

Alaska Mariculture Development Plan
Draft Action Plan
2019-08-02

Category: Industry

(18 actions)

Industry Development

- **Create Alaska Mariculture Development Council***

Objective – industry-driven coordination across stakeholder groups, agencies, and elements in order to accelerate development of the industry.

Tasks:

- Investigate existing models and functionality
 - Consider funding mechanisms & composition
 - Consider authority & responsibility for implementation of comprehensive plan
- Designate representational distribution of members of the Council
- Designate the authority and responsibility of the Council
- Write foundational documents (i.e. legislation, bylaws, etc.)
- Adopt foundational documents

Timeline: 2019-2021

Responsible entity: MTF

Infrastructure

- **Secure seed/juvenile supply through hatcheries***

Objective – Investment to secure shellfish and seaweed seed/juveniles for future industry growth.

Tasks:

- promulgate regs to implement HB 76 (Mar Rev Loan Fund to include hatcheries)
- secure operating funds for existing hatcheries
- consider funding mechanisms and models besides seed sales
- provide technical transfer and expertise to hatchery staff
- support new hatcheries as needed for industry growth and regional development

Timeline: 2019-2024

Responsible entities:

Access to capital

- **New or increased revolving loan funds (RLF)**

Objective – Provide additional capital to small farms and non-profit hatcheries, because increased participation and demand will quickly surpass the state's existing RLF

Tasks:

- Support adding funds to state's existing Mariculture RLF

- Align industry needs with public funding opportunities

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Explore and expand additional sources of public and private capital**

Objective – Provide access to additional sources of capital for medium and large farms and hatcheries, such as AIDEA

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Business Models

- **Consider cooperative structures**

Objective – Educate industry participants about the ability of coops to offer members many benefits (efficiencies, shared risk, common facilities, seed, markets, etc) & are models used in both seafood & agriculture

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Consider community-based structures**

Objective – Explore and identify the potential benefits of community-based models of ownership and operation of mariculture development

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Industry Information Needs

- **Provide web-based central clearing-house for mariculture information**

Objective – Create and maintain an easily accessible and regularly updated public information center

Tasks:

- Develop and maintain list of funding sources for mariculture development
- Develop guide to federal and state permit requirements

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Investor Outreach**

Objective – Provide information specifically designed for potential investors (growth rates, PSP, etc) to develop business plans & assess opportunities

Tasks:

- Create fact sheet for investors
- Do targeted outreach to seafood processors, ANCs, CDQs, PCSGA (WA growers)

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Support continued learning through visits to other regions of world**
Objective – develop contacts in other regions that allow information sharing and learning with existing industry

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Develop and maintain GIS map tool**
Objective - provide siting info to potential investors/regulators that allows development and reduces conflict

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Industry Training

- **Expand formal education in mariculture**
Objective - expanded capacity of University, ANSEP and other institutions/programs to educate/train for all levels of workers (including researchers, hatchery, business, financing, etc)

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Develop & circulate mariculture skill-building resources**

Objective -

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Offer professional development to growers, available remotely & in-person**

Objective -

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Offer informal, flexible training programs**

Objective -

Tasks:

- build on progress to date (e.g. boot camp, apprenticeship, mentorship)

- provide "Introduction to Shellfish/Seaweed Farming" for new farmers or farm employees

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Marketing

- **Build on ASMI programs**

Objective – Consider the benefits of and stages of industry “joining” ASMI and adding marketing of mariculture products to the existing marketing of wild capture seafood products.

Tasks:

- Consider contribution to ASMI through industry taxes
- Consider other funding mechanisms or sources to augment ASMI work
- Revise ASMI strategic plan & tag line to include mariculture products & messaging
- Include information about positive benefits of mariculture at every level of marketing, similar to inclusion of sustainability in wild seafood marketing

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Build collaboration with Alaska Grown and others**

Objective - build synergy with a larger group of Alaska Food Producers (e.g. Alaska Food Policy Council, Alaska Grown, ASMI, etc.)

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Public Outreach

- **Provide public outreach**

Objective - provide public outreach to multiple audiences to help assure realistic & positive views of mariculture using practical and factual information

Tasks:

- identify priority groups & develop effective communication with each
- effective communication may be written material, presentations, meetings, ongoing coordination with groups or individuals
- identify and counter opposition to mariculture & aquaculture; issues include potential for environmental damage, genetics, conflicting users, market competition, aesthetics

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Provide industry advocacy**

Objective – Increase understanding in governmental sectors of industry goals and needs

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Category: Government

(19 actions)

State of Alaska:

Statutory

- **Pass legislation to allow shellfish enhancement***

Objective – Legalize restoration, rehabilitation & enhancement of shellfish

Tasks:

- Continue to support HB 41 and SB 22 through committee testimony
- Compile scientific info to counter opposition
- Work with sponsoring legislators and committee chairs to move bill out of Senate Finance Committee and onto Senate floor vote

Timeline: 2019-2020

Responsible entities: MTF, AFDF, industry, Legislature

- **Pass legislation to reduce requirements on renewals**

Objective – reduce uncertainty for farmers and reduce backlog of applications

- Continue to support HB 116 through committee testimony
- Work with sponsoring legislators and committee chairs to move bill

Timeline: 2019-2020

Responsible entity: MTF, AFDF, industry, Legislature

Regulatory changes

- **Amend commercial use requirement**

Objective - allow shorter or longer term for commercial use requirements, depending upon species; enforce new reg

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Build tribal & local outreach into application process**

Objective - avoid conflict and increase rate of success for new farm apps

Tasks:

- add requirement to application to send letter to local tribe and community

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Regulatory amendment to allow flexibility to increase term of lease from 10 to 20 yrs**
Objective – allow both 10 or 20-yr term leases (20-yr requires additional site survey)
 Tasks:
 Timeline:
 Responsible entity:

Policy issues

- **State of AK commitment to support mariculture & comprehensive plan**
Objective - State will express clear commitment to support comp plan & defined state role & direct regulatory agencies to adopt advocacy approach to mariculture industry
 Tasks:
 Timeline:
 Responsible entity: MTF, Governor, Legislature
- **ADFG genetics policy**
Objective – continue to develop relationships and understanding between industry and ADFG to allow advancement of mariculture techniques and practices while preserving genetic integrity
 Tasks:
 - sterile stock & species that do not reproduce do not need to be subject to genetics policy
 - when a lack of data for a species exists, require a timeline for data collection in order to reduce precautionary restrictions
 Timeline:
 Responsible entity:
- **Revise aquatic farm application**
Objective - adhere to actual language in statute/reg for application requirements
 Tasks:
 Timeline:
 Responsible entity:
- **Reduce bond rates for low risk operations**
Objective - allow reduced bonds for farmers with demonstrated training or experience
 Tasks:
 Timeline:
 Responsible entity:
- **Obtain legal authority for agreements between farmers for clean-up**
Objective – support DNR offering bond & abandoned gear to other farmers for clean-up services
 Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Limit lease fee increases**

Objective – support freeze on lease fee increases for five years, to encourage stability, predictability leading to investment

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Reduce application backlog**

Objective – ADNR lease application process completed for all applicants within 1 year

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Allow ADEC data to be visible**

Objective – allow public access to data collected from water sampling & PSP testing that is important for farmers to access (either nearby or new start-ups)

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

Federal Government

Policy

- **Encourage NOAA to hire Aquaculture Coordinator in Alaska Region***

Objective – provide leadership, coordination and support at the federal level for mariculture endeavors in Alaska

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Support Alaska Sea Grant hiring Mariculture Specialist***

Objective – fill the previous position not re-filled after a retirement

Tasks:

Timeline:

Responsible entity:

- **Re-instate the Corps of Engineers general permit for farming**

Objective - Instead of requiring each farmer to obtain individual Corps permits, re-instate general permit for all

Tasks:
Timeline:
Responsible entity:

- **Support revision of marine mammal policy**

Objective – Ensure marine mammal policies are applied consistently and reasonably to protect wildlife and allow mariculture development

Tasks:
Timeline:
Responsible entity:

- **Support certification of new testing labs and methods**

Objective - Enable efficiencies in transportation, test results & potential fee reductions

Tasks:
Timeline:
Responsible entity:

Category: Research

(2 actions)

- **Explore options for implementation of Mariculture Research Center (MRC) concept***

Objective – Adopt a flexible approach to implementation of this concept which takes advantage of timely opportunities related to funding and staffing availability, and can ramp up to the full vision over time as the industry grows.

Tasks:

- Consider the inclusion of the following elements:
 - Entity for research coordination and funding
 - Director of research coordination and funding
 - Research Advisory Body
 - Annual R&D Forum
 - Maintain and annually update lists of research priorities

Timeline:
Responsible entities: MTF, NOAA, University, ASG

- **Support completion of and funding for the identified research priorities**

Objective –

Tasks:
Timeline:
Responsible entity:

*Priority recommendations from comprehensive plan