the US Army Corps of Engineers
 - Decker – federal and local compliance layers are important to consider along with the state regulations. Municipalities as well. Wrangell as an example – had to consider what are allowable uses when they became a borough, mariculture was defined as an allowable use. More municipalities need to think about this.
 - Brandon – what is a way to reach out to municipalities and boroughs on this?
 - Decker – Alaska Municipal League Annual Conference in November.
 - **Task: Consider presentation to AML.**
- Pring-ham – in our application (page 7-17) there is a list of city and borough authorizations/planning sections that an applicant must adhere to - Ketchikan, Craig, Sitka, Kenai Peninsula, Juneau, etc. listed in app.
- Brandon – do we know the total acreage that is already permitted and under review?
- Smith – acreage proposed, not processed yet. Rough number is 2,000 acres
- Decker – would be important to know what is proposed versus what has been approved. 330 acres approved in 2017?
 - Pring-ham - 2019 = 616 acres, 2018 = 462 acres, 2017 = 1,030 acres, total = 2,109 (17-19). All applications – approved or not.
- Rabung – acreage, general public perception is that this is the surface area of the farm. Must note that acreage is actually where the anchor points are, the outline on the bottom. Surface of farm sites are a fraction of that (half or less).
- Wyatt – important to note that people are putting in applications for larger farms because of the long time-frame for approval. Very tenuous number.
- Decker – important to note which communities are seeing interest and growth – places for us to target public outreach. Particularly with large farms, public concern can be increased.

B. Action Plan

1. Draft outline of action plan (Decker, McCarty)

- Decker – McCarty and Decker started an outline of the action plan. Want feedback on approach. Started with a list of all recommendations from the Plan, added new areas for considerations (i.e. renewal of legislation, length of lease term, application backlog with ADNR, etc.).
 - Began considering timelines more carefully, including progress towards of recommendation.
 - New Zealand Plan as an example - was a joint effort between New Zealand gov. and industry.
- McCarty – may be areas in this action plan outline that can telescope into other areas of the regulatory review. Streamlining of everything on timeline, would like to avoid near-, mid- and long-term and focus on more structure with yearly timeline. Need help creating format for timeline. Need to prioritize the recommendations and set short-term goals.
- Decker – what is the timeline? We are designing a short-term implementation plan. Is it 2, 3, 4, 5 years? Defined timeline for Implementation plan. Especially with the AO expiring in 2021.
- Rabung – Review of AO. We should be passing this on to a Mariculture Development Council.
 - Moller – AOs fall under my portfolio. Existing AO could be paired down. State should and will always be involved, however, AOs indicate that the state is taking a leading role - industry should take a leading role and state should take supporting role.
 - Refine AO based on definition of Council and direction forward
 - McCarty – would this administration be supportive of a mariculture council?
 - Moller – certainly, an industry-driven body for this is supported and ideal, need to avoid overzealous government body involvement in this developing industry.
 - Rabung – good starting point from the Plan. The Mariculture Development Council is in our top 5 priority recommendations. Not a lot of time.
 - Decker – we did not define seats, funding, etc. Government agencies that play a role are important to be involved. ASMI is one example.
 - Moller – pioneering phase for industry and for this development. This Administration is forming an economic development team under Commerce – how can they be involved with this?
 - McCarty – is this team all government filling the positions?
 - Moller – early stages, the idea is that it will be primarily industry.
 - McCarty – Faulkner was anxious about the policies laid out by past administration being in line with new administration. We need check-in points with the administration, etc. - Details are extremely important.
 - Moller – this administration will not be telling industry exactly what to do. Industry's desires will not be meddled with by the administration
 - Decker – there has been a proactive position from the state to help develop an industry that will benefit all Alaskans.
- Scheurer – a lot of these regulatory recommendations also have a federal component to them. Is this a next step? NOAA?
 - Decker – one of our 5 priorities was to get a federal aquaculture coordinator in place. Yes, NOAA needs to be listed as a responsible entity for many of these recommendations.
 - Scheurer – will that NOAA aquaculture coordinator be on the MTF?
 - Decker – NOAA (any federal employee) cannot officially serve as a member of a state Task Force. Can be party of any associated workgroup.
 - Ayers – Beneficial for both the MTF and farmer to understand more about state and federal agencies, their responsibilities and who to contact within each.
 - Rabung – for example, a single point of contact
- Wyatt – mariculture coordinating Council, now it is called development, however, most of what we do with the MTF is economic and commerce related. Mariculture Coordination Council? We need to

set up another formal organization to take over what the MTF is doing. Reassert the priority of the Council.

- McCarty – structure and funding ideas that you could share with us?
- Decker – great points and questions on this. Funding is a huge part of this. Must be industry driven. Right now, we are chasing grants, in order to shift this, industry must step up.
- Rabung – we need to first grow the industry to be able to support this council. Both working on the structure/development of the council and the work of the MTF need to be done in parallel.
 - Decker – how do we coordinate existing support that is there for the council, etc.?
- McCarty – again, what is the timeline?
 - Rabung - 2 years is when the AO expires. If we don't do it within 2 years, then there is no guarantee that it will be done. Legislation + timeline = not good.
 - Decker – what do we need to get done in 2 years as the MTF? The Council, ASG, etc. can take over after the 2-year period
 - Moller – importance of having boots on the ground persons involved. Sunset date of AO (2021) is a motivator, in of itself. Parallel tracks for timeline: what is going to move industry forward in the best way, what agencies have which responsibilities. Who is the body that will take over the work of the MTF? What are the regulatory and legislative priorities that can be accomplished in parallel?
 - Rabung – our action plan is industry-centric, government is in supporting role.
 - Wyatt - New Zealand plan – would be interesting to hear from industry in New Zealand to see impact and effectiveness of plan on development and existing industry.
 - Decker – very important to find this out. Economic numbers indicate that they have made significant progress with towards their goal. Industry has funded much of what makes up plan, i.e. industry newsletter/magazine. Government and industry have gone hand in hand in this process. They have definitely learned from this process and it would be useful to us to understand. Anyone interested in looking into this?

Task: Brandon – will reach out to farmers, etc. in New Zealand to present to the group via ZOOM or teleconference. Decker/Smith – will set up a ZOOM conference for presentation.

- Wyatt – small, med and large balance for farmers in New Zealand and Alaska important. Must be a component for outreach to New Zealand.
- Decker – balance important, making it easy for smaller farms to enter industry is important.
- Rabung – big farms have more negative public perception. This can partially be overcome by location (i.e. distance from municipalities, etc.) – only big farms are viable in remote areas of Alaska
- Moller – how much of this negative public perception has to do with a lack of education?
- Decker – what is the definition of small, medium and large in other regions?
- Hines – is there any interest in developing local area management plans for mariculture development and permitting (i.e. Sitka)? This would alleviate much of the tension.
- Rabung – there is also an opportunity for a public hearing for permitting in these local area management plans.
- Decker – what is the general consensus for the timeline on our plan?
 - Stekoll – New Zealand plan was set for 5 years.
 - Rabung – as McDowell Group advised, the further you go out the more things become uncertain and may change. 5 years makes sense, we have 2 years left for the MTF leaving 3 years to finish plan.
 - Ayers – Chinese approach. 5-year plan with quarters separated out. First 5 quarters are concrete and after that each quarter with rolled forward goals.

- McCarty – do we need to create a workgroup to further disseminate the framework of the council?
 - Decker – would be beneficial to bring forward past examples of councils, including bylaws or statutory language that created each

Task: Stekoll, Decker, Sheridan and Wyatt to head workgroup to create framework for Council formation

- Decker – are we in consensus for the 5-year timeframe for the implementation plan?
Consensus.

Task: Scheuer, Decker, Stekoll, Wyatt, Hetrick, Brandon, McCarty on workgroup to work on the action plan including regulatory component.

Muller left meeting at 10:15 AM AST.

- Decker – what is the crux of what we need to convince existing industry of before this implementation becomes industry driven and industry funded with cohesive involvement?
 - Wyatt – industry needs to know that there is no infringement to existing business, and that there are positive benefits to them.
 - Hetrick – big difference between New Zealand and Alaska. All of this action plan and mariculture development was industry funded. Alaska simply does not have the same industry involvement that we need.
 - Decker – Yes, good point. New Zealand’s first strategic plan was created when the mariculture industry was at \$25 M annual gross sales. Alaska is at \$1.5 M gross sales.
- Rabung – a previous model: Salmon hatchery program was set up regionally, SE divided into 2 regions, with 13 regions across Alaska. Each region had opportunity to decide what they wanted to do with salmon hatchery aquaculture. Regions would come together to make comprehensive plans or actions. Do we separate by species?
 - McCarty – salmon hatchery aquaculture was stakeholder driven but was allowed for by legislature.
- Rabung – another model: non-regional (DIPACS) how are stakeholders defined? In their bylaws and articles of incorporation. DIPACS are non-profit organization with a BOD made up by stakeholders/representatives.
 - Decker – what is the loan collateral?
 - Rabung – real property, infrastructure, inventory (fish and sea)
 - Andersen – in the beginning there is a lot of personal property involved.
- McCarty – another model: AKCRRAB has accessed communities – communities will come to AKCRRAB asking to organize a group that is just for a localized crab fishery and enhance it for the local subsistence users.
 - Decker – if we are successful with our long-term goal for a \$100 M industry, there will be a lot of new stakeholders
 - Wyatt – two subsets of stakeholders: farmers and non-farmers. Actual farming and enhancement are two different sets of stakeholders.
- Ayers – is the question to have industry representatives on MTF now or what and who will be the successor organization to the MTF?
 - Decker – successor organization to the MTF.
 - Ayers – short-term goal for MTF would be to define that all stakeholders, whether statewide groups, regional groups, actual farmers, prospective farmers, either will have a stake/seat in the MTF and/or Council going forward.
 - Stekoll – true for the current administration, what about 4 years from now? Example from Maine – Marine Aquaculture Innovation Center set up by the state. Mission is to assist in the

development of environmentally and economically sustainable aquaculture opportunities in Maine.

- Decker – Moller eluded to the idea that a similar organization could be possible within the department of commerce in Alaska. Moller repeatedly underlined that they want to help and prioritize mariculture in the future. With a 20-year plan – we know and have to recognize that there will be multiple administrations.
- Ayers – understanding of this administration is that economic development is going to be moved into the governor’s office and they will appropriate teams so that persons will be cross-detailed to a team/task force within the office of economic development. MTF can serve as a model for emerging sectors and task forces/teams.
 - McCarty & Decker – door is cracked open, we need to keep pushing these ideas.
 - Rabung – administration is interested in centralizing as many functions as possible into the governor’s office. If this Council is industry driven, then they will remain after the administration leaves. Their priorities will also be centric to industry, not the administration.
 - Wyatt – if half of the seats on the Council were industry representatives, with the other half filled with inter-disciplinary seats, then this would still be industry driven.
- Ayers – Action Plan should include a part indicating when the industry will grow and begin to lead the industry. Reminds me of Peony industry
 - Decker – Peony industry size?
 - Ayers – 40 commercial peony farms in 2019, 25 commercial farms in 2017. Exceeded project growth in farmgate value, # of farms and product value, 128 commercial peony farms, maybe \$2 million farmgate – more farms coming \$6.5 million farmgate by 2024.
- McCarty – idea of mariculture research center and advisory body – how can the action plan address this goal?
 - Stekoll – via the university was the idea. The university doesn’t seem too interested in that.
 - McCarty – how would the MTF like to address this priority in the action plan?
 - Wyatt – currently there is mention of the oyster consortium grant opportunity with the PSMFC – we envision this consortium to include all mariculture by bringing together different entities to guide development.
 - Decker – if we fluidly look at all these staff positions that are opening up with NOAA Regional Aquaculture Coordinator and Aquaculture Research Lead, Mariculture Specialist with ASG, etc. is there a possibility to coordinate this goal and the duties of these positions?
 - Rust – Yes, that is part of the plan to have an Aquaculture scientist at the Alaska Science Center. One of the roles could be a coordinating role.
 - Decker – can the MRC director position be written into their duties at this point?
 - Rust – need to talk to Bob Foy about that, however it is still fluid so potentially.
 - Brandon - new UAF mariculture faculty member, UAF has created an Alaska Blue Economy Center. Poorly funded and defined, however, mariculture could be a component of it.
 - Decker – we have 4 newly created positions: UAF mariculture faculty member, Alaska Sea Grant Mariculture Specialist, NOAA – Alaska Regional Aquaculture Coordinator, NOAA - Alaska Fisheries Science Center Aquaculture Scientist.
 - McCarty – finalist for the faculty position for Kodiak – 2 of them are seaweed people and do not fit as a coordinator position. They are junior people. Also, the University position does not seem feasible.

- Decker – great opportunity to incorporate the MRC concept into the job description and duties of one or more of these new employees. NOAA Science Center could be a good fit for this coordinated research effort.
- Rust – this is a great use of the Science Center position. This position will also bring national expertise to Alaska.
- Stekoll – we have written out the duties for the director. Will resend.
- Decker – do we have any concerns with integrating duties of the Plan into one of these positions?
 - Wyatt – would having a NOAA staff hire working closely with the MTF and influencing RFPs be a conflict of interest?
 - Rust – it is important to note that NOAA cannot compete for federal dollars
 - Decker – Mike, if we get this on paper and hash out the role that we see this position filling with the MTF, can you discuss this with Bob Foy?
 - Rust – yes, the role is designed to support industry. MTF input is appreciated.
- McCarty – we have a general understanding of the Action Plan and the approach for the research action.

2. Priorities for 2019, 2020, 2021 (see discussion above)

3. New Zealand 5-Year Action Plan (see discussion above)

C. Discuss Federal aquaculture bill – support, oppose, amendments, comments

- Decker – from last meeting’s agenda – we tabled it until now. Also, the new bill (Wicker Bill) for this session has not been introduced yet.
- McCarty – came up in the Council Coordinating Committee (CCC) meeting, nothing new – it is expected to be reintroduced. Congressman Don Young introduced a bill which states that it cannot be done anywhere unless it is approved by Congress. May be a negotiating tool for Alaska to remain unchanged in terms of aquaculture.
- Rabung – that was our response with the Wicker Bill –we wanted state statute to apply in federal waters, aka a state opt-out.
- McCarty – CCC meeting also overviewed the offshore aquaculture production in Norway and other European countries at a massive scale, large scale finfish farming, etc.
- Decker – NOAA cannot put any aquaculture in the US EEZ unless Congress gives them the authority to do so – however, Congressman Young did say that he loves what the state is doing with mariculture. OceansAlaska took Congressman Young to their facilities.
- Nervous about federal aquaculture and the negative public perception associated with it. It seems to bleed into mariculture, we need to keep disassociating what we are doing in Alaska with the federal, offshore aquaculture movement.
 - Should we review this?
 - McCarty – is UFA engaging in this conversation as well?
 - Decker - last year, UFA did engage and came to a guiding document. Kept in communications with the congressional offices and the sponsor of the bill, Senator Wicker’s office and the aquaculture industry’s advocacy group (lobbyist). This year they have not formally engaged or changed the document. They will continue with that. Their president will also continue to be engaged in DC, etc.
 - Main areas of concern on the bill:

- State opt-out provision (allowing states with legislation passed prohibiting specific gear types and/or aquaculture) to mirror those provisions in federal waters. Tension – industry does not want that, particularly for states other than Alaska.
- Research and development portion and marketing component.
- Regulatory concerns: environmental protection and lease term (25 years).
- Enforcement.
- Funding: \$300 M over 5 years.
- Decker – although It hasn't been re-introduced, now would be the time to make a statement on suggested amendments or concerns, etc. – we have our letter from last year.
- McCarty – keep an eye on it and when we need to, we will make another statement.
- Decker – we will keep the federal aquaculture bill on the agenda as old business.

D. Public perceptions of mariculture

- Decker – as we are seeing more size and scale, we are seeing more pushback. Concerns fall into three categories:
 - Environmental – perceived or real.
 - Size and scale – big versus small.
 - Setting aside areas for particular groups or communities – community- focused development.
- We need to address these concerns when legitimate, i.e. size and scale in the Council. Possibly in a scientific approach to address misconceptions.
 - Rabung – it seems like much of this push back is emotional, not scientific.
 - Decker – making the scientific information more readily available may be beneficial.
 - Rabung – reporters are uneducated on mariculture, they are being driven by emotion and other individuals.
 - Brandon – BE reached out to us for public relations piece on their harvest. Alaska Sea Grant article on BE is a great example of an organic amplification of mariculture successes.
 - Decker – does Sea Grant have the capacity to facilitate public communications for mariculture?
 - Brandon – if NSG comes through then we would have 2 weeks per year dedicated to mariculture public relations.
 - Decker – another great resource is the Northern Lights column coordinated by ASMI- could be a great avenue for success stories for mariculture farmers.
 - Others: NOAA Promotional video with Hump Island and BE. How will that be rolled out?
 - Hines – NOAA has multiple media channels (social media, etc.) and the video will be released in October. Nationwide release.
 - Decker - all of our various groups would be able to distribute this as well once we get a hold of it.
 - McCarty – anyone would like to help plan farm outreach for Council meeting?
 - Wyatt – will help organize farm trip in area around Homer.
 - Decker – will help with details of meeting.

Informal communications workgroup for Council meeting in October – McCarty, Drobnic, Wyatt and Decker will help organize the farm outreach/visits.

Formal Communications Workgroup will be established pending approval of NSG proposal by Alaska Sea Grant.

- Wyatt – this seems like it will coordinate with the NOAA workshop (Bill Hines).

- Decker/McCarty – outreach to reporters, industry, etc. during the meeting.
- Hines - NOAA hiring will take at least 3-4 months. Hope that workshop will still go forward.
- Kachemak Bay Conservation Society - biological concerns related to farms, shellfish enhancement, concerns regarding large vs. small farms.
- Brandon - Alaska Marine Policy Forum - May 29th meeting – what would you like accomplished during this meeting? Commissioner will be on call. McCarty is committed. No topic titled yet – general discussion. McCarty will speak to legislation, what the MTF is trying to accomplish and what the legislation is trying to accomplish.

Decker – as an aside, there is an effort by TNC and Encourage Capital to encourage private investment towards responsible aquaculture (see article in packet).

8) Work Groups - review tasks

A. Legislative Workgroup (McCarty, Rabung, Drobnica, Decker) – on pause until late fall, early winter as we create a strategy. Hard push in December, at the latest.

- **Tasks:** support passage of SB 22, HB 41, HB 116.

B. Regulatory Workgroup (Rabung, McCarty, Wyatt, Decker, Sullivan, Stryker, Smith) – much of prior discussion was turned into HB 116, priority became trying to work that bill. Pairing it down to the most important ones right now so that it can guide the action plan. Timeline for NOAA workshop is also driving this task. Forum for talking about these issues, feedback, changes.

- **Task:** continue to dive into expanding lease term, existing resources on site, the list on the action plan and other.
- **Task:** email correspondence – go through the action plan and address priority regulations (especially those with only one associated agency) ASAP.
- **Task:** coordinate with action plan workgroup to prepare for NOAA workshop meeting

C. Research Workgroup (Brandon, Stekoll, Wyatt, Foy, Decker)

- **Tasks:** Mariculture Research Center & Coordinator, prioritize research through 2021.
- **Task:** Stekoll will forward previously created list of duties to Decker
- **Task:** Decker will edit and revise previously created list for review by research workgroup, then pass to Mike Rust and Foy for consideration of integration with duties of new Alaska Fisheries Science Center new aquaculture research lead.

D. Action Plan Workgroup (McCarty, Decker, Hetrick, Scheurer, Drobnica, Wyatt, Stekoll)

- **Co-Chairs:** Decker and McCarty.
- **Task:** convene (email and teleconferences) and work on Action Plan to be presented to MTF on August 8th.
- **Tasks:** draft document & coordinate with regulatory workgroup.

E. Development Council Workgroup (Decker, Sheridan, Stekoll, Wyatt)

- **Task:** assess other models.
- **Task:** Brandon will research models while in Connecticut.
- **Task:** create structure of council.

9) Set next meeting date and time – next meeting is set for August 8th, 2019.

10) Closing Comments & Adjournment

Motion (McCarty/Rabung) to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned with no objections at 12:48pm AST.