



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100  
Sacramento, California 95814-4700

## NOAA Fisheries - Office of Aquaculture, West Coast Region Sea Grant Fellow Opportunity

### Host Location and Contact Information:

#### West Coast Regional Aquaculture Coordinator, California

#### NOAA Fisheries

650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### Supervisor & Point of Contact for prospective fellows and finalists:

Diane Windham  
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NOAA Fisheries  
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### Position Description:

NOAA has a multi-faceted role in aquaculture from supporting cutting-edge science and research to federal policymaking and regulation. The **NOAA Fisheries Office of Aquaculture** fosters 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 and works to ensure that aquaculture complies 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 Office 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 Aquaculture Policies, the recent National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan, and its mandates under the Magnuson Stevens Act and the National Aquaculture Act, the [National Shellfish Initiative](#) and the [Aquaculture Technology Transfer Initiative](#). Several statewide shellfish initiatives are also in development, 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 allows better attention to and awareness of region-specific issues. The office has Regional Aquaculture Coordinators in the Northeast region, Southeast region, West Coast region (WA/OR/CA), and the Pacific Islands region. 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 at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center and Olympia oyster restoration by various sectors of academia, primarily in the San Francisco Bay area. There is growing interest in research on shellfish bio-remediation/environmental benefits of shellfish culturing.

A Sea Grant fellow within NOAA Fisheries' CA office will assist the Regional Aquaculture Coordinator in a range of duties addressing policy level issues to direct coordination with Federal, State and local regulatory agencies, local stakeholder interests, academia, and the aquaculture industry. In California, a variety of projects are getting underway, and a Sea Grant fellow will have opportunity to be involved with several collaborative/regionally specific projects, as well as internal regional office NOAA activities.

California aquaculture activities and a Sea Grant fellow's ideal complementary skill set include:

- **CA Shellfish Initiative:** a collaborative effort to expand shellfish aquaculture (commercial and native shellfish restoration), to include stakeholder interests with localized regional planning and policy efforts through 2015 and beyond. Skills needed include communication, collaboration, planning, and administrative/detail-oriented.
- **Humboldt Bay Pre-Permitting Project and Coast Seafoods Permit Renewal/Expansion:** the local harbor district is leading an interagency effort to expand shellfish leases in the Bay, and includes interagency meetings, planning stages, and CEQA planning. Same skills as above.
- **Offshore shellfish and finfish projects (including Rose Canyon Fishery finfish proposal, Santa Barbara Mariculture mussel permit, KZO offshore mussel farm, and the upcoming Ventura Shellfish Enterprise):** with growing interest in offshore aquaculture in CA and federal waters; environmental impact analyses, project monitoring and user conflicts present challenging interagency cooperative opportunities requiring skills listed above as well as diplomacy, in an environment that brings together ocean resource utilization, conservation, and scientifically sound monitoring programs. Where appropriate, align with offshore activities in other regions.
- **Coordination on aquaculture projects with the CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife's State Aquaculture Coordinator:** the State and Federal coordinators must work closely together on all projects, so there is opportunity to work together and benefit from cross-training 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 undergoing revision and redesign, in coordination with NOAA's Office of Communication. Updates, project reporting/ "stories", new research and policy/permitting information are among areas to be addressed. Outreach/education opportunities are available. Computer skills, web page experience, social media experience, writing skills needed.

The Sea Grant fellow may participate in agency meetings, site visits, policy discussions and planning, communication to agencies and constituencies, literature reviews, 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; there is little direct scientific research, but the ability to conduct science literature/bibliographic, legal, and administration research is vital. Strong writing, organizational, and interpersonal/listening skills are also highly valued. Openness to a broad variety of experiences and projects will enhance the fellowship.