



The Alutiiq Pride

THE CHUGACH REGIONAL RESOURCES COMMISSION'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2025



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ALUTIIQ PRIDE MARINE INSTITUTE



CELEBRATING ALUTIIQ PRIDE MARINE INSTITUTE

APMI is officially ours! As of this past April, we successfully purchased Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute from the City of Seward with the support of partners, NDNCollective and First Nations Development Institute. This is an exciting development for CRRC and a resounding step towards Land Back. This September, we finally made time to celebrate!

Our APMI celebration featured delicious food, good company, lots of laughter, and many pounds of potatoes! We are grateful to our Board Chairman, Boyd Selanoff, for speaking to the significance of our purchase of Alutiiq Pride, what it means to

reclaim space for our Tribal organization and the impactful work we can accomplish with APMI as our own. Thank you to our friends at the City of Seward for supporting this work and sharing with our guests how community partnership can facilitate meaningful change. Thank you to our partners at NDNCollective and First Nations Development Institute for joining us and speaking on the importance of the Land Back movement and building power together. Without both of these organizations, purchasing APMI would not have been possible. Qu yana.

Thank you to Primrose Provisions for catering our event. Shout out to the Prince William Sound Stewardship Foundation for supporting an excellent potato harvest! Deep gratitude to Qutekcak Native Tribe for opening the event with a land acknowledgement. Thank you to all of our family, friends, community members, Elders, and partners that joined us on a beautiful, rainy day in Seward to celebrate this exciting occasion.

QUYANA.



2025 APMI
CELEBRATION

FRESH FACES IN THE FIELD

CROM 2025
SEASON RECAP

We're excited to welcome two new samplers to the Chugach Regional Ocean Monitoring (CROM) field team! As part of CROM, they'll play a key role in collecting high-quality environmental samples, supporting community-based monitoring, and supporting community-based monitoring to build baseline environmental data and inform communities on subsistence shellfish harvests. Their addition strengthens our capacity to serve and deepen our understanding of local ecosystems. We're thrilled to have them on board!



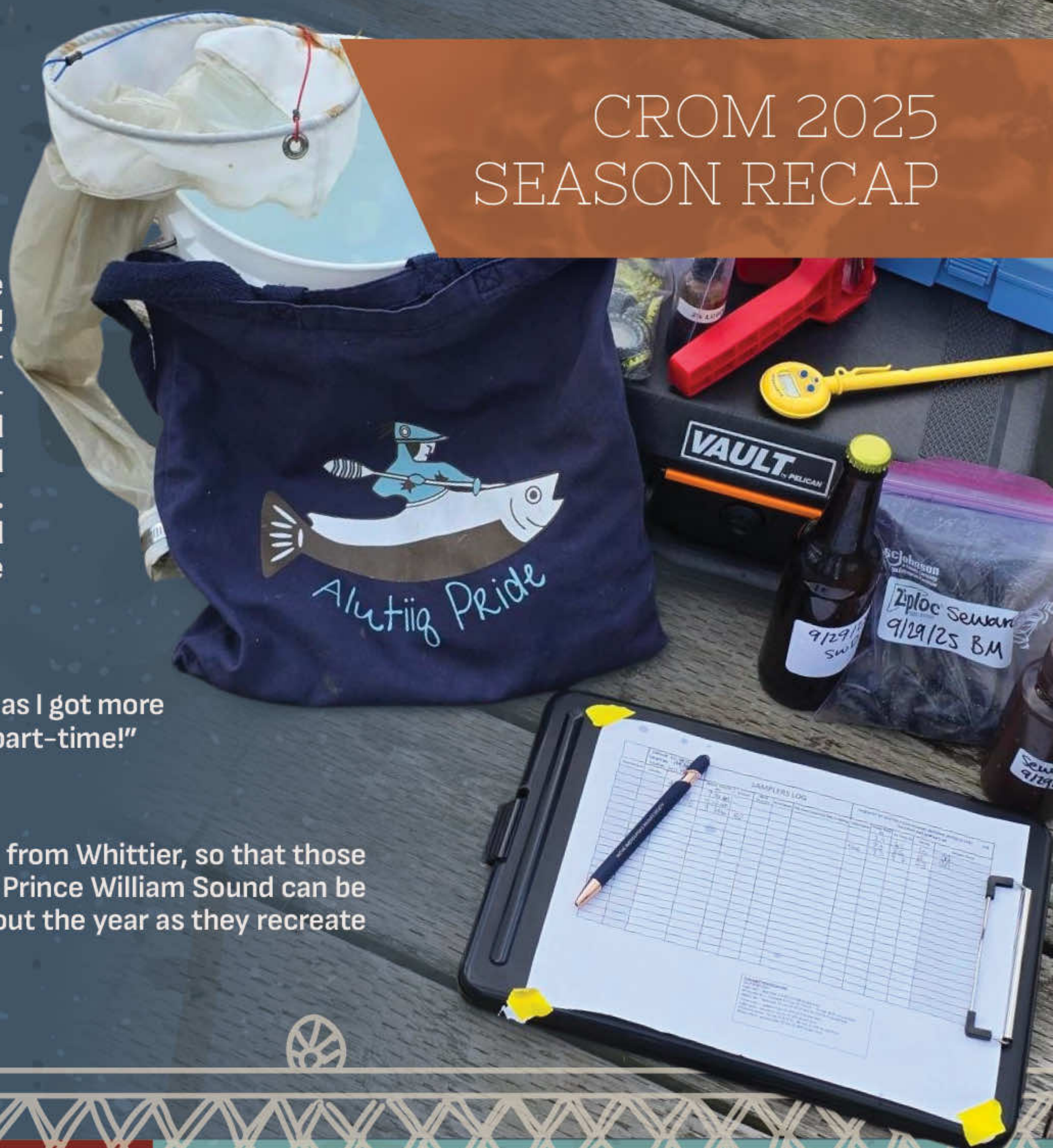
SEU DEMAS

"I started sampling for extra income, but as I got more into it, I started to love what I was doing part-time!"



AUBREY JURGERSON

"I'm excited to provide samples to CRRC from Whittier, so that those who rely on Whittier as their gateway to Prince William Sound can be well informed about our waters throughout the year as they recreate and participate in subsistence here."



WHAT IS BEING SAMPLED AND WHY?

Phytoplankton tows are analyzed in the CROM Biology Lab; species of particular interest are *Pseudo-nitzschia* and *Alexandrium*. These phytoplankton can produce domoic acid and saxitoxin, which have the potential to cause Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning (ASP) and Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP), respectively.

Blue mussel samples are also sent in and are tested for both domoic acid and saxitoxin to inform subsistence shellfish harvests.

Ocean acidification water samples are sent to the CROM Chemistry Lab where they are processed to better understand the composition of our region's sea water, including looking at measurements such as pH.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The CROM team is gearing up to begin sending quarterly reports to participating communities. The data collected from this program are specific to each community and paint a bigger picture about ecological health throughout our region.



View the NEW Chugach Region Ocean Monitoring StoryMap

tinyurl.com/5dbnpdcx



TANKS, TIDES, & TECH



▲ Spore germination experiment based on starting density of cultures



▲ Gametophyte production results from one module of our Industrial Plankton Bioreactor

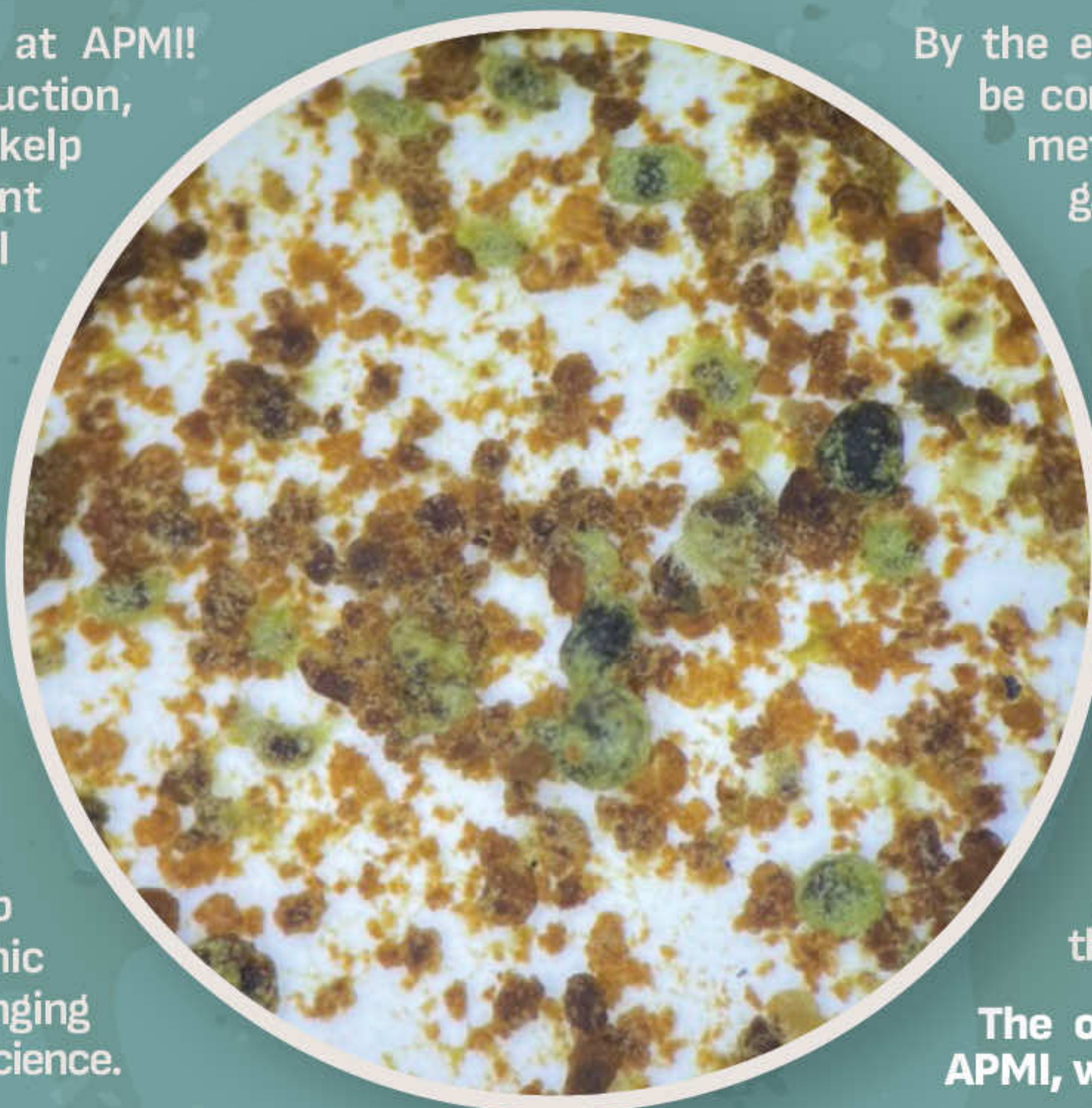
SEEDING THE FUTURE

- APMI'S QUEST FOR THE PERFECT KELP

By Cameron Jardell, Mariculture Biologist at APMI

Exciting things are happening at APMI! A new wave tank is under construction, designed to test a variety of kelp seeding methods at different depths. This cutting-edge tool will help us better understand the dynamics of kelp growth and advance the success of sustainable kelp farming.

Meanwhile, our team is gearing up for an outplant experiment in Kachemak Bay, where we'll be testing several kelp seeding techniques with the local sugar kelp species. This project is a collaborative effort with the NOAA Kachemak Bay Lab and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts, bringing together local expertise and global science.



By the end of October, APMI researchers will be comparing traditional kelp spore seeding methods with the innovative kelp gametophyte seeding approach. The latter may offer more growth control and efficiency, potentially boosting yield while using less space.

We are also teaming up with the Kachemak Bay Kelp Hub on a kelp cosmetic project, exploring how locally grown kelp can be used in products like lotions and creams. This initiative is not only about innovation but also about creating new income opportunities for our coastal communities and inspiring greater interest in kelp farming across the region.

The ocean is full of possibilities, and at APMI, we're diving in!

Above: Stereoscope image of well-developed sugar kelp gametophytes on filter paper

MEET MICHAEL OPHEIM

TRIBAL FISH & WILDLIFE LIAISON

TRIBAL FISH & WILDLIFE

Okay, who are we kidding? You probably already know him. Michael is CRRC's Tribal Fish & Wildlife Liaison. Based in Seldovia with family ties to Ouzinkie, Michael enjoys fishing, hunting, and spending time with his dog, Buddy.

He's instrumental to CRRC, attending regulatory meetings, consulting on projects, and compiling the monthly Tribal Fish & Wildlife Report. He does it all.

We recently sat down with Michael to talk about his work. When asked how he'd describe his role, he said:

"It's a role I'm excited to wake up for. It challenges me and helps me learn more about our region and our people. I believe in this work."

Michael finds his work deeply fulfilling, especially being part of a team focused on food security for Alaska Native communities.

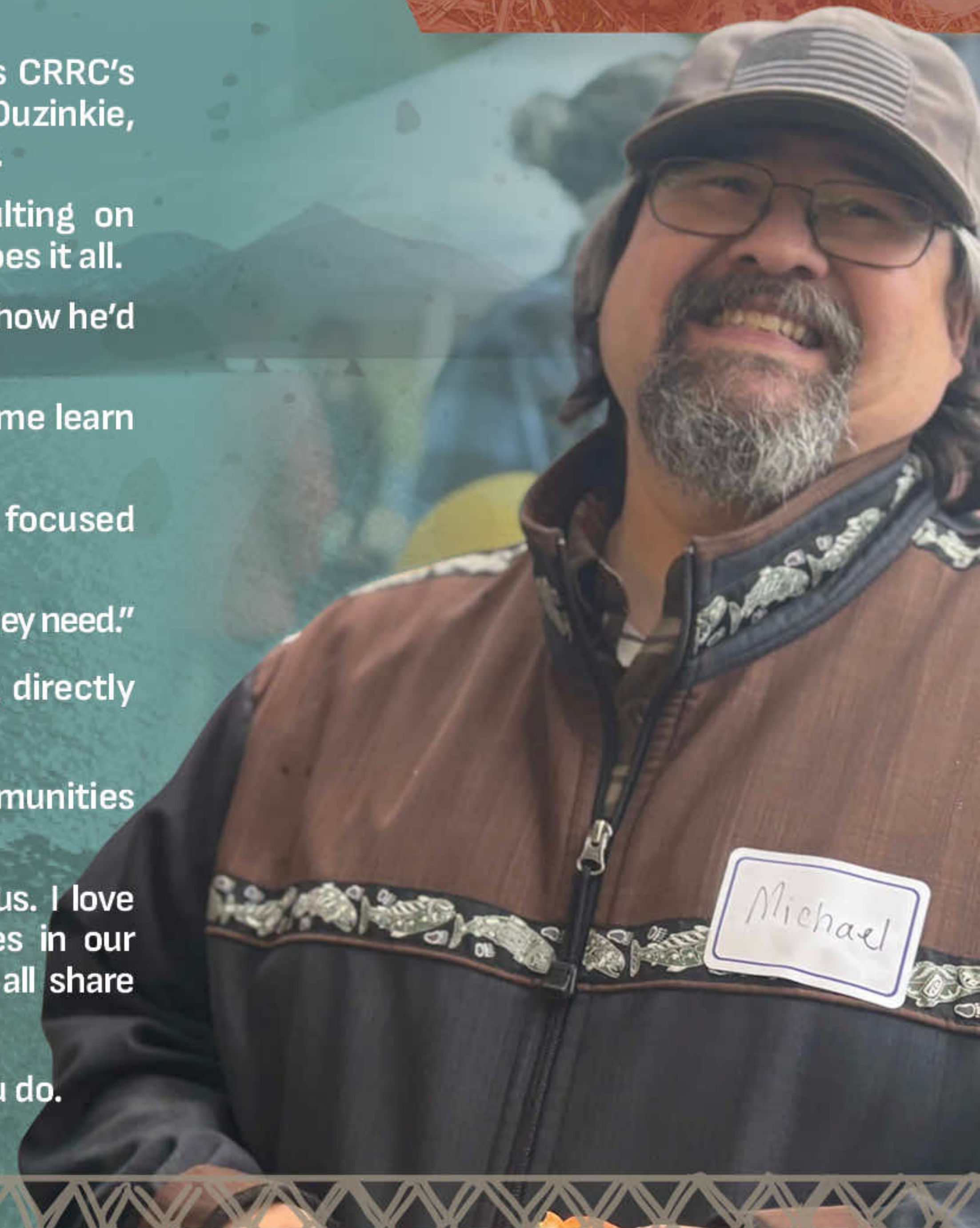
"Our foods are part of us, and people feel it when they don't have what they need."

His favorite parts of the job include collaborating with staff, working directly with communities, and learning from Elders and Tribal members.

Looking ahead, Michael is excited for projects that bring him into communities to listen, learn, and help.

"When people are excited about the work, that energy is infectious. I love helping organize Alliance meetings, trainings, and sharing updates in our newsletter. I also enjoy working across departments because we all share common goals."

Michael, we're so lucky to have you on our team. Quyanara for all that you do.



ENGLISH BAY LAKES CLEANUP EFFORTS MOVE FORWARD

Our Tribal Fish & Wildlife Fisheries Program has been busy this fall! Fisheries Biologist Madeline Lee has been working closely with the Nanwalek community to clean up English Bay Lakes and remove derelict hatchery net pens. Decades-old debris, including a wooden net pen, sunken skiff, floats, pipes, and metal, was removed through the coordinated efforts of Nanwalek, CRRC, and partners. Over 30 metal walkway pieces, each weighing around 1,200 lbs, were airlifted from the lake system with support from Maritime Helicopters LLC, Pursuit Maritime LLC, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Nanwalek IRA Council.

We're thrilled these materials are being repurposed for community projects such as reinforcing 4-wheeler trails, building a lagoon dock, and creating a culvert for fish passage. Teamwork makes the dream work. Quyanara to the Nanwalek community, our partners at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and all who supported this cleanup effort.

FILM PREMIERE IN NANWALEK

In September, our Tribal Fish & Wildlife Director, Fisheries Biologist, and filmmaker Bjørn Olson screened a film in Nanwalek for the community. Highlighting the deep ties between salmon, culture, and subsistence, the film was made with Tribal member support. Watch it now on YouTube!



tinyurl.com/4zfya4an

KIDS CORNER + ELDER SPOTLIGHT



KIDS CORNER MT. ECCLES CULTURE WEEK



BEKS RUMLEY

We were thrilled to be able to attend the 2025 Mt. Eccles School Culture Week in Cordova. This educational event is organized annually by the Native Village of Eyak with support from the school. This year our Education and Outreach Specialist and Climate Change Coordinator brought three activities for cultural programming. One activity focused on how animals and people adapt to the often cold and often wet environment of Prince William Sound by testing how blubber, down feathers, and human skin adapt to cold water. The second lesson built on the idea of adapting to the world around us using natural resources by asking students to match animals to the Traditional clothing, handicrafts, and items they were used to make. The third lesson focused on mariculture and ocean monitoring, ending with a trivia game for the students.

Mt. Eccles Culture Week brings Traditional knowledge, handicrafts, and foods into the classroom. We are grateful to participate in this meaningful and fun event!

AwA'ahdah to the Native Village of Eyak for organizing and facilitating Culture Week (and supporting CRRC's participation!). Special acknowledgement to Danaya Hoover for her hand work in making this event special for all students. Thank you to Mt. Eccles School staff for supporting this event. Deep gratitude to the Elders and Tribal members who volunteered their time and knowledge to Culture Week programming. Qu yana. AwA'ahdah.

ELDER SPOTLIGHT

WITH DIANE SELANOFF

TEACHING AT CRRC'S STAFF RETREAT

At CRRC's annual staff retreat in September, Elder and Community Catalyst, Diane Selanoff of Valdez led team members in sewing salmon leather and fur keychains. Diane often teaches classes on fur sewing in her community to a wide range of audiences. When asked what teaching means to her, Diane said, "We are always learning, always absorbing information. That's why teaching is important; teaching and learning can be directed."

During the handicraft session, Diane also spoke on Chugach region history, language, and told stories of the region. Diane has also recently become CRRC's Community Catalysts for Valdez, a role with our Alaska Southcoast Partnership, which supports community-driven priority projects in our region.

Qu yana, Diane! Thank you for sharing your knowledge with our team!



DIANE SELANOFF

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT

▲ CRRC EDUCATION & OUTREACH DIRECTOR, CAROL, AND QUTEKCAK ELDER COLETTE BRANTINGHAM IN THE CLASSROOM!

Chugachmiut EDUCATOR SUMMIT

Our Education & Outreach team works across the region to create meaningful learning opportunities for students as well as community members of all ages. We are grateful to work with our Tribes and regional partners to implement place-based and culturally responsive education.

Early this fall, our Education and Outreach team attended Chugachmiut's Educator Summit. Facilitated by the Alaska Humanities Forum and Chugachmiut educators, this two-day workshop provided participants with an opportunity to discuss pathways towards educational goals for the Chugach region. This summit was informed by the previous gathering of the Tribal Education Committee (TEC), a working group of Tribal leaders from our seven communities brought together to identify goals related to what education, language, and culture can look like for future generations. The TEC's initial discussions brought forth topics such as re-awakening culture and language, support for adult learners, reclaiming schools as spaces that represent Chugach communities, and building partnerships. The Educator Summit utilized these goals as anchors to create meaningful workshop time for local regional educators. Sessions focused on further prioritizing language and culture into schools, teacher prep, student needs, advocacy, and educational sovereignty.

We are grateful for the guidance and vision of the Tribal Education Committee. Our deepest thanks to Chugachmiut for facilitating and organizing this event and to the Alaska Humanities Forum for running the workshop. Finally, thank you to the Alaska Native Heritage Center for hosting us. Quyana.

To learn more about Chugachmiut's education work and the Tribal Education Committee, please visit:



tinyurl.com/yau7u5kf



tinyurl.com/4n5wwvjy



▲ NVE TRIBAL MEMBER, TEAL HANSEN, AT CAMP IN CORDOVA



▲ ELDER NANCY YEATON OF NANWALEK SHARES DURING A KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE IN KENAI FJORDS



▲ NVE TRIBAL MEMBER, DANAYA HOOVER, INSTRUCTS STUDENTS DURING MT. ECCLES CULTURE WEEK

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS EDITION OF *The Alutiiq Pride*

In future editions, we hope this page can be a space for our communities to share photos, artwork, stories, recipes and more. After all, this is your newsletter! CRRC works on behalf of the Chugach region Tribes to support our subsistence way of life and promote community wellbeing. We want to hear from you!

Have something you'd like to share?

Contact our Education & Outreach Specialist, Robin, at robin@crrcalaska.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



• NOV •
7

Ocean Sciences Festival
Mt. Eccles School, Cordova, Alaska

• NOV •
7-9

Native Village of Eyak Sobriety
Cordova, Alaska

• NOV •
7-9

Sitka Whalefest
Sitka, Alaska

• JAN •
26-30

Alaska Marine Science Symposium
Anchorage, Alaska

• JAN •
2-6

Alaska Forum on the Environment
Anchorage, Alaska

• FEB •
12-15

Cordova Science Gathering
Cordova, Alaska

Have an event coming up in your community?

Let us know so we can add it to our next newsletter! Email Robin at robin@crrcalaska.org.

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP, KNOWLEDGE, AND GUIDANCE

AWA'AHDAH • QUWANAKCUK • QUYANA • GUNALCHÉESH • THANK YOU



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For feedback or questions regarding the newsletter, please reach out to our Education & Outreach Specialist directly at robin@crrcalaska.org. For any other inquiries, contact us at admin@crrcalaska.org.