



RESOLUTION of the Board of Directors

Resolution 2021-08: *Support for the passage of Alaska House Bill 115*

Aquatic Farming & Hatchery Site Leases

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) has assembled in a meeting this the 3rd day of March 2021;

WHEREAS, the mariculture industry in Alaska is an approximately \$1.4 million annual industry, and mariculture has the potential to provide more year-round jobs in coastal communities, leading to more diversified and resilient local economies;

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Governor established a Mariculture Task Force and Mariculture Development Plan, with the overarching goal to develop a \$100 million mariculture industry in Alaska within 20 years;

WHEREAS, aquatic farms, including those that produce kelp, oysters, and other shellfish, operate under site leases overseen by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR);

WHEREAS, under current regulations, these leases must be renewed every ten years, through a process that is the same as the initial application process;

WHEREAS, it can take five to eight years for a farm to operate at full capacity, making a ten-year lease with a lengthy renewal process a potential barrier to entry;

WHEREAS, in recent years DNR has seen an exponential increase in lease applications, resulting in delays in the lease renewal process;

WHEREAS, House Bill 115 creates a regulatory framework with which DNR makes aquatic farm lease renewals consistent with other DNR lease renewals, such as those used for agricultural grazing, cabins & lodges, fish processing docks, and hydroelectric facilities;

WHEREAS, the changes proposed in House Bill 115 would allow DNR to renew leases *in good standing* using a process that is estimated to take 90 days;

WHEREAS, the passage of House Bill 115 is key to the continued expansion of mariculture in Alaska and supported by those in the industry;

WHEREAS, JEDC has long supported the emerging mariculture industry in Alaska through various avenues, including the Southeast Alaska Cluster Initiative.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: The Board of Directors of the Juneau Economic Development Council expresses support for the passage of Alaska House Bill 115.

The undersigned hereby certify that the Board of Directors of the Juneau Economic Development Council duly adopted this Resolution on March 3, 2021.

Garrett Schoenberger, JEDC Chairperson

Melissa Kookesh, JEDC Secretary
