



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.

For the meeting of: July 25, 2017

Date: July 17, 2017
To: Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor Mike Wilson
Subject: Letter of Support for Coast Seafood's request before the California Coastal Commission for an extension of their existing permit

RECOMMENDATION(S): That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Chair to sign the letter of support.

SOURCE OF FUNDING: N/A

DISCUSSION: The California Coastal Commission will be considering Coast Seafood's request for an extension of their existing permit at their August, 2017 meeting. The Board of Supervisors has been asked for a letter of support for Coast Seafood's request to extend their existing permit.

Aquaculture is a valuable public trust use in Humboldt Bay and an important part of Humboldt County's economy. Well managed shellfish farming can co-exist with other important bay resources and uses while protecting and enhancing high water quality. Humboldt Bay is the largest producer of oysters in California and Humboldt County and its residents continue to support this sustainable industry.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS: Letter of Support.

Prepared by Kathy Hayes

Signature

REVIEW:

Auditor County Counsel Personnel Risk Manager Other

TYPE OF ITEM:

XX Consent
Departmental
Public Hearing
Other

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.

Meeting of:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
Upon motion of Supervisor Seconded by Supervisor

Ayes
Nays
Abstain
Absent

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated:

By:

Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board

July 25, 2017

Jack Ainsworth, Executive Director  
California Coastal Commission  
45 Fremont Street, Suite # 2000  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2219

Dear Director Ainsworth and Honorable Coastal Commissioners:

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors would like to offer their support for the proposed extension to the existing Coast Seafood permit in an effort to continue to seek a long term agreement for future shellfish culture in Humboldt Bay.

Humboldt Bay is California's second largest bay with approximately 17,760 acres in area with about 5,650 acres of eelgrass beds and 287 acres of mariculture. The bay and surrounding lands have been the home of the Wiyot people for thousands of years. Since the 1850's the bay has been a deep water port servicing our timber industry and fishing fleet. It is widely considered one of the more pristine and productive estuaries on the west coast and we are proud of the environmental stewardship our county has played helping to protect this invaluable resource.

Humboldt Bay has a long history of mariculture and is the producer of the majority of oysters in California and proclaimed the oyster capital of California by the legislature. We support shellfish culture and its consideration as an appropriate and valuable public trust use in balance and co-existence with other public benefits such as fishing, commerce, boating, tourism, hunting and clamming. It is an important part of our economy and working waterfront that allows many people from all over California and the nation to connect with and enjoy the bounty that our rich coastline has to offer.

Our Board also recognizes the significant community investment the shellfish growers have made in their efforts to maintain and improve the water quality of Humboldt Bay. In many estuaries around the world the connection between water quality, ecosystem health, and shellfish culture is noteworthy. Had our bay not have had a strong mariculture presence for the last 100 years the bay would look significantly different than it does today; think San Francisco Bay and it's loss of eelgrass. Shellfish farmers have been instrumental in preventing planned and accidental pulp mill and sewage discharges from directly entering into the bay. They continue to be strong advocates for storm water and point discharge regulations and projects essential to protecting Humboldt Bay's water quality.

Our Board recognizes the need for good resource management using sound science and responsible decisions based on that science. The shellfish industry here strives to encourage and embrace this sound science and management and has changed considerably over the years in order to minimize and eliminate negative impacts, improve ecological services and improve co-existence with other public trust uses and resources. As a result of this effort, Humboldt Bay is widely considered one of the most progressive and well managed shellfish culture areas on the West Coast.

Humboldt County and its residents continue to support this sustainable and responsible industry and would encourage the California Coastal Commission's efforts to renew Coast Seafood's existing farm and allow for efforts to continue to explore alternative methods and areas for the growth of this industry.

Sincerely,

Virginia Bass, Chair  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

VB:kh