

COOK INLET AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2005 - 2010

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1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Statement of Intent:

This strategic plan articulates in broad strokes the direction the Board of Directors has deemed appropriate and productive for the Association and the set of priorities the Board has identified as pivotal to moving the Association in that desired direction.

The direction and priorities are further detailed in a statement of specific goals and the most likely objectives that, when implemented, will result in the achievement of those goals.

This plan incorporates policy, fiscal and personnel objectives and tactics intended to function as checks and balances that will keep the day-to-day affairs of the Association consistent with the approved long-range direction and priorities.

Statement of Strategic Plan Structure:

This strategic plan is supported by numerous related documents including but not limited to annual program and financial reports issued by CIAA and assorted project reports including but not limited to annual hatchery management reports. This plan does not include the detailed contents of all of its supporting documents for two basic reasons.

First, the orientation of the plan is forward. The particulars of the Association's history are relevant in this document only to the degree they directly influence the establishment of new policies and the identification of new objectives, and in that case reference may be made in a summary fashion.

Second, for the plan to be most productive for the volunteer Board members it has been made sufficiently lean and direct to be easily understood and referenced.

Statement of Strategic Plan Content:

The strategy is to establish objectives in eight broad categories of Association activity and identify the tactics which may be employed to achieve those objectives.

Four of the eight basic activity categories in this plan deal with what may be broadly described as administrative operations.

The first of these administrative categories is entitled "Administration - Purposes of the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association" and serves as the introduction to the organization.

The second category is entitled "Administration - Finance", and it describes the nature and sources of the organization's revenue stream.

The third category is entitled "Administration - Human Relations", and it addresses the policies governing performance and responsibilities of both volunteer Board members and paid staff.

The final administrative category is entitled "Administration - Public Relations", and it covers the method and content of the Association's interface with the broader community.

The remaining four activity categories address project work carried out by the Association.

The first project category is entitled "Projects - Habitat and Self-sustaining Salmon Production". It describes the maintenance of salmon habitat and the overall strength of the existing resource.

The final three project categories are entitled "Projects - Trail Lakes Hatchery", "Projects - Eklutna Hatchery" and "Projects - Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery". Each of these describes the stewardship and operation of the named facility.

Within each of these eight segments there is an examination of the history and current status of the work, a presentation of the objectives and identification of the suggested tactics.

2.0 ADMINISTRATION - PURPOSES OF THE COOK INLET AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION

Background:

The Association first expressed its organizational purpose in its articles of incorporation in 1976 where it said quite simply it was forming to engage in aquaculture and activities in furtherance of aquaculture. In this context aquaculture was understood to pertain only to anadromous Pacific salmon.

The purpose was refined into a mission statement in 1990, and that mission was supported by a set of goals.

In this strategic planning process relatively minor adjustments have been made to both the mission statement and the set of goals. They now read as follows.

Mission: Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association is a nonprofit regional association which exists to: (1) protect self-sustaining salmon stocks and habitats upon which they depend; (2) rehabilitate self-sustaining salmon stocks; (3) rehabilitate salmon habitat; and (4) maximize the value of the Cook Inlet (Area H) common property salmon resource by applying science and enhancement technology where appropriate.

Goals: To accomplish this mission the Board of Directors of Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association will:

Seek protection of salmon habitat through active participation (testimony, committee work, data input, etc.) in planning, permitting and enforcement processes.

Conduct salmon rehabilitation and enhancement projects which can be expected to significantly contribute to common property fishery harvests. An average harvest rate of 50% in the common property fishery is the acceptable standard for "significant contribution". This standard does not apply during project development or to projects designed solely for cost recovery harvest.

Conduct evaluation activities which increase the effectiveness of project implementation.

Engage in research which advances the state of enhancement/rehabilitation technology.

Be sensitive to the interests of those harvesting the Area H common property salmon resource.

Educate the public about the salmon resource and the mission, goals and projects of the Association.

Maintain the highest standards of financial responsibility and accountability for the funds entrusted to it.

Maintain facilities, administrative practices and personnel policies which require and encourage its staff to perform in a safe, professional and cost-effective manner.

Comply with all statutes and regulations governing private nonprofit aquaculture association activities in the State of Alaska.

Participate, within the limits for tax-exempt corporations, in the development of legislation and regulation relevant to attainment of the mission.

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to declare the high value it places on credible performance.
- to acknowledge its full accountability for its programs.
- to affirm the importance of education in resource stewardship.
- to commit to serve the resource and the community responsibly.
- to continue its commitment to service to the greater Cook Inlet community.

Tactics - The Association should:

- develop cooperative relationships with other enterprises, agencies and organizations with compatible missions to maximize the benefits of efforts expended in behalf of the resource.

- be certain the public statements and reports about its programs and projects are complete and accurate.
- continue to recognize it is in the Association's best interest and supportive of its overall mission to foster educational efforts whenever possible because successful stewardship of the salmon resource depends in large part on a well-informed public.
- retain the commitment to service to the fisheries resources and human population of the greater Cook Inlet community where it originated and where its efforts have historically been directed.
- operate in a manner that recognizes that essentially all of the activities associated with the enhancement or rehabilitation of the salmon resource are long-term, and this dictates that the Association must place a high priority on its ability to remain sustainable.

3.0 ADMINISTRATION - FINANCE

Background:

The four major revenue sources upon which the Association depends for its annual operation are the salmon enhancement tax, cost-recovery harvest of a portion of the supplemental production generated by the Association, grant funds and contract fish production. The Directors understand that significant elements of each of these revenue streams are out of the control of the Association.

The magnitude of the enhancement tax is dependent upon the size of the return, the degree to which fishermen are allowed to harvest those fish and the price they are paid for those fish. The revenue generated by cost recovery harvests also depends on the size of the return and the price which is paid. The availability of grant funds is dictated by the granting source and the volume of competing applicants. The opportunities for the Association and an acceptable project sponsor to agree to a fish production contract are quite limited and subject to the funds available to the potential sponsor and the sponsor's ability to secure the necessary permits.

With recognition of the fact that proportions will vary from year-to-year, it is the Association's intent to strive for a long-term balance of approximately 25% of annual revenue from each of the four sources. The Association must continue to refine and expand its new revenue-generating program until it provides the required support and is predictable.

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to develop new income streams through State funding of projects, contracts for stocking projects and grants.
- to assure that no new project will be developed without first identifying long-term funding and no common property

harvest should be allowed until the project has recovered all the funds necessary for its development and designated a dependable source for the funds necessary for its operation.

- to reduce CIAA's debt load.

Tactics - The Association should:

- establish a cost recovery harvest that, on average, generates approximately 25 percent of the Association's budgeted expenses annually.
- develop a cost recovery project in Upper Cook Inlet.
- continue to increase revenue from contract fish production by maintaining current contracts with Seward and Homer; developing similar proposals for contract fish production for presentation to Anchorage, Wasilla and Palmer and other communities; and entertaining such requests from other responsible entities.
- secure grant funded projects that annually provide, on average, approximately 25 percent of the Association's budgeted expenditures.
- pay off its two oldest loans totaling \$306,420 plus deferred interest by 2010.

4.0 ADMINISTRATION – HUMAN RELATIONS

Background:

CIAA is overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors dedicated to the salmon resources of Cook Inlet. To translate that dedication into an effective organization with meaningful programs the Board employs a staff that strives to meet its responsibilities in a professional and efficient manner.

Objectives - The Association wants:

- the Board of Directors to remain well informed about issues relevant to the salmon resource and the actions of their staff.
- the staff to maintain high professional standards.

Tactics - The Association should:

- provide an annual professional training program for each regular full-time employee.
- maintain affiliation with a consulting group such as the Foraker Group that specializes in the management and leadership of non-profit organizations.
- provide salmon enhancement information to the members of the Board of Directors through the web site.
- secure at least one professional presentation to the Board of Directors each year.

5.0 ADMINISTRATION – PUBLIC RELATIONS

Background:

The core of CIAA's public relations activities have been the publication of the SMOLTS newsletter and the Annual Report and making our meeting room available to resource-related groups at no cost.

During the decade from the mid-1980's to the mid-1990's the Association also attended and had displays at outdoor shows in Anchorage and Soldotna, the State Fair in Ninilchik and Palmer and at other venues as the opportunities presented themselves. This type of effort was discontinued as a cost-cutting measure in the mid-1990's.

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to continue to regularly produce and distribute the SMOLTS newsletter and Annual Report.
- to continue to update and improve the services offered by and the user effectiveness of the meeting room.
- to finish developing and maintain an informative web site.
- to develop informational brochures for the projects.

Tactics - The Association should:

- update the production and printing of the SMOLTS newsletter.

- replace the meeting room "chalk" boards with dry erase boards.
- purchase a conference phone system for the meeting room.
- transfer the web site to a more user-friendly system and provide training to the staff on its use.
- develop an educational pamphlet that describes CIAA activities and accomplishments for distribution to school and other tour groups that visit Trail Lakes Hatchery.
- develop a program to annually award a scholarship to a student from Area H.

6.0 PROJECTS – HABITAT AND SELF-SUSTAINING FISH PRODUCTION

Background:

CIAA has historically recognized the importance of maintaining and improving salmon habitat and self-sustaining fish populations through its efforts to provide adequate flows through migration corridors, removal of seasonal barriers to fish migration, construction of spawning channels and fish ladders and implementation of fish habitat projects in cooperation with other resource agencies

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to implement at least one project per year that improves salmon habitat in the Cook Inlet basin.
- to continue to annually monitor at least four streams in Upper Cook Inlet for seasonal migration barriers and modify the barriers as needed.
- to continue to operate four flow control structures to assist salmon migration.
- to bring the Paint River fish ladder into operation.

Tactics - The Association should:

- complete the cooperative effort with the Kenai Watershed Forum and where possible initiate such efforts with similar organizations to identify priority habitat projects.
- annually fund and operate flow control structures at Daniel's, Packer's, Bear and Marten lakes.
- annually fund and conduct aerial surveys of Northern District streams for beaver dams.
- activate the Paint River Committee to develop a plan that includes identified financing sources and broodstock sources and a schedule for initiating operation of the Paint River fish ladder.

7.0 PROJECTS – TRAIL LAKES HATCHERY

Background:

This facility is owned by the State of Alaska and operated by the CIAA through contract with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The hatchery is located at Trail Lakes is permitted to produce sockeye, coho and chinook salmon for release at selected sites throughout the Cook Inlet (Area H) watershed.

Individual project objectives and strategies are presented in the annual Trail Lakes Hatchery Management Plans

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to maintain the Trail Lakes Hatchery physical plant in a manner which (1) does not accelerate its deterioration, (2) does not cause failure of any of its principal elements to result in the loss of fish or the injury of staff or visitors and (3) does support maximum sustained production.
- to reduce the use of chemicals as much as possible.
- to increase the number of immature fish produced by 15%.

Tactics - The Association should:

- reduce the use of Formalin by 50%.
- update the wastewater treatment plant.
- install a UV filter on the influent.
- develop a sockeye salmon return to Tutka Bay Lagoon.
- build a remote rearing facility for smolt production in Resurrection Bay.
- evaluate and change, where appropriate, the broodstock used for existing projects to maximize the benefits of these projects.
- renew its lease of the Trail Lakes Hatchery when it expires on June 30, 2008 or accept the facility if the State seeks to turn it over to CIAA.

8.0 PROJECTS – EKLUTNA HATCHERY

Background:

This facility was built by and is owned and operated by CIAA. The Eklutna Hatchery was originally constructed in 1982 as a pink, chum, coho and chinook salmon hatchery. In 1992, a majority of the facility was converted to sockeye production, and the facility produced sockeye and coho salmon smolts for release to the Eklutna Tailrace and sockeye fry for release to several Cook Inlet lakes. In 1998, fish production was suspended and the facility has been maintained as an emergency backup system for Trail Lakes Hatchery.

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to select one of two alternative objectives for this facility; and it should be to (1) contract with the State for salmon production at the facility or (2) operate the facility for the production of sockeye and coho.

Tactics - The Association should:

- initiate an internal process leading to the identification of the best objective for the Eklutna Hatchery.

- identify the most effective tactics to achieve the objective once it has been selected.
- evaluate and change, where appropriate, the broodstock used for existing projects to maximize the benefits of these projects.

9.0 PROJECTS – TUTKA BAY LAGOON HATCHERY

Background:

This facility is owned by the State of Alaska and operated by CIAA, Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery produced pink salmon fry and sockeye salmon smolt for release at the facility and pink salmon fry for release at selected remote sites in Lower Cook Inlet. In 2004, operations at this facility were suspended.

Objectives - The Association wants:

- to operate the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery on a limited scale for short-term rearing of sockeye salmon smolts.

Tactics - The Association should:

- maintain the net pen complex and hatchery buildings by securing a caretaker and seasonal crew for feeding sockeye salmon smolts from Trail Lakes Hatchery.
- evaluate and change, where appropriate, the broodstock used for existing projects to maximize the benefits of these projects.

10.0 STRATEGIC PLAN CHECKLIST

**commitment to the core values of
credibility, accountability, education and
responsible service to the resource and the community**

		Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association Annual Meetings				
		February 2006	February 2007	February 2008	February 2009	February 2010
ADMINISTRATION						
1	continue existing / develop new cooperative relationships with other organizations	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
2	maintain credibility through complete and accurate reporting	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
3	conduct and/or foster public fisheries resource education efforts	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
4	continue the commitment to resource-oriented community service in Area H	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
5	operate in a manner that assures long-term sustainability	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
6	secure at least 25% of budgeted expenditures from cost recovery harvest annually	progress check	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review
7	increase revenue from contract fish production	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review
8	secure at least 25% of budgeted expenditures from grant funded projects annually	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
9	payoff the two oldest loans totaling \$306,420 plus deferred interest by 2010	progress check	progress check	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED
10	develop a cost recovery project in Upper Cook Inlet	progress check	progress check	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED
11	continue contract fish production for Seward and Homer	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
12	develop contract fish production proposals for Anchorage, Wasilla and Palmer and others	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review
13	provide an annual professional training program or full-time employees	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
14	maintain affiliation with management and leadership consulting group	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
15	provide information to the Board of Directors through the web site	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
16	secure at least one annual professional presentation to the Board of Directors	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
17	update the production of SMOLTS	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
18	replace meeting room chalk boards with dry erase boards	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
19	purchase an conference telephone system	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
20	transfer the web site to a new system and provide staff training	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
21	develop an educational pamphlet about CIAA activities and accomplishments	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
22	develop a program to annually award a scholarship to an Area H student	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review
PROJECTS						
23	complete work with Kenai Watershed Forum to identify priority habitat projects	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review
24	annually fund/operate flow control structures at Daniels, Packers, Bear and Marten lakes	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
25	annually fund/conduct aerial surveys of Northern District streams for beaver dams	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
26	to develop a Paint River operational plan that identifies financing sources	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review
27	reduce Formalin use at Trail Lakes Hatchery by 50 percent	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review
28	up date the Trail Lakes Hatchery wastewater treatment plant	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review
29	install a ultraviolet filter on the influent at Trail Lakes Hatchery	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review
30	using Trail Lakes Hatchery develop a sockeye return to Tutka Bay Lagoon	progress check	progress check	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED
31	build a remote rearing facility for smolt production in Resurrection Bay	progress check	progress check	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review
32	evaluate project broodstock choices at Trail Lakes Hatchery	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
33	renew lease for or accept ownership of Trail Lakes Hatchery	annual review	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review
34	initiate an internal process to identify the best objective for the Eklutna Hatchery	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review
35	identify the most effective tactics to achieve the best objective for the Eklutna Hatchery	see #34 above	progress check	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review
36	evaluate project broodstock choices at Eklutna Hatchery	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
37	maintain the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery by securing a caretaker and seasonal crew	COMPLETED	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review
38	evaluate project broodstock choices at Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review	annual review