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Benefits of Geoduck Nursery Systems & Predator Exclusion

Pacific Shellfish Institute Quarterly Progress Report

October 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025

Background

The Pacific Shellfish Institute is conducting applied research to support Alaska's mariculture industry, focusing on developing methods and assessing the viability of cultivating geoduck (*Panopea generosa*) under the Southeast Conference Other Mariculture Species grant program.

Project Update

- Geoduck broodstock was collected and delivered to the Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute (APMI) for another spawn.
- The "Alaska Geoduck Nursery Hitlist" living document was updated.
- Literature was compiled and sections of a "Geoduck Knowledge" report were drafted.
- PSI staff attended the Mariculture Conference of Alaska and connected with individuals interested in geoduck farming. There is continued interest from the Metlakatla community based on discussion with members at the conference. Geoduck aquaculture has been attempted on Annette Island, the home of the Metlakatla Indian community, in the past but was abandoned due to predation and other issues. New predation avoidance techniques would likely alleviate most predation pressure. This knowledge was shared again this quarter though conversations with members. Future dissemination will be promoted.
- PSI began to strategize ways to import geoduck seed for future outplants. A list of reliable out-of-state hatcheries was developed for one-on-one follow-up to solicit interest and capacity to navigate importation requirements, and input towards feasible revisions.

Key Milestones

Grower Conference	Participated in the Mariculture Conference of Alaska in Anchorage, connecting with current and prospective Alaska shellfish farmers.
Nursery Hitlist	Updated and shared the living document "Alaska Geoduck Nursery Hitlist" with water quality targets, food type and rate, and tips on successfully raising seed indoors in sand trays.
Broodstock	Another round of broodstock was collected for Alaska based seed production at APMI.

Challenges

The initial shipment of geoduck broodstock was accidentally frozen by the air carrier on its way to Anchorage from Ketchikan. Another collection of broodstock was conducted in early 2026 and successfully delivered to APMI by Tom Caruth.

Due to the low supply of geoduck seed in Alaska, we are now examining the feasibility and interest in out-of-state seed production and are preparing an informational briefing on shellfish seed importation pathways and regulatory considerations for aquatic farming in Alaska.

Ocean's Alaska floating hatchery and nursery is moving to Sitka, in partnership with the Applied Fisheries Program at the University of Alaska Southeast, Sitka campus. The protracted planning process has created some uncertainty surrounding this project. However, we are prepared to travel there for information exchange with prospective geoduck farmers in that area, if interest exists.

Next Steps & Recommendations

1. Continue updating and distributing all summary documents and guidelines for geoduck farmers and nursery operators.
2. Plan for additional nursery and outplant phases later in the year.
3. Solicit information needs from Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) staff and other stakeholders about potential importation of shellfish seed for non-oyster species in Alaska.
4. Solicit and summarize lessons learned from shellfish hatcheries who recently attempted importation of shellfish seed for emerging mariculture species (i.e. Kumamoto and Olympia oysters) to Alaska.

Figure 1. Shellfish farmers showcasing Alaska-grown oysters at the Mariculture Conference of Alaska in Anchorage on March 10, 2026.