

Wi-Fi:

Tlingit and Haida Guest

PW: GunalcheeshHawaa

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Meeting ID:

865 5683 7775

Passcode:

187066

Governance Body Members

Liza Mack, APICDA

Gregg Renkes, Chenega

Richard Peterson, T&H

Marya Halvorsen, Koniag

Thea Thomas, AMA

Jason Lessard, AMA

Heather McCarty, AMA

Markos Scheer, AMA

Cassidi Cameron, KPEDD

Kristin Smith, PWSEDD

Wanetta Ayers, SWAMC

Robert Venables, SEC

Kristy Clement, AFDF

Julie Decker, Seafood Industry



(Scan for Meeting Packet)



Governance Body Meeting Agenda

April 8, 2026, 10:00 AM (Alaska Time)

Andrew Hope Building | Tlingit & Haida Council Chambers

320 W Willoughby Ave, Third Floor

Juneau, AK 99801

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call & Introductions
3. Safety Moment
4. Approval of Agenda
5. [Approval of Minutes](#), January 16, 2026, Governance Body Meeting

Old Business | N/A

New Business

6. Welcome Remarks
7. Regional Liaisons Update | 5 Minutes Each | Written reports for October, November, and December 2025.
 - o 1. [Kenai](#); 2. [PWS](#); 3. [Southeast](#); 4. [SW \(Aleutians\)](#); 5. [SW \(Kodiak\)](#)
8. Review of RFPs Closed & Awarded Since Last Meeting
 - [Mariculture Business Planning Tools](#) – Closed March 2, 2025
 - [Succession Planning](#) – Closed January 23, 2026
9. Project Updates | 15 Minutes on Goals & Metrics
 1. Revolving Loan Fund (SEC, Spruce Root)
 - a. Andrew Jylkka, Spruce Root; Keolani Booth, Native Conservancy, Lindsay Olsen, GreenWave; Garrett Evridge, Seamark;
 2. Governance, Coordination and Outreach (EDDs & AMA)
 3. Workforce Development (UAA, UAF, UAS)
 - a. Ginny Eckert, UAF Alaska Sea Grant

Break for Lunch | Approximately 12:30 PM

4. Research and Development (ADFG, AFDF)
 - a. Chase Jalbert, Alaska Department of Fish & Game
5. Market Development (SEC)
 - a. Katie Goldberg, Tastemaker Comms, and Kate Consenstein, Rising Tide Communications, [AMC Marketing Program](#)
6. Green Energy (AFDF)
7. Equipment and Technology (SEC, DEC)
 - a. Jonny Antoni, Mariculture Innovation Center & Sea Quester Farms
 - b. Eric Wyatt, OceansAlaska
 - c. Mari Fester, UAF (Red Ribbon Seaweed)
 - d. Patryce McKinney, Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation
 - e. [Mariculture Equipment Program Update](#)
8. Grant Administration (SEC)

Other Topics

10. Review of RFPs Issued & Upcoming
 - [Farmer Knowledge Exchange Grant Program 2026](#) – Rolling Basis
 - [Project Management & Grant Administration Consulting](#) – Rolling Basis
11. Upcoming Events
12. Public Comment
13. Next Governance Body meeting tentatively set for July 29, 2026 in Anchorage
14. Good of the Order

ALASKA MARICULTURE CLUSTER (AMC) GOVERNANCE BODY MEETING

SUMMARY FOR GOVERNANCE BODY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026

1. Call to Order

The AMC Governance Body meeting was called to order at 10:01 am on April 8, 2026, by Robert Venables.

2. Roll Call & Introductions

Members Present:

Cassidi Cameron (KPEDD), Gregg Renkes (Chenega), Heather McCarty (AMA), Jason Lessard (AMA), Julie Decker (PSPA), Kristy Clement (AFDF), Marya Halvorsen (Koniag), Ralph Wolfe (CCTHITA), Robert Venables (SEC), Wanetta Ayers (SWAMC),

Non-Governance Body Members Present (In Person):

Dan Lesh (SEC), Charlie Herrington (SEC), Abigail Bromberger (SEC), Stephane Granato (SEC), Jamey Young (SEC), Alex Huller (AFDF), Andrew Jylkka (Spruce Root), Ana Velasquez (CCTHITA), Mari Fester (UAF), Jonny Antoni (Sea Quester Farms).

Non-Governance Body Members Present (Virtual):

Nick Mangini (SWAMC), Molly Dischner (AMA), Missy Good (Alaska Sea Grant), Keolani Booth (Native Conservancy), Maranda Hamme (Southeast Liaison), Karli Tyance Hassell (T&H), Tomi Marsh (OceansAlaska), Lexa Meyer (Kodiak Liaison), Emma Luck (AMA), Sean Den Adel (CRRC), Garrett Evridge (Seamark), Lindsey Hammer (PWSEDD), Jon Bonkowski (EcoTrust), Katie Goldberg (Tastemaker Comms), Chase Jalbert (ADFG), Sara Ebersole (UAS), Chandler Kemp (UAF), Karin St. Clair (SEC), Haley Terpenny (SEC).

3. Safety Moment

Ana Velasquez, T&H and Ralph Wolfe, T&H: gave an overview of the T&H Office.

4. Approval of Agenda

The April 2026 meeting agenda was approved without objection.

5. Approval of Minutes, January 14, 2026

The January 2026 meeting minutes were approved without objection.

Old Business

None.

New Business

6. Alaska Mariculture Alliance (AMA) & Regional Mariculture Liaisons Updates

Kenai Peninsula: Briana Murphy, CRRC

Briana was not able to attend the meeting, but sent the following notes:

- Kenai Peninsula outreach focused on upcoming kelp harvests in Port Graham, Nanwalek, and through the Qutekcak Native Tribe, along with presentations at the Seward Chamber and Kenai Growers Expo.
- The regional liaison supported several mariculture research and development efforts, including the Sea to Sprout product, testing of a new infrared dryer, and planning for spring and summer events with KPEDD.

- Regional investment activity included assistance to prospective applicants, including English Bay Corporation and a Seward resident, as well as a new kelp farm coming online in Seldovia.
- CRRC's Kelp Classic, a shark-tank-style kelp product competition, remains a major focus. Applicants from across the Chugach Region will develop products during the spring and summer, with results expected in late summer or early fall.

Prince William Sound: Sean Den Adel, Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC)

- Sean's recent regional outreach has been primarily focused on coordinating kelp testing and processing using AMC-funded drum dryer equipment, procured by the Prince William Sound Economic Development District (PWSEDD) through the AMC's Mariculture Equipment Program. This involved planning and coordination with PWSEDD, GreenWave, kelp farms, and other project partners with Marine Biologics, Blue Dot Kitchen, and Barnacle Foods.
- PWSEDD has a short-term lease at Silver Bay Seafood's processing facility in Cordova to house the new drum dryer and allow farmers to collectively process kelp locally for the first time. The equipment will be operated by project partners, while Chandler Kemp, leader of AMC's Green Energy in Mariculture (GEM) project, evaluates energy use and drying-cycle costs to support future kelp pricing and business planning.
 - Andrew Jylkka, Spruce Root: noted that Spruce Root may provide financing support, and Dan Lesh shared that SEC recently contracted with GreenWave to support expanding their business-planning work.
 - Lindsey Hammer, PWSEDD: clarified that they're leasing one building of Silver Bay's Cordova plant. Initially, the lease ended in mid-June, but now that Silver Bay won't be processing at all this facility, they have more flexibility.
 - Cassidi Cameron, KPEDD: asked what user model are you using? We're thinking of doing something similar.
 - Lindsey: PWSEDD has hired lead equipment operator. Initially, the plan was to use processing facility staff, but this year Silver Bay shifted all Cordova seafood processing to its Valdez facility. In the future, it would be ideal to use the staff from the processing plant. For now, it will be performed by PWSEDD staff, farmers, interns, apprentices, and project partners.
- Additionally, PWSEDD and project partners were awarded a lease for a Cordova city lot to develop a kelp and seafood processing hub, collaboration between mariculture and seafood industries. This facility would become home to the AMC-funded mariculture equipment awarded to PWSEDD.
- Sean also supported an NVE Tribal member family in establishing the region's newest kelp farm, assisting with permitting, insurance, licensing, contracts, monitoring work near Tatitlek, and access to equipment from research farms.
- Outreach at the Cordova Science Gathering also included connections with NVE intern Dakota and Alaska Sea Grant mariculture apprentices working with Wild Blue Mariculture and Simpson Bay Oyster Company.
- NOAA, CRRC, and Alaska Department of Fish & Game are supporting golden king crab research in Prince William Sound, including studies of ocean acidification impacts and the feasibility of crab enhancement.
- A few farmers mentioned to Sean that they have felt PWS was underfunded. However, there has been quite a bit of AMC funding and feels that it does not accurately represent funding landscape.

Southeast Alaska: Maranda Hamme, Ecotrust

- Maranda has focused on introducing new participants in Southeast Alaska to mariculture, including organizing a Juneau workshop that accepted 15 participants from over 40 applications. Following the workshop, several attendees expressed interest in applying for aquatic farm leases and were connected with Andrew Jylkka and Spruce Root for business-planning assistance.
 - Dan Lesh, SEC: asked whether the workshop would be offered again. Maranda said she is exploring opportunities to host another similar workshop.
- Maranda identified compensation for farmers who host training events as an ongoing challenge, because hosting can take time away from income-generating farm activities.
 - Ana Velasquez, T&H & Jason Lessard, AMA: identified Alaska Sea Grant's Farmer Knowledge Exchange Program and the AMA's Hands-on Farm Training Program as existing levers that help offset this constraint.
- Maranda also assisted an individual she met at the Mariculture Conference of Alaska with the aquatic farm lease application process and connected the Alaska Department of Natural Resources with people interested in learning more about aquatic farm leasing.
- Maranda provided letters of support for a Tribe developing a new oyster-farming cohort and hosting an oyster-farming workshop in Kasaan. To date, she has connected with more than half of the 54 Southeast Alaska entities and communities identified for outreach and plans to contact with more in Sitka, Petersburg, Wrangell, and Hoonah.

- Maranda noted that interest has been substantially stronger in oyster farming than seaweed farming, with only two individuals expressing interest in seaweed. Because direct funding opportunities are currently limited, she recommended emphasizing the educational and training resources available to prospective farmers.

Southwest Alaska (Aleutians): Shanoy Anderson, Qawalangin Tribe, reporting for Calvin George

- Shanoy shared that Calvin lost his contacts list due to technical difficulties and is working on reestablishing connections.
- Jason mentioned that there is movement to put together a Mariculture 101 training, similar to the one Maranda helped with in Juneau, that would bring community members to Kodiak for an immersive, multi-day knowledge sharing experience.

Southwest Alaska (Kodiak): Lexa Myer, Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute (KALI)

- Lexa reported that substantial funding has been allocated to the Kodiak region. As the AMC grant enters its final year, regional partners are focused on completing projects, purchasing equipment, and fully allocating remaining funds.
- Major AMC equipment investments include a FLUPSY (floating upweller system) for the Native Village of Larsen Bay to development oyster farming, as well as an assortment of seaweed processing equipment for the Sun'aq Tribe's Kelp Primary Processing Platform (KP3).
- Additionally, KP3 secured a grant from the Rasmuson Foundation to support construction of the building that will house the equipment, although additional funding is still needed.
- Lexa recognized Nick Mangini and Alaska Sea Grant for assistance in creating the Hands-on Farm Training project awarded to the Kodiak Ocean Growers cooperative group, which places interns with mariculture farms throughout the Kodiak region.
- KALI is actively seeking funding through a Alaska South Coast Partnership grant opportunity to support rural and Tribal communities' continued participation in mariculture, with goals related to food security, subsistence, and commercial development. Potential projects include harmful algal bloom testing, workforce training, laboratory certification, commercial shellfish testing, and shore-based cultivation of dulse and red ribbon seaweed.
- KALI's annual Rural Regional Leadership Forum has included substantial mariculture programming in previous years, and KALI plans to continue incorporating mariculture into future forums.

7. Review of RFPs/RFQs closed and awarded since last meeting

Mariculture Equipment Round #3 – Closed November 14, 2025

- Update covered in Dan Lesh's update within Component #7: Equipment & Technology

Joint Innovation Projects Round #3 – Closed December 12, 2025

- Update covered in Alex Huller's update within Component #4: Research & Development

8. Project Updates (15 minutes on goals, metrics)

Component #1. Revolving Loan Fund

SEC, Spruce Root

RLF Collateral Support Updates: Jamey Young, SEC; Robert Venables, SEC

- Jamey reported that SEC recently received the first interest payment from a certificate of deposit supporting a loan funded through the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), marking the beginning of the fund's revolving activity. Two loans have been booked and are now generating returns: an \$800,000 loan supported by RLF collateral assistance and a second loan of \$268,000. Spruce Root and Northrim Bank are the two participating lending institutions, and others are welcome to become involved. Approximately 15% of the RLF's roughly \$8 million corpus has been deployed to date. Jamey emphasized the need to increase lending activity and encouraged partners to help spread the word that the RLF is actively making loans.
- Cassidi asked what the loan timeline is (from receipt of loan application). Jamey responded that realistically, it may take around 6 weeks to 2 months, contingent on seasonal busy cycles for banks.
- Robert flagged that the first loan in a new program is always the longest. With subsequent loans, it will depend heavily on the applicant's own preparation and loan readiness, which is why we have a very robust set of free business planning resources through Spruce Root, and now GreenWave, both of whom we will hear from later in the meeting. Robert added

that the first loan that we were able to approve was for Alaska Naive partners, which is where we want to see as much investment as possible.

Mariculture Business Planning Tools: Andrew Jylkka, Spruce Root

- Andrew provided an overview of Spruce Root's mariculture business services, which include education and training, planning tools, and one-on-one business development support. Additional information is available [online](#) and with this program [flyer](#). Andrew is also developing an oyster-specific flyer.
- Spruce Root's primary financial support for mariculture businesses is provided through the Alaska Mariculture Cluster Revolving Loan Fund, with the Healthy Food Financing Initiative also available as a resource. All Spruce Root services are free and are not limited to businesses seeking loans.
- Heather asked whether Spruce Root's business-planning services are available to hatcheries and processors as well as farms. Andrew confirmed that the services are open to all types of mariculture businesses.

Mariculture Business Planning Tools: Lindsay Olsen, GreenWave

- GreenWave recently contracted with SEC through the Mariculture Business Planning Tools RFP to expand its existing business and financial planning work statewide, building on past success working with seaweed farmers in Kodiak and Cordova. The effort grew from farmers' need to understand the cost of producing a pound of kelp so they can set prices that support profitability.
- GreenWave is developing a customizable Cost of Production Analysis tool focused on two key drivers of farm profitability: increasing yields and reducing costs. GreenWave will meet individually with farmers to adapt the tool to each farm's operations and how each farmer approaches their business. These individual meetings and cost analyses help inform price negotiations with buyers.
- GreenWave is also developing tools, including Average Cost Modeling metrics, that provide anonymized cost ranges and aggregate data so the industry is better understood and so farmers can compare their performance with similar businesses.

Immersion Training Program: Keolani Booth, Native Conservancy

- Keolani reported that Native Conservancy provided four kelp farming immersion training courses in Kake and Metlakatla in 2024 and 2025. Training covered the kelp farming lifecycle, farm gear, ocean monitoring, and community capacity building, while connecting participants with Spruce Root, AMA, and regional mariculture liaisons. Native Conservancy also supported NAUI dive certifications for nine people across Kake and Metlakatla.
- Beyond the workshops, the organization is revising some equipment plans in response to tariffs and navigating internal staff transitions, while equipment work in Cordova continues to progress steadily.
- Dan asked about the pathway for transitioning Native Conservancy-led aquatic farm leases into operating farms. Keolani said Native Conservancy is working with Nautical Marine on several farm projects and that identifying funding is currently the primary need. He also noted that participants with experience in halibut fisheries may be particularly well positioned to transition into mariculture.

Component #2. Governance, Coordination & Outreach

AMA, KPEDD, PWSEDD, SEC, SWAMC, Governance Body Members

AMA: Jason Lessard, Executive Director

- [The presentation recording is available online.](#)
- In February, AMA hosted the Alaska Mariculture Legislative Reception in Juneau with over 100 attendees.
- In March at the Mariculture Conference of Alaska (MCOA) in Anchorage, AMA hosted a harmful algal blooms (HABs), Vibrio, and cold-chain best practices workshop attended by more than 40 people. This event, which was funded by AMA's AMC-funded Hands-on Farm Training project, was video recorded and will be published on YouTube as an online training resource. Also, during MCOA, AMA hosted a first-ever Mariculture Nerd Nite, which was a fantastic and well attended awareness-raising event.
- Through the Mariculture Incentive Grant Program (MIGP), AMA has awarded 60 grants to 38 Alaska mariculture businesses between 2023 and 2026. Jason noted that the awards were not distributed evenly across the regions because AMA prioritized project feasibility rather than equal geographic distribution.

- AMA is redesigning its website, as well as a consumer-facing Alaska Mariculture branded website, which will incorporate newly developed assets and a media library for use by industry partners. AMA has also contracted for the development of a crisis communications plan and is currently reviewing draft materials.

SWAMC: Nick Mangini, Mariculture Director

- Nick reported that SWAMC attended Aquaculture America and continues to support the KP3 project, which is currently underway. Additionally, SWAMC attended the MCOA and then hosted one of its keynote speakers, Vincent Doumeizel, as well as representatives from Pew Trust, in Kodiak, helping generate new ideas and valuable partnerships.
- Nick is helping Nautical Marine develop a training course through the Kodiak Ocean Grower's (KOG) AMC-funded Hands-on Farm Training project.
- SWAMC is also exploring ways to support farmers who are expected to harvest more seaweed in summer 2026 than they currently have purchase orders from committed buyers. The gap is largely due to Cascadia Seaweed informing farmers that they aren't able to commit to what they originally pledged to purchase.
- SWAMC hosted approximately 90 third-grade students in Kodiak to teach them about kelp farming.

KPEDD: Cassidi Cameron, Executive Director

- Cassidi reported that the KPEDD is preparing to host its annual Industry Outlook Forum in Seward later this month. AMA's Jason Lessard, Kenai Peninsula's Liaison Briana Murphy, and a Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC) manager will present project goals, updates, and next steps.
- KPEDD is working with Kachemak Kelp on AMC Mariculture Equipment awards. A shredder has been delivered to the site, and the partners are now working to install it and make it operational.
- KPEDD is also supporting outreach event activations this summer, including Harbor Fest and Salmon Fest.

PWSEDD: Kristin Smith, Executive Director – Lindsay Hammer, Program Manager

- Kristin and Lindsey expressed excitement about the collaborative work advancing PWSEDD's mariculture equipment project.
- PWSEDD is preparing for the upcoming harvest season by moving equipment into the processing facility and awaiting the arrival of several remaining pieces. Technical specialists will assist with calibrating the air-handling system, and PWSEDD is also working with Chandler Kemp to estimate the equipment's energy use.

SEC: Robert Venables, Executive Director & Dan Lesh, Deputy Director

- Strategic investment remains critically important, and the recent increase in both funding and industry capacity has had a meaningful impact on mariculture development.
- SEC will host a table at the Juneau Maritime Festival in May, offer information and free kelp and oyster products samples alongside Sea Quester Farm, Salty Lady Seafood, and additional regional oyster farmers and partners.

Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (T&H): Ralph Wolfe, Director of Indigenous Stewardship Programs

- Ralph reported that T&H participated in an Aquaculture Opportunity Area (AOA) mapping workshop.
- T&H is planning its annual Tribal Environmental Forum for August 2026.
 - SEC offered to increase its involvement and support for the upcoming forum.

Heather McCarty: Governance Body Member, AMA

- Heather reported that the St. Paul king crab hatchery project is progressing well. She also expressed appreciation for the Hands-on Farm Training workshop hosted by OceansAlaska in Ketchikan and for the opportunity to send two hatchery staff members to participate.

Julie Decker: Governance Body Member, Pacific Seafood Processors Association

- Julie expressed appreciation for Eric's presentation and recognized the work of OceansAlaska, UAS, and the other partners involved. She noted that this progress reflects a vision many participants have worked towards for a long time. Julie also

appreciated the positive tone of the meeting and observed that many elements of the AMC original vision are now coming together.

Greg Renkes: Governance Body Member, Chenega Corporation

- Greg asked for additional information about a comment included in the Prince William Sound Liaison Reports about industry members feeling underrepresented. Sean replied that that sentiment is no longer prevailing.

Component #3. Workforce Development

UAF, UAS, UAA-PWSC, SEC

Hands-on Farm Training Program: SEC

- Jason Lessard, AMA: During MCOA in Anchorage, AMA Hands-On Farm Training hosted a HABS, Vibrio & Cold Chain Best Practices workshop with over 40 attendees and more follow-up expected.
- Eric Wyatt, OceansAlaska: [presentation recording is available online](#). Eric presented about the Shellfish Hatchery Hands-On Training Workshop held in late March and other OceanAlaska activities. The workshop was highly successful, and Ketchikan Public Utilities also sent a film crew at the last minute to document the workshop. Eric also highlighted OceanAlaska's floating barge facility's use of continuous culture to grow microalgae, describing it as cutting-edge technology that is valuable for training the future mariculture workforce. He noted that the work contributes to a more reliable and resilient seed supply in Alaska. As Sara Ebersole noted in the UAS Workforce Development update, the process of relocating the floating facility to Sitka is underway.

University of Alaska Fairbanks / Alaska Sea Grant: Melissa Good, UAF

- Melissa Good, UAF: [presentation recording is available online](#). Melissa reported that UAF and Alaska Sea Grant supported a range of workshops and events, including the macroalgae session at Aquaculture America, a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points workshop, the Introduction to Mariculture workshop in Juneau, which Maranda updated on previously, the Mariculture Conference of Alaska, a Seaweed Processing and Product Development Needs Workshop attended by approximately 70 people, and an oyster hatchery training.
- Recent publications and educational resources include the Kelp Nursery Manual, Meet the Farmer video, Oyster Farming Manual, Kelp Farm Operations Manual, and Salty Interview Sessions. The team is also developing a manual for tank-based cultivation of Pacific dulse.
- Upcoming opportunities include a Seaweed Handling and Processing Workshop and the Kodiak Kelp Festival in June, a Kelp Nursery Workshop in August, SCUBA Open Water Certification in September, and Oyster Farming 101 in December.
- All positions in the Mariculture Summer Apprenticeship Program have been filled. Missy noted that the program could not fund every request, demonstrating strong demand and a continued need for similar workforce opportunities.
- The Farmer Knowledge Exchange Grant Program remains open through July 31 and is available to nursery and hatchery operators, farmers, and processors.

University of Alaska Southeast: Sara Ebersole, UAS

- Sara Ebersole, UAS: reported a productive spring with strong student engagement. Twenty-four students enrolled in Introduction to Mariculture, and 12 students enrolled in Shellfish Farming and Hatchery Techniques.
- UAS is continuing to organize workshops and trainings, recruit for the Alaska Aquaculture Semester, and develop a water-safety course with the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA) and Alaska Sea Grant. A few spaces remain available in the Alaska Aquaculture Semester.
- Sara and Angie Bowers also presented on UAS mariculture and workforce development at several events. Angie presented at Aquaculture America, UAS participated in Sitka's annual State of the Sound event, and both Angie and Sara presented at the MCOA, which included strong participation from Alaska Aquaculture Semester alumni.
- The Oyster Hatchery Workshop, held March 31 through April 2, which was also discussed in Eric Wyatt's presentation, included 12 participants and covered topics ranging from microalgae production to Alaska-specific oyster-farming methods. Sara described the workshop as highly successful and noted that a report would be released.

Component #4. Research and Development

AFDF, ADFG, SEC

Joint Innovations Projects (JIP) Program: Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF)

- Alex Huller, AFDF: JIP Round #3 funded nine projects up to \$50,000 each. Additional information about the funded projects is available on the AFDF website, AMC website, and AMC Airtable Database. All contracts are signed and project activities take place between September and November.

De-Risking Mariculture Investments Program: AFDF

- Alex Huller, AFDF: Kelson Marine's modeling project is progressing. Staff presented on the project at the Mariculture Conference of Alaska and participated in the Aquaculture Opportunity Area (AOA) workshop. Kelson Marine's contract will be extended through December to continue testing its predictive models against data from active National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) sensors, with the goal of improving model accuracy.

Seaweed Tissue Analysis: AFDF

- Alex Huller, AFDF: reported that statewide averages from the 2025 seaweed tissue analysis data have been published, and each participating farmer received individualized results for their samples. Updated polysaccharide data are not yet available, but AFDF is preparing the information for public release.

Seaweed Population Genetics Program: Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG)

- Chase Jalbert, ADFG: provided an update on the Seaweed Population Genetics Program, including a revised project timeline. The project began with DNA extraction, which is particularly challenging for kelp, and is examining genetic structure across multiple species and geographic locations. After receiving sequencing data, the team used a high-performance computing cluster to conduct its analysis. Chase reported that an average of approximately 70% of the sequence data successfully mapped to reference genomes, exceeding expectations and indicating promising data quality. He also shared preliminary results for individual kelp species.
- A new round of DNA extraction is underway, with samples expected to be sent for sequencing soon. Results are anticipated by the end of May, allowing the next phase of analysis to begin during the summer. Chase noted that the project is making good overall progress.

Kelp Agricultural Product Development & Testing: SEC

- Progress continues, reports are uploaded to the AMC website's [Kelp Agriculture Product Development & Testing program webpage](#).

Component #5. Market Development

SEC

Scientific Consulting Related to Heavy Metals

- Stephane Granato, SEC: reported that work related to petitioning for California Proposition 65 exemption is underway with a California-based contractor who has extensive experience with the policy. SEC is coordinating with AFDF and Dr. Umanzor at UAF to use data from the 2025 Seaweed Tissue Analysis project and collect additional seaweed and water samples for testing. The goal is to continue building a case for a naturally occurring exemption under Proposition 65.

AMC Marketing Program: AMA, SEC

- Katie Goldberg, Tastemaker Comms: provided an update on recent AMC Marketing Program activities. [The presentation recording is available online](#).
- The Shuck & Tell event, hosted the day before the MCOA in Anchorage, created several hours of meaningful engagement among farmers, guests, and media, and additional stories are currently in development. The Marketing Program is exploring opportunities to replicate the event in other markets.
- At Seafood Expo North America (SENA) in Boston, the program hosted the first booth dedicated to showcasing Alaska Mariculture using the new industry branding. Katie reported productive conversations with prospective buyers, distributors, and reporters.

- Through GreenWave's Kelp Co-Lab product development initiative, an editor from BeautyMatter is scheduled to visit Juneau later in April. The Marketing Program is also planning three familiarization trips to Cordova, Juneau, and Ketchikan/Prince of Wales.
- Heather, AMA: asked whether prospective partners have pushed back on the higher prices of Alaska products. Katie said they have not, explaining that the program strategically targets partners that are accustomed to paying a premium for high-quality products.
- Robert, SEC: asked how quickly farmers should expect to see increased sales from the marketing work. Katie emphasized the importance of gathering feedback directly from farmers and noted that another farmer panel is planned to collect additional sales information.
- Karli, T&H: asked about follow-up on partnerships with Alaska Native organizations. Katie described plans to incorporate Alaska Native storytelling into the upcoming familiarization trips. Robert reinforced the importance of the question, and Katie said the program would prioritize those partnerships.
- Cassidi, KPEDD: asked how marketing momentum could be sustained and how economic development districts could remain involved. Charlie discussed plans to develop shareable AMC marketing materials, including banners and merchandise, and noted that the Marketing Program has been extended for several months beyond December 2026.
- Robert, SEC: asked about connecting marketing activities with existing supply chains. Katie said this remains challenging and depends in part on which farmers already have distribution systems in place. The program is focusing on areas where those systems exist, although some farmers are willing to travel or take additional steps to complete their supply chains.

Component #6. Green Energy

AFDF

Green Energy in Mariculture (GEM) Program: AFDE, UAF

- Chandler Kemp, UAF: [presentation recording is available online](#). Chandler reported that the Bethel team is preparing a paper for submission in May documenting travel to farms and an economic analysis of electric outboard motors.
- The team is also developing a second paper that will incorporate seafood processor energy loads and examine opportunities to manage dockside electricity use without overloading local grids or incurring unnecessarily high demand charges. Both papers will become chapters in a broader Green Energy in Mariculture Plan scheduled for release in the fall.
- On the processing side, the program is modeling the significant energy demands associated with methods such as drying and blanching and evaluating opportunities to incorporate green energy.
- Chandler is working with PWSEDD's Lindsey Hammer to install a three-phase electric power meter on the new AMC-funded dryer in Cordova. The meter will provide data to support analysis of the dryer's energy use.
- Calvin George, who has been assisting the GEM project through his capacity with UAF, completed his contract last month, including a literature review.

Component #7. Equipment & Technology

DEC, SEC

Mariculture Equipment Program: SEC

- Dan Lesh, SEC: reported that a broader Mariculture Equipment Program update is [included in the meeting packet](#). Approximately 14% of the program's equipment funding has been reimbursed to date. With Round III funding now fully allocated, SEC is shifting its focus to completing equipment purchases and processing reimbursements. Most equipment purchases are either under review by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) or being prepared for EDA review. Dan clarified that the primary delays occur during the approval and documentation steps that precede reimbursement, rather than during SEC's reimbursement process.
- Jonny Antoni, Mariculture Innovation Center (MIC): presented about the MIC, which received a Round #3 equipment award, intends to address industry barriers by providing a physical space for the development of mariculture projects. [The presentation recording is available online](#). MIC is currently focused on market and hatchery development and is prioritizing flexible infrastructure that can support the development of a wide variety of mariculture products. Processing activities will be divided between wet- and dry-processing areas. For hatchery development, Jonny highlighted GreenWave's containerized hatchery as an exciting and useful tool. MIC also plans to showcase Alaska mariculture through marketing campaigns and tourism. The organization is currently exploring partnerships for dockside processing infrastructure that could provide visitors with opportunities to see mariculture processing firsthand.

Kelp Seed Quality Improvement Program: SEC

- Progress continues, reports are uploaded to the AMC website's [Kelp Seed Quality Improvement Program webpage](#).

Feasibility Studies: SEC

- Progress continues, reports are uploaded to the AMC website's [Feasibility Studies program webpage](#).

Other Mariculture Species: SEC

- Progress continues, reports are uploaded to the AMC website's [Other Mariculture Species program webpage](#).
- Mari Fester, UAF: presented about the Pacific Dulse/Red Ribbon Seaweed Project. [The presentation recording is available online](#). The project is investigating spore-based propagation, a novel approach for Pacific dulse, with the goal of developing optimal hatchery protocols for spore release and ocean cultivation. Pacific dulse is currently grown primarily in land-based systems, and its complex lifecycle and reproductive system present challenges for cultivation. The team has conducted outplanting trials in Juneau and Cordova and collected preliminary data. Next steps include delaying growth and fertility to improve the timing of outplanting and determining the optimal seeding density. The team has also collected native seaweed samples but has not yet compared the cultivated seaweed with wild populations. Mari noted the species' market potential, referring to Pacific dulse as the "bacon of the seaweed world."
- Jonny Antoni, Sea Quester Farms: presented an update on the split kelp Other Species project, which is testing three triplicates over two years. [The presentation recording is available online](#). The team planted and trimmed the 2025 lines and is now evaluating second-year growth on the same line. Second-year split kelp growth is approximately three times greater than first-year growth, meaning the project may be able to harvest earlier than anticipated. As a perennial species, the kelp grew back much more strongly than expected following the first year's trimming.

Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) Testing Method Development: Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

- Patryce McKinney, DEC: [presentation recording is available online](#). Patryce provided an overview of DEC's operational goals and the testing methods currently available through the agency. Patryce also reviewed the equipment purchased with AMC funding, including a liquid chromatography–tandem mass spectrometry system. The project pivoted to DST testing in the fall, and DEC is currently coordinating with a Florida agency conducting similar work.

Component #8. Grant Administration

Grant Administration: SEC

- Dan Lesh, SEC: overviewed AMC investments and spending to date by grant component area, highlighting efforts underway and planned to ensure grant funding is fully utilized before the end of the grant period.

Grant Evaluation: Ecotrust

- Evaluation project will resume in late summer 2026.

Other Topics

9. Review of RFPs & Contracts

Business Planning RFP – Closed March 2, 2026

- Closed, spoke about that earlier with GreenWave. Working with another contractor as well but will announce when that contract is signed.

Succession Planning RFP – Closed January 23, 2026

- SEC has selected a contractor and is working on refining scope. Interested in hearing more about what Governance Body wants out of the process, trying to design an iterative process. More interested in action that comes out of succession plan than plan itself, and most effective is identifying private investment.

10. Upcoming Events

[Juneau Maritime Festival](#) | Juneau, AK | May 9, 2026

[ComFish](#) | Kodiak, AK | April 16 – 18, 2026

[Harbor Fest](#) | Homer, AK | June 5 – 6, 2026

[Kodiak Kelp Fest](#) | Kodiak, AK | June 16 – 21, 2026

[Salmon Fest](#) | Ninilchik, AK | July 31 – August 2, 2026

[Kelp Classic](#) | Seward, AK | Submissions Due August 15, 2026

11. Public Comment

- None

12. Next Governance Body

The next Governance Body meeting will be in Anchorage and is scheduled for July 29, 2026.

The following meeting will also be in Anchorage and is tentatively set for October 14, 2026*.

**Note the October meeting has since been reschedule to November 4, 2026.*

13. Good of the order

14. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:33 PM.