



**PACIFIC COAST  
SHELLFISH GROWERS**

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## **Advantages to be gained in developing individual farm plans**

Growers that haven't yet developed "Farm Plans" may want to begin considering the advantages of doing so soon. The farm plans are, in essence, each grower's individualized best management practices manual based upon the PCSGA Environmental Codes of Practice.

These farm plans could fulfill a two-fold purpose. First, growers with approved farm plans will be eligible to participate in the shellfish certification program currently under development. As envisioned, the certification program would provide growers with a leg-up in a marketplace that increasingly demands food that is sustainably produced.

Secondly, it appears the ECOP – and growers individual plans – will provide the basis for obtaining Army Corps programmatic permits, as envisioned by the head of the Corps, J. P. Woodley, and as has been discussed in subsequent planning meetings with Corps staff.

Towards this end, PCSGA has been invited to submit a grant proposal to USDA to fund technical

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# **Longlines**

**Volume 9, Number 2**

**March/April 2006**



*Greg Dale, Coast Seafoods, at the Shellfish Caucus Reception in D.C.*

## **Shellfish growers converge on Capitol Hill**

PCSGA members and other growers from the Gulf and East Coasts converged on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. the first week of February to convey our issues and concerns to members of Congress and agency representatives. The week got off to a start for West Coast growers first thing on Monday morning when we met at the Pentagon with the head of the Army Corps of Engineers, J.P. Woodley, to discuss permit requirements for the industry. Following that meeting, we headed over to NOAA headquarters to discuss the prospects for undergoing the programmatic consultations that will be necessary as part of procuring Corps permits.

(For a synopsis of those meetings, please read "Fish Stories" on page two.)

On day two, growers from around the country held the annual all-coasts growers' meeting, hosted by the Molluscan Shellfish Institute (MSI) and National Fisheries Institute (NFI). Major issues included Army Corp permit policies, prioritization and allocation of hurricane relief funds, research and development funding, and organic standards for shellfish. Tom Kehoe and Mike Voisin, co-chairs of the MSI, led a discussion on how to improve communication and coordination of activities tied to the Shellfish Caucus. After the meeting, participants headed to the Hill for a week-long series of meetings and briefings.

On Thursday night, a reception honoring the Shellfish Caucus was hosted by the Gulf Oyster Industry Council, East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, and PCSGA, with an impressive oyster bar featuring cream-of-the-crop oysters from each coast. Commemorative plaques were presented to the co-chairs of the newly formed Shellfish Caucus.

For those of us that go back to D.C. every year, the difference these visits make is clear. The relationships we have developed, and continue to develop, with both our congressional representatives and their staff, is better than money in the bank when we are trying to communicate complex issues and gain support. And the relationships and friendships

*continued on page 2*

## Fish Stories: *Hope burns eternal*

By now, all of you should have received the update on the Army Corps permitting issue. In short, the Corps has turned a deaf ear to our arguments that their jurisdiction does not extend to shellfish culture activities in most instances. Despite this apparently bad news, we have reasons to be cautiously optimistic. After all, two years ago we were already being told we needed permits for most of our activities. And while we have been unsuccessful in convincing the Corps otherwise, we have established a far stronger foundation for developing these permits.

First and foremost, we have developed positive working relationships and allies at the top of the agencies' food chains over the past two years. This will be absolutely critical in our ability to successfully negotiate permit terms. Virtually all of the challenges we have faced to-date have been generated at the local level from well-meaning if ill-informed-idealoguees, and we have only been able to affect these outcomes by calling upon upper management.

The head of the Corps' civilian branch, J.P. Woodley, has given his staff strict marching orders that if we must have permits they will be programmatic and streamlined. He believes that PCSGA's Environmental Codes of Practice can form the cornerstone of this permit. He has further stated that the Corps will pay the cost of undergoing the requisite ESA (Endangered Species Act) and EFH (Essential Fish Habitat) consultations.

The heads of NOAA-Fisheries (Admiral Lautenbacher, Bill Hogarth and Tim Keeney), have likewise all pledged their oath that their consultation process will be streamlined and reasonable.

Coast's permit debacle serves as a painful reminder to the agencies of what NOT to do, as agency staff have all been quick to tell us. We will be well served to negotiate the particulars of our programmatic permit and consultation while these wounds are still fresh.

Further, as lawmakers look at ways to help the Gulf Coast industry get back on its feet post-Katrina-and-Rita, it will likely not be looking to layer burdensome new regulatory requirements on them. By extension, given the call for national consistency echoing through the halls after last year's permit consistency review (at our request), this prerogative should help inform permit conditions for the West Coast as well.

And finally, the alliances and friendships we have forged over the past few years with our colleagues in the Gulf and East Coasts will prove invaluable over the next few months as we seek a legislative mechanism to clarify the Congressional intent behind the laws we are now being regulated under. The new national shellfish caucus can play a pivotal role in helping us devise a long-term legislative solution to these permitting dilemmas. We are pursuing these options and will keep you apprised as this unfolds.

So the take-home message here: Working together as a national coalition of shellfish growers, we will continue to pursue a reasonable, science-based approach to the regulation of our industry. There is strength in numbers and we will persevere. Through your support as a member, you are helping to make this happen.

-- Robin Downey, E.D.

## Growers on the Hill

*continued from page 1*

developed among the growers, from coast to coast, is at least as valuable.

PCSGA growers who participated in this year's Hill Walk included, from California: Greg Dale, John Finger, Kevin Lunny. From Oregon: Mark Wiegardt. From Washington: Lisa and Brett Bishop, Dana and Oliver Chapman, Peter Becker, Bill Taylor, Bill Dewey. Representing the West Coast industry as a whole: Robin Downey and Billy Plauche. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, no Alaska representatives joined us during the week, although Jeff Hetrick from Alaska paid visits to the Alaska delegation the following week.

**Mark your calendars!  
The next PCSGA  
Annual Conference will  
be held October 2-5,  
at the Hilton Vancouver,  
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### **Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association**

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Fax: 360-754-2743  
E-mail: [pcsga@pcsga.org](mailto:pcsga@pcsga.org)

## Shellfish farmer John Sells dies

John A. Sells, owner of Sells Shellfish, and a lifetime resident of Mason County, died at home, surrounded by his family and friends, on January 1, 2006. He traveled the world as a Merchant Marine during World War II. John enjoyed a rich and varied career life. Besides being a shellfish grower, he was a construction engineer and a land developer. His construction career began in 1940, when he was hired to do land and road survey work for the Bureau of Reclamation at Grand Coulee Dam. His work took him to Washington, Idaho, and Hawaii. He moved his family to Eastern Washington in 1949, where he supervised the construction of nuclear separating plants, reactors, and power generators at Hanford.

He returned to Shelton in 1955 and started a shellfish business, which he was actively involved in until the day he died. In 1975, at the age of 59, he took an academic course at The Evergreen State College. It was one of the most memorable experiences of his life. A lifelong democrat, John chaired the Mason County Democrats during the 60's, actively campaigning for President John F. Kennedy, Governor Albert Rosellini, U.S. Senators Warren G. "Maggie" Magnuson and Henry M. "Scoop" Jackson, and State Representative Roy Ritner.

John was one of three children born to John N. Sells, a Shelton logger and farmer, and India Rose (Archer) Sells, one of the first teachers in Mason County. He is survived by his longtime companion, Edith Elson; two daughters, Dianne M. (Richard) Berry, and Pamela C. (Skip) Patterson; three grandchildren, Jason Dodge,

## Pearls of Wisdom: South Sound Growers do the industry proud with third bi-annual beach clean up

All shellfish growers are invited to participate in the South Sound shellfish growers third bi-annual beach clean up day. Seven different farms and the Pacific Shellfish Institute participated in cleaning up beach areas in South Sound last fall and are gearing up to clean the same areas again this spring. Each crew records data on what garbage is found where, and how much trash is recreational debris or from shellfish aquaculture. We have documented a significant reduction in trash found with approximately one-seventh of the trash related to aquaculture.

We would like to expand our clean up efforts to more areas. If you are interested in participating, please contact me or Shina Wysocki, Chelsea Farms, and ask for a Beach Clean Up Data Card to record what area you clean up and what trash is collected. Please coordinate with me on what areas you plan to clean up.

Trash bags may be picked up at Taylor Shellfish, who will also provide dumpsters at Arcadia Point Boat Launch. Lunch (chili dogs, hot coffee and sodas) will be served between 12:30-1:30 at Arcadia. Please make reservations for your crew with Shina Wysocki, [shinawysocki@comcast.net](mailto:shinawysocki@comcast.net) or 360-866-8059.

This is a great opportunity for our industry to put our best foot forward and show the community we really care about all our beaches!

- Linda Lentz, Chelsea Farms, Olympia

## Help to develop your farm plan

*continued from page 1*

assistance to grower members in developing farm plans. If we are successful in procuring these funds, growers will have the option of attending workshops where they will receive assistance in completing their farm plans, as well as one-on-one technical assistance that will be made available.

For more information on this project, please contact Robin Downey at 360-379-9041.

Ormond J. Dodge, and Johnna (Mark) Zeigler.

His greatest joys were his many friends, and John was known to organize the whole neighborhood to rescue a stray dog. His greatest loss was his eyesight. His family is requesting donations be made to pet shelters and the Lions Club, for their wonderful work, providing services for the visually impaired. There will be a Celebration of John's Life to be announced in the spring.



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## Get ready - it's time to SLURP!

When Spring flowers begin to bloom and we return to daylight low tides – it can only mean one thing — it's time to SLURP! With Fish Tale Brewery generously signing on as a sponsor and hosting the event in their brew house in downtown Olympia, the Shellfish Lovers Ultimate Rejuvenation Party sold out last year - and we're gearing up for another great year. The area's best restaurants will be serving up their favorite shellfish dishes, accompanied by an assortment of Fish Tale brews and Washington wines, the new celebrity slurp-off, a live auction, live jazz, live growers and live oysters.

If you'd like to be one of those live growers or would like to volunteer your efforts in helping to plan or staff the event, sell tickets, or help procure or make auction donations, please contact Connie at 360-754-2744.

Tickets are \$40 if purchased in advance, \$50 at the door.

Proceeds from the event help to pay for PCSGA's efforts in restoration and protection activities throughout the year.

## The inexorable march toward organic shellfish standards

While growers were in D.C. in February, we spoke to our Congressional representatives about the lack of organic standards, or even serious forward momentum towards developing standards, for mollusks. The problem, as much as anything, can be attributed to the fact that every task force and work group assembled to work on this issue, to-date, has included one lonely, lowly shellfish representative among a sea of finfish representatives.

We have asked the members of the Shellfish Caucus to send a letter to the USDA requesting that a task force made up of shellfish industry and biology experts be assigned the task of looking at mollusk standards specifically, rather than trying to grapple with very disparate issues finfish and shellfish species issues simultaneously. If you are interested in seeing these standards finally go forward, call or write your members of congress and urge them to sign on to the letter, or contact USDA, on our behalf. If you need more information, contact Robin Downey at 360-379-9041.

## 'Go Fish!' Campaign aimed at Seniors

*Excerpted from Seafood Business*

A new campaign is promoting the health benefits of eating seafood to clients of the largest meal-services organization in the United States. "Go Fish!," a joint effort between the National Fisheries Institute and the Meals On Wheels Association of America, is based upon the popular card game.

Each week, a card bearing recipes, meal-preparation ideas, health and nutrition information and facts about fish will be disseminated to Meals On Wheels members, volunteers, clients, donors and staff. Hearts will center on health benefits, spades will focus on recipes and preparation techniques, clubs will spotlight packaging and storing, and diamonds will include fish facts and trivia questions. The first "Go Fish!" card — the king of hearts — describes how seafood can add protein and limit saturated fat in the diet.



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## Western Regional Aquaculture Center seeks industry nominations

The Western Regional Aquaculture Center (WRAC) is currently soliciting nominations for leaders in the aquaculture industry to serve as representatives on the Industry Advisory Council (IAC) and as members of the Technical committee's (TC) Research Subcommittee. Nominations are invited from all sectors of the aquaculture community in the twelve states of the western region, and you may nominate more than one individual. **Industry Advisory Council:** The IAC provides input regarding the needs and priorities of the regional aquaculture industry, with respect to the research, extension, and development programs of WRAC. Members are selected from all sectors of the aquaculture industry, including finfish and shellfish producers, suppliers of goods and services, and marketing and distribution personnel. **Technical Committee/Research Committee:** The Technical Committee provides input to the Board of Directors regarding regional research and extension needs and priorities, development and assessment of new projects, and evaluation of ongoing projects. Individuals with extensive scientific expertise in any of the following disciplines are desired: general fish culture, general shellfish culture, water quality, fish nutrition, shellfish nutrition, diseases of fish,

diseases of shellfish, broodstock management, genetics engineering, physiology, reproduction, marketing, product quality/preservation, and economics.


To submit a nomination, provide the name, address and phone number of the nominee, specifying whether the nomination is for the Technical Committee or Industry Advisory Council, and the nominee's area of expertise/discipline. Please include your name, phone number and e-mail, in case further information is needed. Forward the information via e-mail to [cjn4@u.washington.edu](mailto:cjn4@u.washington.edu), or mail to: Carla Norwood, WRAC Administrative Office, University of Washington, Box 355020, Seattle, WA 98195-5020. If you have questions regarding the nomination process, contact Carla Norwood at 206-685-2479. *The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 17, 2006.*

## International aquatic health committee forms

by Dr. Ralph Elston, *Aqua Technics*

On January 17 and 18, I attended the Inter-American Ad Hoc Group of the OIE on Aquatic Animal Health in Panama, on behalf of PCSGA. This was a regional (North, Central and South American) meeting of country representatives and technical experts to assess common goals in regard to shellfish and fish health disease control objectives. The meeting was motivated by concern that the European voting block of 19 nations has become too dominant in determining OIE disease control matters, and concern about the credibility of laboratory certifications from particular countries outside the region of the Americas.

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## Update on delisting of Denman Island disease

### *Spanish translators needed*

by Dr. Ralph Elston, *Aqua Technics*

The Pacific Shellfish Institute completed a risk assessment for Denman Island disease in 2004. This disease is scheduled for OIE delisting in May 2006, pending an affirmative vote by the OIE General Assembly. However, there is likely to still be some concern among South and Central American countries that may wish to purchase live North American mollusk products. Our risk assessment found negligible risk from such products.

I recommend that we get the risk assessment report translated into Spanish so that I can present it to the committee which I will form. This would greatly help alleviate any concerns and basis for trade restrictions due to Denman Island disease, which might still be attempted after the delisting. I think we have enough Spanish speakers amongst us that we could get this done without great cost, but it must be an accurate and grammatically correct translation. Of the two project reports, the workshop report, about 30 pages, would have top priority. *Anyone interested in volunteering for the Spanish translation, please contact Ralph at 360-681-3122.*

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Olympia, Washington

## Aquatic health committee

*continued from page 5*

I was asked by USDA-APHIS to attend and assist them as an expert on shellfish diseases. This was the first face-to-face meeting of the Ad Hoc Group whose objectives include: promotion of the application of, and modifications to, OIE standards; promotion of the exchange of scientific and technical information and harmonization of technical procedures methodologies; and the removal of artificial and unjustified trade barriers based on animal health issues.

Among the recommendations that I made related to mollusks, which will be incorporated into the meeting report, were to list the Pacific oyster egg parasite, *Marteilioides chungmuensis*, known only from Japan and Korea, as an OIE disease; and to maintain the OIE listing of *Perkinsus olseni*, a parasite of manila clams and abalone that does not exist in the Americas.

I was nominated to chair an inter-American committee of mollusk disease experts to define common issues for the Americas in regard to mollusk health. I will select five other experts to participate on the commit-

tee. We will set an agenda for the first year. I expect the agenda will promote the exclusion of diseases we do not have in the Americas, evaluate risk of diseases that we do have in sub-regional areas, and to make recommendations in regard to whether or not any inter-American restrictions on live mollusk trade are merited, based on infectious mollusk disease considerations.

I expect that unjustified animal health trade barriers among countries of the Americas should be eliminated as the Ad Hoc Group develops, thus opening markets in Central and South American for US shellfish products.

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## Asia-Pacific Conference offers networking opportunities for exporters

The Asia Pacific Business Outlook Conference (APBO) takes place on April 3-4 at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. The conference focus will be on Asian and Pacific markets, with Senior Commercial Officers from American embassies, consulates and institutes in Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. These officials will speak in small-group workshops and be available for private one-on-one consultations with registered APBO participants. Early registration (\$675) ends on March 3. After that, registration fees of \$775 will apply. The event is hosted by the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, with support from the U.S. Commercial Service.

For more information, or to register, go to <http://www.apbo2006.com>. You will need this registration code during sign up: **DOC2006**. If known, mention your local Export Assistance Center or Trade Specialist. After the registration process is complete, you will receive email instructions to sign up for one-on-one meetings with Senior Commercial Officers. Appointments are approximately 15 minutes long and run concurrently with the conference sessions. For questions or general inquiries, contact Amy Benson at 208-364-7791. Tel: (208) 364-7791. [Amy.Benson@mail.doc.gov](mailto:Amy.Benson@mail.doc.gov). [www.buyusa.gov](http://www.buyusa.gov)

## EU Audit expected in October

West Coast shellfish exporters can expect an animal health audit by the European Union this fall, according to Dr. Jill Rolland, Aquaculture Specialist with the USDA/APHIS.

"We are awaiting more details on the scope of the audit, but as Washington, California, Hawaii and Oregon are the only approved states for shipping to the EU, we suspect that facilities in these states will be the subject of the audit," says Rolland.

"The audit is expected to occur sometime around October and we will be working with states, industry and our local APHIS folks to prepare."

For more information, Dr. Rolland can be reached at 301-734-7727

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## WDOE says cruise-ship agreement got results in 2005

More cruise ships took steps to protect Puget Sound from wastewater pollution in 2005, according to the Department of Ecology. This was the second year of an environmental agreement signed in 2004 with the Department, Port of Seattle and the Northwest Cruise Ship Association (NWCA) on behalf of the cruise industry.

The voluntary agreement sets standards for wastewater treatment and discharge in Washington waters that exceed federal requirements that ordinarily apply to the ships. Nine of the 17 large cruise ships visiting Seattle received authorization from Ecology to discharge under the MOU's wastewater treatment standards, tripling the number of ships approved under the agreement. They accounted for 69 percent of the sailings by the giant liners from April through October.

Ecology conducted on-board inspections of the ships to review treatment system operations and collect samples. Lab results showed that shipboard treatment systems were treating wastewater and discharging treated water that was as clean as, or cleaner than, the effluents from on-shore municipal wastewater treatment plants.

Five other large liners covered by the MOU agreed not to discharge waste water at all within Washington waters. Three other liners – which made a total of five visits to Seattle - were not NWCA members and were subject to normal federal wastewater requirements.

Ecology's report includes recommendations for ongoing efforts to control cruise ship wastewater discharges, including: continuation of DOE inspections of ships sailing under the MOU in Washington, with emphasis on maintenance of wastewater systems; the Departments of Ecology and Health jointly gathering information on wastewater discharges from smaller passenger vessels that do not belong to the NWCA; and DOE, the port and the NWCA finalizing a funding mechanism under the MOU to provide ongoing oversight of the agreement.

Ecology's report and additional information are available on-line at [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/cruise\\_mou/index.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/cruise_mou/index.html).

## WDOE releases cruise ship waste assessment

The 2005 Assessment of Cruise Ship Environmental Effects in Washington was just published and can be found on Ecology's cruise ship website: [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/cruise\\_mou/index.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/wastewater/cruise_mou/index.html). If you have any questions, contact Amy Jankowiak, Department of Ecology, Northwest Regional Office, Water Quality Program, 3190 160th Avenue SE, Bellevue WA 98008. (425) 649-7195  
ajan461@ecy.wa.gov

## 2500 acres upgraded in Grays Harbor

The Washington Department of Health announced in February that they are reclassifying the South Bay portion of Grays Harbor to take effect immediately. Approximately 2500 acres have been reclassified from Conditionally Approved to Approved. In addition, approximately 500 acres near Ocean Shores have been reclassified from Approved to Unclassified. If you have questions, please call Frank Meriwether at 360 236-3321.



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## DOC provides new sales leads around the world

Growers can now search for trade events by country, industry, state, date and event type from a list that is officially sponsored and/or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Trade Events List is updated monthly and includes all trade promotion events produced by the International Trade Administration. The list is searchable, including links to event descriptions and contact information for local U.S. Export Assistance Centers. Access the Trade Events List website at [http://www.export.gov/eac/trade\\_events.asp](http://www.export.gov/eac/trade_events.asp).

If any of the trade events listed are of interest to you, you may contact the Project Officer noted below each trade event. If you have any additional questions or comments, please call John Klingelhut at (202) 482-4403 or by e-mail at [John.Klingelhut@mail.doc.gov](mailto:John.Klingelhut@mail.doc.gov).

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## Annual Report on US Seafood Industry released

*by H.M. Johnson & Associates*

The Annual Report on the United States Seafood Industry tracks key trends affecting U.S. seafood supply and demand. Over 100 tables, charts and graphs provide concise data on the state of the industry, key species, availability and consumer attitudes and purchasing patterns. The report contains up-to-date industry information, including proprietary reports and previously unpublished research. Information is displayed in easy-to-understand charts and graphs, plus a comprehensive appendix with full data tables. Sources for all information are identified for easy access. The report is \$55. To order online go to <http://www.urnerbarry.com/promo/books/hmj2005.html>, or contact the sales desk at 800-932-0617.

## Even more reasons to eat seafood

*From NFI's "Fish and Clips"*

Why do the Japanese and the Inuits have some of the lowest risks for cardiovascular disease and heart-related death? Likewise, why are breast cancer rates unusually low in these same groups? Why are rates of postpartum depression relatively lower in Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Chile than in most western nations? Why is the prevalence of Alzheimer's disease so high in Arab populations in Israel while the risk is significantly lower for the Cree Indians of northeastern Canada?

The best explanation points to differing diets. The healthier populations listed above ingest high levels of nutritious omega-3 fatty acids through consumption of fish and shellfish. Comparing national daily intakes of these essential fatty acids reveals average Americans consume between 2 to 10 times below rates in Japan, Singapore, Scandinavia, and Spain. Check out more facts here: <http://www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=18451>



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## 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Shucking for the Sound March 21

by Jon Rowley

Anthony's Home Port at Seattle's Shilshole Bay celebrates their 16<sup>th</sup> year of support for Puget Sound and the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance on March 21, 3-9 p.m. Oyster lovers can taste 20 varieties of local oysters, along with Washington wines and Red Hook Ales. Come watch the Celebrity Oyster Slurp, restaurant competitions, shucking championship, Washington's largest oyster contest, oyster-themed "fashion" judging, oyster art, silent auction and more. There will be ongoing live entertainment along with the star of the party: oysters...nude, stewed and BBQ-ed. But you don't have to be an oyster lover to join the fun: Anthony's will also be serving up a bountiful buffet of other regional specialties. Tickets are \$85, advance purchase only. For tickets, contact the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance at 206-297-7002. or [www.pugetsoundkeeper.org](http://www.pugetsoundkeeper.org).

## Washington SAC meets March 8

Washington's Shellfish Advisory Committee, made up of state agencies and members of the shellfish industry, will be holding their bi-annual meeting on March 8 in Tumwater. The agenda includes an update on legislative issues, a review of Washington's *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and biotoxin monitoring for last year, and an update on the cruise ship virus study.

The meeting will take place at DOH Point Plaza East headquarters in Tumwater, from 9 to noon, in Rooms 152-153.

## Alaska growers fight \$125 PSP testing fee

*Excerpted from ASGA Newsletter*

Alaska growers are facing a startling new PSP testing fee of \$125 (per test) unless the Legislature steps in to fix the problem.

It all began last year, when the Legislature directed the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to collect \$256,000 through new user fees to support its food safety laboratory and a new position. Most of this was covered by a 60 percent increase in licensing fees. The balance, \$37,500 was to come from laboratory testing fees.

DEC first attempted to impose a two-tier fee structure for paralytic shellfish poisoning lab tests, charging divers \$125 per sample and shellfish farms \$35 per sample. This was done in recognition that the shellfish farmers could not afford to pay the higher fee. However, the Department of Law struck down the two-tiered system, saying the state had to charge all users equal fees for the same service. In response, DEC this fall imposed increases in licensing fees for all seafood processors and user fees for laboratory services.

The Alaskan Shellfish Growers Association (ASGA) is asking the Legislature for their support for restoring full funding of DEC's laboratory services. Although the imposition of lab user fees was slated to raise only a small percentage of the increases, these new charges could be devastating to the small businesses forced to pay them. Even at \$35, the new lab fee would have been overwhelming for new shellfish farmers, but at \$125 the fee would be devastating to even established operations. For example, the \$125/test fee could cost a new farmer \$3,750 for a 30-week season.

ASGA and the Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association (SARDEFA) have agreed to work together on seeking state funding to eliminate users fees for PSP testing. The Murkowski Administration will support the request. Growers have been asked to send in letters and make calls to their representatives.

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## April PacRim conference packed with HAB, bacterial, virus monitoring advances

by Jessie DeLoach, Chair, PacRim Board

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Pacific Rim (Pac Rim) Shellfish Sanitation Conference will be held April 24 - 27 at the Cape Fox Lodge, in Ketchikan, Alaska. Based upon suggestions from our 2005 conference in Reno, the

Pac Rim Board has pulled together a full program covering a wide range of topics. Since this is non-ISSC Conference year, we will not be formally soliciting proposals; however, we will discuss the 2005 ISSC Conference and address any issues of interest. A board meeting will be held the evening of Monday, April 24, from 6-8.

Agenda highlights include sessions on monitoring phytoplankton to predict HAB bloom events; Microbial Source Tracking (MST); Update on Domoic Acid (DA) Neurotoxicity Research; bacteriophage & coliphage monitoring for viral indicators; the cruise ship discharge study; and updates on *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*, including the Risk Assessment Model, tdh+ monitoring, trends in Vp Research, post-harvest controls; and the ecology and epidemiology of the 2004 Alaska outbreak. A tour of a nearby geoduck hatchery and farm is scheduled for Thursday, April 27.

For information on the hotel and details on attractions and activities go to: <http://capefoxcorp.com/cflodge1.html>. The hotel room rate is \$99.95. Reservations can be made by calling 866-225-8001 and must be made by March 25, 2006 to guarantee the Pac Rim conference rate, so make sure you call them well before the conference. There is also a convenient ferry and airport shuttle (\$20 total per person each way).

The registration fee is \$120 if paid by the early registration deadline of March 20, 2006, or \$150 after that date and includes admittance to all sessions; morning snacks; lunches and afternoon refreshments for both days; plus the evening reception on Tuesday, April 25. Please feel free to give me a call at (360) 236-3302 or call the Pac Rim Vice Chairman, Terry Sawyer, at (415) 663-9218 ext. 203, should you have any questions.



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## NFI Spring Conference in Georgia

The National Fisheries Institute's Spring Conference will take place April 19-22, at the Chateau Élan Resort & Winery in Braselton, Georgia. The Conference focus this year is on marketing trends, consumer trends, and eating trends.

NFI Committees will meet throughout the conference, and the NFI Board Meeting takes place on Saturday morning. Special events include the Welcome Reception on Thursday night; the Golf and Tennis Tournaments; and a day trip to a replica of an Old Bavarian Village in Helen, Georgia. On Friday night, the North Georgia Mountain Reception & Dinner will take place; and the 'Southern Soiree' closes out the conference on Saturday night.

For more information, go to NFI's website: [www.nfi.org](http://www.nfi.org)

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## Current Events

### March

- 6-7: Sea Grant's Shellfish Growers Conference, Shelton, WA. (360) 432-3054, [guatemal@u.washington.edu](mailto:guatemal@u.washington.edu)
- 8: HAZWOPER (Oil Spill Responders) Training, Little Creek Casino, Shelton. 360-754-2741. [www.pacshell.org](http://www.pacshell.org)
- 8: Washington Shellfish Advisory Committee meeting, Dept of Ecology, Rms 152-153, Olympia.
- 12-14: Int'l Boston Seafood Show, [www.bostonseafood.com](http://www.bostonseafood.com); 207-842-5504
- 15-17: Thailand Seafood Buyers visit Washington State. For appointment, contact Rebecca Weber, WSDA, 509-3672-7612. [rweber@agr.wa.gov](mailto:rweber@agr.wa.gov)

### March

- 21: Anthony's Oyster Olympics, Seattle. 206-297-7002. [www.pugetsoundkeeper.org](http://www.pugetsoundkeeper.org)
- 23: PCSGA Board Meeting, Taylor's Conference Room, Shelton. 360-379-9041.
- 23: Organic Aquaculture Conference, The Tolbooth, Jail Wynd, Stirling, Scotland. Emma Watson, 0131 666 2474, or [ewatson@soilassociation.org](mailto:ewatson@soilassociation.org).
- 26-28: NSA Conference - Monterey, CA. <http://shellfish.org/conferences>
- 29: Int'l Assoc. of Culinary Professionals, Seattle. [www.iacp.com](http://www.iacp.com)

### April

- 5-6: ISSC's *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* Subcommittee mtg, Salt Lake City, Radisson Hotel. [www.issc.org](http://www.issc.org)
- 6: ISSC's *Vibrio vulnificus* Education Subcommittee mtg and Vv State Facilitators Workshop, Salt Lake City, Radisson Hotel. [www.issc.org](http://www.issc.org)
- 6: ISSC's *Vibrio* Management Committee mtg, Salt Lake City, Radisson Hotel. [www.issc.org](http://www.issc.org)
- 6-7: ISSC Executive Board meeting, Salt Lake City, Radisson Hotel. [www.issc.org](http://www.issc.org)
- 19-22: NFI's Spring Conference, Chateau Elan Resort, Braselton, Georgia. [www.nfi.org](http://www.nfi.org)

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