

Mariculture Regulation Review Stakeholder Team Teleconference

DRAFT Minutes November 25, 2003

The Mariculture Regulatory Review Stakeholder Team met via teleconference on November 25, 2003 at 10 am.

Participants of the team included ADF&G staff: Deputy Commissioner David Bedford, Jackie Timothy, Kyle Herbert, Steve McGee, Ted Meyers, Dave Petree, and Jim Seeb. Members of the Alaska Shellfish Growers Association (ASGA): Bob Hartley, Jeff Hetrick, Stephan LaCroix, and Rodger Painter attended. Other participants included Julie Decker of the Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fishery Association (SARDF), John Agosti of the Qutekcak hatchery, and Paula Terrell. Kathy Hansen of Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAF) attended towards the end of the teleconference.

The team met to discuss ADF&G regulations that deal with shellfish mariculture, management issues, and ways to be more responsive to shellfish farming operations.

Rodger Painter of ASGA stated that he wants regulations that are commensurate with the impacts of mariculture operations. He feels that ADF&G could pair back restrictions and continue to maintain adequate protection. ASGA provided participants with a list of major concerns with ADF&G mariculture regulations. Some of these concerns were addressed.

David Bedford asked whether the list of concerns provided by ASGA was a complete list of the issues they wished to address in the regulations. Rodger Painter replied that it was with the addition of interest expressed by Jeff Hetrick in personal use mariculture or community gardening mariculture.

Stephan LaCroix of ASGA addressed geoduck farming. He expressed the need for better clarity on how the department determines if there is an impact on commercial fisheries, and what it means for an area to be significant.

Jeff Hetrick of ASGA supports the idea of personal use aquaculture, so that private individuals can grow shellfish without it being a commercial venture. Jeff outlined three scenarios he would like the department to consider: 1) allowing an individual to grow shellfish for personal use; 2) allowing municipality enhancement for public use, and; 3) allowing for a "pay for dig" where people pay a fee to dig for shellfish.

David Bedford asked Jeff to provide a memo with more definition on these ideas for ADF&G staff. Jeff agreed to do so.

Jackie Timothy recommended participants read the 2002 Annual Mariculture Report and ADF&G's policy regarding community shellfish restoration and enhancement. She will discuss personal use culture with DEC to see if there are human health concerns.

Rodger Painter recommended that a subgroup work on issues related to shellfish genetics. David Bedford recommended that a subgroup keep the whole group informed on their meetings. A Genetics Subgroup was formed and includes Jim Seeb and John Agosti. Others may be included later [Note from Jackie: Dan Moore added 12/2/03]. They agreed to coordinate their own schedules. Jim Seeb will keep David Bedford informed on progress with the subgroup.

Rodger offered to track down the genetic research information referenced in ASGA's list of concerns and forward it to David.

Julie Decker of SARDFa noted the importance of wild stock while looking at enhancement of geoducks and sea cucumbers.

Bob Hartley of ASGA recommended that the regulations be written so that a person can be certain he/she understands them.

The group agreed to pick one of ASGA's issues and try working it out on the internet. The next meeting was scheduled for December 19 [Note from Jackie: 9:30 am].

David Bedford stated that the department looks forward to working with folks in the shellfish/mariculture business, and although there are some sidebars, feels they can make progress.

Kathy Hansen asked to be included on the e-mail list [seafa@gci.net].

The teleconference ended at 10:45 am.