

**SITKA SOUND  
SCIENCE CENTER**

834 Lincoln Street, Suite 200  
Sitka, Alaska 99835  
Admin Phone: 907.747.8878  
[www.sitkascience.org](http://www.sitkascience.org)



June 1, 2017

Dear City and Borough Assembly members,

It is a great pleasure to send this proposal request for the Fisheries Enhancement Fund on behalf of the Sitka Sound Science Center(SSSC). The City of Sitka has been a strong support and partner in moving our community forward in salmon enhancement, science research and science education. In addition to our hatchery adding to the common property fishery of Sitka Sound, our visitor programs educate thousands of people about commercial fishing, salmon enhancement, and marine and terrestrial science issues.

The voters approved the Enhancement Funds to be used in part for fisheries enhancement in the Sitka area. Our proposal does exactly what the voters had in mind. SSSC has utilized the dollars from this Fund to provide salmon to the common property fishery in Sitka Sound and Deep Inlet through its operation of the Sheldon Jackson Salmon Hatchery and increasing fishing opportunities near town. In addition, the Sitka Sound Science Center has trained people to work in the salmon enhancement sector and provide support to the aquaculture industry.

Thank you for your past support and for helping us build an organization that is supporting the fishing sector of our community.

Thank you also for your careful consideration of this proposal. I welcome your interest in our organization and invite you to tour the facility with me when it is convenient for you.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Busch', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Busch  
Executive Director  
Sitka Sound Science Center

## **Application City and Borough of Sitka Fisheries Enhancement Fund**

### **Sitka Sound Science Center**

**2017**

**The Sitka Sound Science Center's respectfully requests the City and Borough of Sitka consider providing the Sheldon Jackson Salmon Hatchery \$38,000 from the Fisheries Enhancement Fund. The SJ salmon hatchery work aligns perfectly with the purpose of the Fisheries Enhancement Fund. Our facility is permitted for 12 million chums, 3 million pink and 250,000 coho eggs. The Sitka Sound Science Center produces these fish for the commercial, sport and subsistence harvest in Sitka Sound and Deep Inlet. We have a partnership with the Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture, for whom we provide 9 million chum eggs, returning \$6.1 million total value to the fishing fleets of Sitka over the past ten years. The fish Sitka Sound Science Center releases in front of our facility are worth another \$1.5 million over the last 10 years. Our hatchery fish are caught by sport, subsistence and commercial fishermen in Sitka Sound and surrounding waters and our return site adjacent to the Sage Beach provides a unique opportunity for anglers of all ages to catch salmon.**

#### **History of the Organization: Sitka Sound Science Center**

The Sitka Sound Science Center(SSSC) is a **non-profit 501c3** organization formed in 2007. The Sitka Sound Science Center is dedicated to increasing understanding and awareness of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of Alaska through education and research. Our vision is to build on Sitka's legacy and potential as an educational and scientific community. We have 15 year-round staff members and 14 additional summer employees. We own the 1929-era Sage building that at one time housed the Sheldon Jackson College science classrooms and laboratories. Today we operate the Molly O Ahlgren Aquarium and the **Sheldon Jackson Salmon Hatchery**. Our hatchery contributes to the Sitka Sound common property fishery, the Deep Inlet chum fishery and towards training people in the UAS Fisheries Technology Training Program as well as in the Sitka School District and Mt. Edgecumbe High School. Students in these program are the future of salmon enhancement and fisheries management. This year we provided a new aquaculture hands-on, experiential learning class to Pacific High School students.

The Sheldon Jackson Salmon Hatchery was the first hatchery permitted in the State of Alaska. The hatchery was a production facility and a training location where students learned fisheries biology, natural resource management and fisheries enhancement techniques. Graduates from the fisheries program at Sheldon Jackson College from 1975 to 2007 are now professionals and leaders in fisheries enhancement, management and policy around the State of Alaska. When the Science Center took over operation of the hatchery in 2007, our board remained committed to contributing to the common property fishery and the continuation of the unique training program our location and facility affords.

Today, SSSC delivers high quality science education programs and conducts collaborative research with a number of research institutions from around the nation. SSSC works to conduct research that reflects Sitka's locally relevant scientific questions and in close partnership with fishing interests such as NSRAA, Silver Bay Seafoods, and the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association.

### **Our programs:**

**What's new?** This year we made large improvements to the back of the building where hatchery plumbing was outdated. We replaced the olden wooden stairs that enter the hatchery with safer concrete ones, we upgraded the degassing tank and put it below ground and with funding from the City and the National Science Foundation we replaced old saltwater pipes leading from the saltwater intake to the building. We also obtained a back-up generator so that research and hatchery operations can be maintained during a power outage. We continued our strong partnerships with the University of Alaska Southeast Fish Tech program, NSRAA, Sitka School District, Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, Mt. Edgecumbe High School, Stanford University, University of San Francisco, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Mote Marine Laboratory, NOAA, USGS and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Our dive programs have also grown as the state and the nation become more interested in ocean acidification(OA)and mariculture. University of Santa Cruz conducts dive research on kelp and OA educational programs and has developed a winter dive field course for undergraduates. Our after-school, and summer camps have become enormously popular and our Scientists in the Schools program has been well integrated into the K-12 curriculum for the Sitka School District.

### *Enhancement*

Sitka Sound Science Center is part of the almost \$1 billion aquaculture industry in Alaska. Southeast Alaska hatcheries contribute millions of pounds of fish to commercial, charter, sport, personal use and subsistence fisheries, resulting in the injection of millions of dollars into the Sitka economy. The McDowell study (May 2010) demonstrates how important hatcheries are to our community and regional economy. The SJ Hatchery facility is permitted by the State for 12 million Chums, 3 million Pinks, and 250,000 Coho that return to Crescent Bay, providing important local sport, commercial and charter fishing opportunities near town. Visitors target our fish when fishing near the sea walk and Sage Beach (adjacent to our facility). Our nonprofit organization provides 9 million chum eggs for the Deep Inlet remote release site. **The value of the SSSC's S.J. Hatchery contribution to the Deep Inlet fishery over the last ten years is estimated at \$6.1 million in total value and the commercial catch of fish released from SJ is valued around 1.5 million over the last 10 years.** Because of our location, SSSC-reared salmon are easily accessible to commercial fishermen, recreational and guided sport fishermen including land based sport fishing. The return site adjacent to Sage Beach provides a unique opportunity for anglers to catch salmon from the shore, an opportunity used by children, family

and elders during the salmon return. We also provide salmon carcasses for locals to use for dog food and gardening. In addition, SSSC is training people to work in fisheries enhancement. We have a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Alaska Southeast to provide hands on training to people in the University of Alaska Fisheries Technology Program. **We are the only working training facility hatchery in the State of Alaska, and one of only two in the Pacific Northwest.**

We are part of the State of Alaska \$20 million long term study on the interaction between wild and hatchery chum salmon overseeing the Southeast field crews conducting the research. SSSC continues to conduct controlled research experiments for the hatchery feed company Skretting in which we are testing alternative fish food ingredients. We continue to collaborate on doing research in partnership with University of Alaska Southeast, University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Fisheries, on humpback whales feeding on hatchery released smolt and fry.

SSSC conducts longline fishery research, funded by NOAA, and in partnership with Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the University of Alaska Southeast, the Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Cooperative, and the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association. We also conduct a number of projects for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) related to oil spills and herring fitness.

Our facility receives approximately 14,000 visitors annually and as part of the visitor experience, we provide them with a history of salmon enhancement and commercial, sport and subsistence fishing in Alaska. We teach visitors about the salmon life cycle, how our community depends on fishing for an economic base and the importance of culture in our relationship with the natural world.

### *Community Support*

Sitka Sound Science Center has a wide breadth of community support as represented by our donation and in-kind support from fish processors such as Silver Bay Seafoods, and Sitka Sound Seafoods; private foundations including the Sitka Permanent Charitable Trust, the Boat Company, Rasmuson Foundation, members, and a breadth of individual donations. We are also supported by Douglas Island Pink and Chum (DIPAC) and the Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA). Our Board of Directors represents a cross section of Sitka. Our board members are: Trish White (chair, owner, White's Pharmacy); Kitty LaBounty (vice chair, UAS); Justin Penny (Wells Fargo), Linda Waller (co-secretary, Sitka Sound Seafoods); Nancy LeClerc-Davidson ( co-secretary, retired ); Steve Clayton (building contractor); Rob Allen (Sitka Community Hospital administrator, treasurer);; Madison Kosma (UAF graduate student)

**Dollars Requested:** Sitka Sound Science Center respectfully requests the balance of the fisheries enhancement fund \$38,000

**Statement of what will be achieved with the funding:** Fisheries Enhancement funding will enable Sitka Sound Science Center to maintain its hatchery production and enhancement operations. The monies from the Fisheries Enhancement Fund go directly into supporting hatchery operations and funding our aquaculture director. This position is responsible for overseeing fish health, tagging fish, water quality monitoring, research operations, facility issues and other essential hatchery tasks that support strong, healthy fish releases. Because of the small size of our facility, cost recovery fishing does not pay all the bills for operations. The funds provided by the fish box tax are vital for our organization, particularly this year with diminished federal and state opportunities for grants and contracts.

**Explanation of how this will enhance the fisheries within the City and Borough of Sitka:** Sitka Sound Science Center provides fisheries enhancement in many ways. We directly contribute to salmon fishing opportunities for all users in Sitka by:

- Enhance the quantity of fish stocks returning to Sitka Sound by releasing 250,000 Coho, 3 million Chum and 3 million Pink salmon that return to Crescent Bay.
- Enhance and contribute to the Deep Inlet terminal fishery in partnership with NSRAA to release 9 million Chum salmon.

Additionally, we ensure fisheries enhancement into the future by:

- Train adults and students to become competent aquaculture technicians for work at NSRAA or other hatcheries/salmon enhancement projects through on-the-job training and UAS Fisheries Technology class laboratories.
- Introduce K-12 students to fisheries enhancement, science and other marine related disciplines as options for their future careers by providing hands-on laboratories and supporting science curriculum at all Sitka Schools.
- Educate visitors about hatcheries and how salmon enhancement works in conjunction with wild salmon management and conservation in Southeast Alaska
- Educate visitors and residents about the important role of commercial, sport and subsistence fishing to Sitka's economy, lifestyle and culture.
- Provide internship opportunities for college students studying science and to work in science education and hatchery operations during the summer.
- Provide summer employment opportunities for Sitka High School students to work in science education and hatchery operations.

**ATTACHED:**

**Hatchery Pro Forma**

**SSSC recent Balance Sheet and Support Letter from NSRAA**

NORTHERN



SOUTHEAST REGIONAL AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION, INC.

(907) 747-6850  
FAX (907) 747-1470  
EMAIL [steve\\_reifenstuhl@nsraa.org](mailto:steve_reifenstuhl@nsraa.org)

1308 Sawmill Creek Road Sitka, Alaska 99835

June 2, 2017

**RE: Support for Sitka Sound Science Center 2017 Fish Box Tax Request**

Dear Mayor Hunter & Sitka Assembly,

The Sitka Sound Science Center through its operation of the Sheldon Jackson Hatchery fully meets the criteria for receiving the 2017 Fish Box Tax funds in the category for salmon enhancement. SSSC conducts and is committed to salmon enhancement programs that benefit common property fisheries in Sitka. No other entity in Sitka, applying for the funds, fulfills that mission. In addition, SSSC provides several functions that support enhancement programs in important and fundamental ways, including kindergarten to college science education and aquaculture research, as well as providing student/employee salmon hatchery training.

Commercial fishermen have benefited directly from the 12 million chum eggs (increased from 10 million in 2013) associated with the Sheldon Jackson Hatchery permit. If it were not for SSSC operating the hatchery there would be 125,000 fewer adult chum salmon to catch in Sitka Sound each year. The total value of the SJ hatchery chum caught in Deep Inlet by the commercial fleet from 2007 to 2016 is \$6,100,000. These dollars flow through Sitka's economy. While the ex-vessel value accrues to fishermen and the community, it doesn't pay for the SJ hatchery program which is why the box tax is significant and important to SSSC.

NSRAA is a private non-profit fisheries enhancement organization based in Sitka. We have several large salmon production facilities that benefit commercial, sport, subsistence, and personal use fishermen in the region. The NSRAA board is comprised of 15 commercial fishermen representing the three salmon gear groups, one crew seat, and 9 non-commercial seats including subsistence, conservation, municipality, Native organization, and sport fishermen. NSRAA has a strong partnership with Sitka Sound Science Center that began at its inception. NSRAA believes SSSC is ideally suited for receipt of the fish box tax, and wholly deserves the funds.

The SJ hatchery was one of the very first permitted enhancement facilities in the State of Alaska. It has been producing salmon for common property fisheries in Sitka Sound since 1975. Importantly, SSSC has improved the hatchery infrastructure, staff, and programs. Fishermen depend on SSSC's 12 million permitted chum eggs.

Please support this important enhancement operation in Sitka.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Steve Reifenstuhl'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Steve Reifenstuhl, General Manager

**Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association**





**Sitka Sound Science Center**  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of June 1, 2017

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	<u>Jun 1, 17</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Checking/Savings	701,796.98
Accounts Receivable	35,786.34
Other Current Assets	41,798.29
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<u>779,381.61</u>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<u>2,415,120.83</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><u>3,194,502.44</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Current Liabilities	56,127.73
Long Term Liabilities	635,109.67
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>691,237.40</u>
<b>Equity</b>	<u>2,503,265.04</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><u>3,194,502.44</u></u>