

## **Project Summary**

**Applicant Organization:** Yakutat Regional Aquaculture Association

**Project Title:** Yakutat Regional Aquaculture: Project Implementation Utilizing Broodstock Transfer

**Research Priority:** Aquaculture

**Project Location:** Yakutat, Alaska

**Project Period:** September 01, 2016 – September 01, 2018

**Requested Funding:** \$300,000

**Principal Investigator:** Yakutat Regional Aquaculture Association

**Collaborating Partners:** State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, DIPAC, Alaska Hydroscience

**Species Addressed:** (*Oncorhynchus keta*) Chum Salmon

### **Project Description:**

Yakutat, Alaska is a traditional commercial fishing community that has experienced severe economic decline in part due to the decrease of commercial fishing in the area. As of late Yakutat has consistently ranked as the fastest shrinking community in Alaska.

This project would develop the first commercial scale salmon aquaculture project in the Yakutat salmon planning region. The goal of the project is to provide the basis of aquaculture in the Yakutat area allowing for future expansion and development of aquaculture projects resulting in local job creation, production of wild Alaskan salmon for commercial, subsistence, and sport use, and lead to the economic revitalization of Yakutat, Alaska as a traditional fishing community.

In addition to revitalizing Yakutat economy this project will greatly improve the safety of the Yakutat setnet fishery. By creating a terminal harvest area in the protected waters of Yakutat Bay this project will reduce the need for fishermen to operate in the unsafe river mouth and open ocean conditions. The redistribution of fishing effort to safer waters will result in an overall safer and more productive fishery.

In 1974 the State of Alaska created salmon enhancement planning areas and authorized the Department of Fish & Game to issue permits to private non-profit (PNP) salmon hatcheries for the purpose of enhancing the State's common property fisheries. Successful salmon aquaculture projects have been developed in the planning regions

directly surrounding the Yakutat area, a region where no projects have yet to be established. These surrounding projects, some which started in the 1970's, now provide the economic basis for much of the commercial salmon fishing in these areas. Without the advantage of salmon aquaculture projects, the Yakutat area has seen a severe decline in its commercial fishing industry. Since commercial fishing serves as the economic basis for this area, it is now on the brink of economic disaster.

This goal of this project is to incubate, rear, and release 10 million chum salmon in the Yakutat area. Since the Yakutat planning region does not have a significant chum salmon population the broodstock for this project will be sourced from the successful Douglas Island Pink and Chum (DIPAC) aquaculture association located in the planning region directly east of Yakutat. DIPAC has agreed to supply YRAA with 10 million chum salmon eggs for four years to allow for development of a successful local broodstock.

With the great success of the surrounding aquaculture projects, YRAA anticipates that this initial commercial scale project in Yakutat will provide the basis for all future aquaculture projects in the region. In addition to providing commercial, subsistence, and sport salmon directly to the waters of the region, this project will serve as proof of concept for all future projects in Yakutat.