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Governor Walker Announces Members of the Alaska Mariculture Task Force

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PRESS RELEASE - Juneau – Governor Bill Walker announced the newly appointed members of the Alaska Mariculture Task Force. The eleven-member Task Force held its first meeting on June 1st, 2016, to begin its work to develop a viable and sustainable mariculture industry consisting of shellfish and aquatic plants.

“Each of the Task Force members brings unique experiences and knowledge to the challenge of growing this new industry. The Task Force will represent interests of Alaskans from the Aleutian Islands to Southeast Alaska,” said Governor Walker. “These Alaskans are committed to finding solutions to hurdles in the development of mariculture for the long-term benefit of Alaska’s economy, environment and communities.”

Governor Walker signed Administrative Order 280 on February 29, 2016, establishing the Alaska Mariculture Task Force, setting the guiding principles for the Task Force’s work, and directing the Task Force to present recommendations for a comprehensive plan to him by March 1, 2018.

“Mariculture represents a tremendous opportunity to grow and diversify our state’s economy, strengthen our coastal communities, and provide healthy food to the world by using sustainable practices that are a foundation of our current fishery management practices,” said Governor Walker.

The Alaska Mariculture Task Force consists of the following eleven members (*need summary paragraph for each*):

- Chris Hladick of Unalaska (Commissioner, Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development)
- Sam Rabung of Juneau (Mariculture Director?, Alaska Department of Fish and Game)
- Paula Cullenberg of Anchorage (Director, Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program)
- Dr. Michael Stekoll of Juneau (Professor, University of Alaska Southeast)
- Julie Decker of Wrangell (Executive Director, Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation)
- Angel Drobnica of Juneau (???, Aleutian and Pribilof Island Community Development Association)
- Jeff Hetrick of Moose Pass (Manager, Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery)
- Heather McCarty of Juneau (representative, Central Bering Sea Fishermen’s Association)
- Kate Sullivan of Ketchikan (Executive Director, Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association)
- Chris Whitehead of Sitka (Environmental Program Manager, Sitka Tribe)
- Eric Wyatt of Edna Bay (aquatic farmer, Blue Star Oysters)