



Resolution of Support for the Alaska Mariculture Initiative: Phase 2

WHEREAS, in 2014, the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) was awarded a NOAA grant to spearhead the *Alaska Mariculture Initiative* with the goals to broaden the stakeholder base and increase its capacity to be effective, and to develop a strategic plan, inclusive of the various stakeholders and State agencies; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, Governor Walker established the Alaska Mariculture Task Force (Task Force) by [Administrative Order #280](#) as a direct result of this Initiative; and

WHEREAS AO #280 directed the Task Force to submit a comprehensive plan “to develop a viable and sustainable mariculture industry producing shellfish and aquatic plants for the long-term benefit of Alaska’s economy, environment and communities” by March 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the Southeast Conference completed a five-year update of its comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) and included Mariculture Development as one of its priority initiatives; and

WHEREAS, mariculture will enhance economic opportunities for many Southeast Alaska rural communities that are at low to moderate income levels; and

WHEREAS, the initiative has the potential to address SE 2020 Strategic Plan seafood priority objectives; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the State of Alaska received new aquatic farm lease applications which represent a tangible indication of change in perception and the resulting increased interest in the industry; and

WHEREAS, these 2017 aquatic farm applications include fifteen new farms (a 50% increase over the current number of permitted farms), over 1,000 new acres (an increase of 400% over existing permitted acreage), increased average farm size (including four farm sites between 100 and 300 acres), farms located in multiple regions of

the state (from Kodiak to Ketchikan), 7 applications for seaweed (which represents interest in a new species), and the first application submitted by a seafood processing company; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Mariculture Initiative was also effective at coordinating and attracting additional partners and research funding to Alaska for projects critical to developing the industry, including public agencies such as the U.S. Dept. of Energy, Economic Development Administration, and communities, and private entities such as industry, CDQ Groups, and The Native Conservancy (TNC); and

WHEREAS, AFDF has been encouraged by NOAA to submit a full proposal for the Saltonstall Kennedy grant program for a project titled, ***Alaska Mariculture Initiative – Phase 2***, with the overall goal to implement the Governor’s statewide comprehensive plan to expedite the development of the mariculture industry, providing economic, environmental, cultural, and food security benefits to Alaskans.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Southeast Conference supports AFDF’s efforts to implement the Governor’s statewide comprehensive plan to develop the mariculture industry.

Adopted by the Southeast Conference on December 21st, 2017.

Witness by:



Jan Hill
President

Attest:



Robert Venables
Executive Director

Copies to be sent to Governor Walker, Alaska’s Congressional Delegation, Julie Decker, AFDF.