

2020 California Sea Grant Host Description

1. Host Location and Contact Information:

West Coast Regional Aquaculture Coordinator, NOAA Fisheries, California

Genetics, Physiology, and Aquaculture Program, NOAA Fisheries Southwest Fisheries Science Center

8901 La Jolla Shores Dr.

La Jolla, CA 92037

2./3. Supervisor & Point of Contact for CA Sea Grant, prospective fellows, and finalists:

Diane Windham, NOAA Fisheries West Coast Regional Aquaculture Coordinator – California
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John Hyde, Genetics, Physiology, and Aquaculture Program Leader, NOAA Fisheries Southwest Fisheries Science Center, john.hyde@noaa.gov, (858) 546-7086

4. Position Description:

Background: NOAA has a multi-faceted role in aquaculture, ranging from supporting cutting-edge science and research to policy development and regulation. The **NOAA Fisheries Office of Aquaculture** supports sustainable aquaculture that provides safe, sustainable seafood; creates employment and business opportunities in coastal communities; and complements NOAA's comprehensive strategy for maintaining healthy and productive marine populations, ecosystems, and vibrant coastal communities.

NOAA Fisheries plays a central role in developing and implementing policies that enable marine aquaculture development and works to ensure that aquaculture projects comply with existing federal laws and regulations that NOAA enforces under its marine stewardship mission. In the United States, marine aquaculture operates within one of the most comprehensive regulatory environments in the world. Projects that are sited in U.S. waters must meet a suite of federal, state, and local regulations that ensure environmental protection, water quality, food safety, and protection of public health.

Science and adaptive management inform NOAA policy, regulatory, and management decisions regarding aquaculture in marine waters. NOAA's aquaculture efforts are led by NOAA Fisheries and include activities at **NOAA Fisheries science centers and regional offices**, NOAA's National **Sea Grant program**, and NOAA's **National Ocean Service**. The Aquaculture Program integrates and coordinates the agency's aquaculture policies, research, outreach, and international efforts. NOAA is working with its federal, state, and tribal partners on a variety of initiatives stemming from the 2011 National Aquaculture Policy, the National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan, and its mandates under the Endangered Species Act, Magnuson Stevens Fisheries Conservation Act, the National Aquaculture Act, the National Shellfish Initiative and the Aquaculture Technology Transfer Initiative. Several statewide shellfish initiatives are also underway, including in California.

Since 2008, NOAA has been expanding its aquaculture efforts by establishing Regional Coordinators around the country. This allows NOAA to have a regional presence and increases awareness of region-specific issues. The office has Regional Aquaculture Coordinators in the Northeast region, Southeast region, West Coast region (WA/OR/CA), the Pacific Islands region, and soon in Alaska. California primarily grows Pacific oysters, Kumamoto oysters, and manila clams for commercial purposes with lesser amounts of Mediterranean mussels, Atlantic oysters, red abalone, rock scallops,

and seaweed. Research in the Southwest focuses on abalone recovery and commercial aquaculture production of amberjacks (*Seriola* spp.) at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center, and Olympia oyster restoration by various sectors of academia, throughout California and along the entire west coast. There is growing interest in research on shellfish and seaweed bio-remediation/environmental benefits.

Fellow Responsibilities: A Sea Grant fellow within NOAA Fisheries' CA office will assist the Regional Aquaculture Coordinator and the SWFSC Genetics, Physiology, and Aquaculture Program Leader in a range of duties addressing policy level issues and science questions in direct coordination with Federal, State and local regulatory agencies, scientific institutions, local stakeholder interests, academia, and the aquaculture industry. In California, a variety of marine aquaculture projects are in various stages of development and permitting - a Sea Grant fellow will have opportunity to be involved with several collaborative/regionally specific projects, internal regional office NOAA activities, Southwest Fisheries Science Center research projects, and national NOAA Aquaculture Program activities and coordination.

Opportunities to work on California marine aquaculture activities include:

- **Offshore shellfish and finfish projects (including Pacific Ocean AquaFarms finfish proposal and associated NEPA process, Ventura Shellfish Enterprise proposed offshore mussel farm, proposed land-based Norwegian Recirculating System for finfish in Humboldt Co.):** with growing interest in offshore aquaculture in CA and federal waters, work includes utilizing spatial siting analysis, environmental impact analyses required under NEPA, ESA, etc., developing project monitoring and resolving user conflicts. These present challenging interagency coordination opportunities requiring a variety of skills such as diplomacy, in an environment that brings together regulatory marine resource management with robust science. The fellow will assist the Coordinator with meetings of the Southern CA Offshore Aquaculture Working Group. The working group purpose is to facilitate information exchange to inform permitting processes and translate and apply best available science to coastal manager's decision making.
- **Coordination on aquaculture projects with local port districts, CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife's State Aquaculture Coordinator, and various state/federal regulatory agencies:** the State and Federal coordinators must work closely together on all projects; there is opportunity to work together and benefit from cross-exposure with both agencies to gain understanding of Federal and State policies and regulations.
- **NOAA West Coast Region Aquaculture web page/aquaculture outreach:** the regional and national webpages are continually updating and revising web page design and content; outreach/education opportunities are available.

A Sea Grant fellow's ideal complementary skill set includes:

The Sea Grant fellow may participate in agency meetings, site visits, policy discussions and planning, communication to agencies and constituencies, spatial data sharing, and conference calls. A successful candidate must be able to work independently but function as part of a team, with emphasis on communication, interaction, and policy/regulatory information; in addition, the fellow may provide scientific research support, and should have the ability to conduct science literature/bibliographic, legal, and administration research, and effective time management is vital. Strong writing, computer, organizational, and interpersonal skills are also highly valued. Openness to a broad variety of experiences and projects will enhance the fellowship.