

To promote aquaculture development that supports First Nation communities, culture and values

Aboriginal Aquaculture Association NEWSLETTER

Issue 3

March 2005

• **Aboriginal Aquaculture Association 1182** Homathco Drive, Campbell River, B.C. V9W 1G6

Phone: (250) 286-9939 Fax: (250) 286-9931 Email: richard@aboriginalaquaculture.com

AAROM Funding Agreement Reached

It is with great pleasure to announce that the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association (AAA) has signed an Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM) Agreement with the Department of Fisheries in Oceans (DFO), effective February 2005. The Agreement provides seed financing to enable the AAA to meet with First Nations communities to discuss needs, interests and issues with respect to aquaculture development and to prepare a long-term strategic plan for the AAA in this important industry. Funding has been provided to carry out the core consultation and planning activities and allow us to move forward with our plans enhancing the strengths of the organization, expanding membership and building our capacity to support Aboriginal communities in sustainable aquaculture development.

Over the past two years, the AAA has made significant strides toward acquiring the capacity to assume this role. In addition to working with our membership we have developed close working relationships with government, academic and private aquaculture research organizations, government regulatory and development agencies (both with the Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia), the aquaculture industry and a core group of aquaculture development professionals. To date, the operations of the AAA have been limited to British Columbia, although the potential and intention exist to open chapters in other areas of Canada. We now have the

resources to assist with our efforts to make sustainable aboriginal aquaculture development a reality.

DFO's AAROM program is designed to promote the increased involvement of Aboriginal groups that have not signed treaties in fisheries and oceans management decision making in commercial fisheries and aquaculture. The approach being taken is to encourage the organization of Aboriginal groups into watershed or ecosystem based bodies. These bodies will also receive funding to acquire and maintain the capacity to participate in resource management decision-making and to assist Aboriginal groups to participate in commercial fisheries and aquaculture development, leading to an enhanced quality of life and self-sustainability among Aboriginal groups.

The AAROM program recognizes that there is a role for "sectoral" groups to coordinate, assist and support activities in pursuit of a particular AAROM objective (such as commercial fishing or aquaculture) in a broader geographic context. The AAA is now a recognized sectoral group for aquaculture under the AAROM initiative. In keeping with the objectives of the Association the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association was formed to promote and assist the involvement of First Nations in aquaculture and aquaculture development that supports First Nations communities, culture and values. We are not competing with other AAROM bodies - we are providing an important resource to them to facilitate their efforts in aquaculture.

Scope of Work

The initial AAROM funding agreement will enable the AAA to pursue core consultation and planning activities to solidify the AAA's position as a sectoral body for Aboriginal aquaculture development. This will involve the following activities which will enable the AAA to secure additional financial support from DFO and other agencies. Specifically, the AAA's initial work plan will focus on:

1. Identifying and developing opportunities for regional and band-level First Nation aquaculture development
 - Opportunities assessments for current and alternative species development
 - Identification of needs and challenges
 - Market identification, and access
 - Bio-physical resource potential and site identification
 - Technology transfer
 - Quality control/quality assurance
2. Identifying and working to resolve specific needs and challenges pertaining to the sustainable development of aquaculture
 - Policy and regulatory efficiency
 - Access to financing
 - Training, skills development, apprenticeships, mentoring
 - Research and technology transfer
 - Production, processing, food Safety, marketing and distribution
3. Establishing Communications amongst AAROM bodies, First Nations and other stakeholders having an interest in sustainable aquaculture development
 - Regional/national forums
 - Technical Workshops
 - Website development and maintenance
 - Newsletters
4. Establishing an environmental monitoring and audit program to enhance the sustainability of the sector
 - Environmental management program for sustainable aquaculture
 - Dissemination of information regarding best practices
 - Monitoring and Enforcement
 - Incentives and sanctions for compliance enforcement

Planning Workshop – Date change to: April 21-22, 2005

The AAA will host its first formal planning workshop with First Nations communities on April 21st and 22nd. The objective of the workshop is to solicit input on how the AAA can best serve its members' needs to

support sustainable Aboriginal aquaculture development in British Columbia. We believe that such input will enable the association to better define the services and support functions that the AAA will provide

and to make sure that they are aligned with the key needs of First Nations.

“Our objective is to work with First Nation communities to address specific needs and to overcome the challenges in achieving economic and environmental sustainable aquaculture development”.

Thursday April 21 & Friday April 22 at the Best Western Austrian Chalet, 462 South Island Highway, Campbell River. RSVP to (250) 286-9939 or by e-mail to either richard@aboriginalaquaculture.com or to margueriteparker@shaw.ca

