



The Alutiiq Pride

THE CHUGACH REGIONAL RESOURCES COMMISSION'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2026

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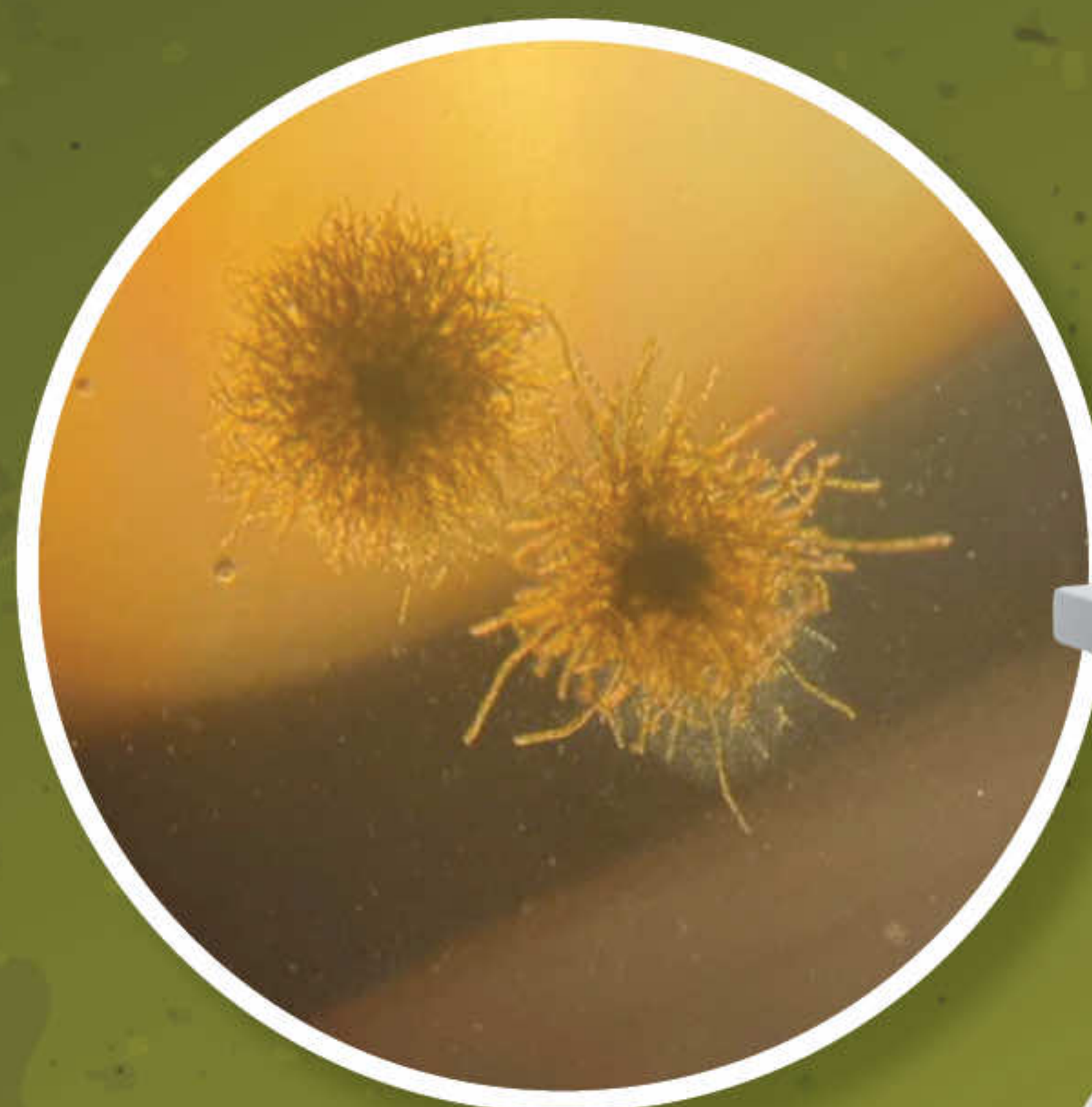
KELP MARICULTURE SYNOPSIS



2025 WAS A GREAT YEAR FOR CRRC'S KELP MARICULTURE PROGRAM!

KELP PROGRAM UPDATE

- ▶ In spring of 2025, we celebrated our very first harvest from the Passage Island kelp farm, marking an exciting step forward for locally grown kelp. With the help of dedicated community farm monitors, we collected sorus tissue to support this year's growing season and strengthen community involvement from seed to sea.
- ▶ We also partnered with the Port Graham Corporation to host a hands-on outplanting workshop for secondary students in Port Graham, to provide an opportunity for students and community members to see kelp farming in action and get a better sense of CRRC's monitoring efforts at the farm.
- ▶ Gametophyte laboratory aims to establish protocols and capacity for alternative methods of seeding Sugar kelp on farms.
- ▶ The lab has sustained cultures since 2024, improved operational capacity with new equipment (such as the Industrial Plankton Seaweed Bioreactors), and tested methods of growth looking at growth rates as a function of density of spores and gametophytes.
- ▶ The lab is currently preparing a trial of seeding kelp lines in Kachemak bay with gametophytes.
- ▶ We wrapped 2025 up on a delicious note by hosting a kelp pasta lunch with the Qutekcak Native Tribe—celebrating kelp not just as a resource, but as food, culture, and connection!



▲ Sugar kelp gametophytes, male on left, female on right.



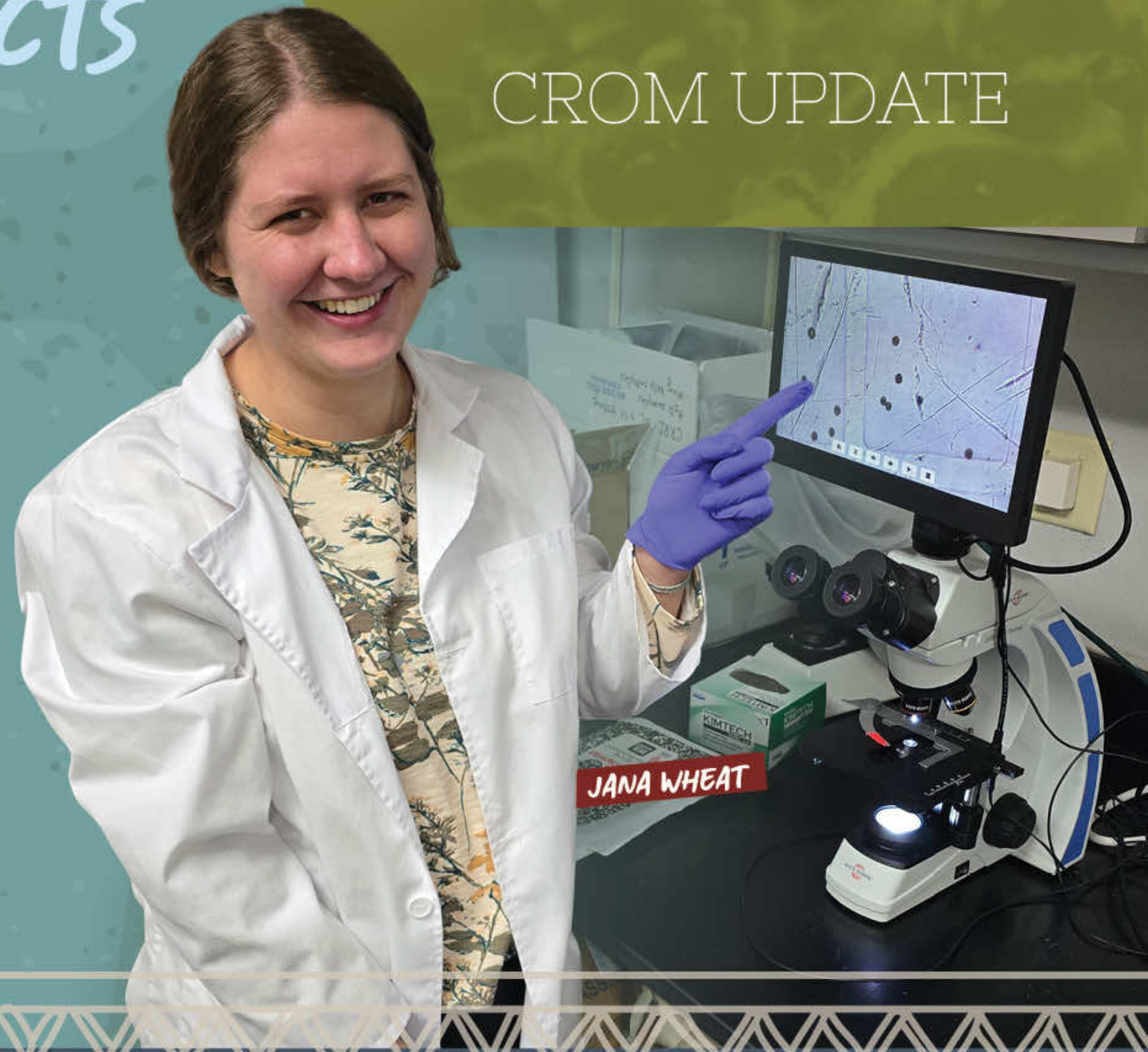
RESEARCH AND PROJECTS

CLAM MOLECULAR RESEARCH

Through the UAF EPSCoR Interface of Change project, APMI biology and mariculture staff are working with Dr. Glass at UAF to study molecular markers in butter and littleneck clams. Samples from seven life stages were collected for DNA sequencing to better understand lifecycle traits and population connectivity.

CROM CULTURES

Biology Lab Technician Jana Wheat has successfully expanded cultures of *Alexandrium catenella*, a harmful algal species linked to paralytic shellfish poisoning. This work, in partnership with Dr. Tomco at UAA, will support studies on blue mussel metabolic responses. We thank NOAA and UAA collaborators for their support.



CROM UPDATE



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

SEWARD SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

CROM staff attended and presented at the annual Seward Science Symposium alongside the Alaska SeaLife Center. The event made possible by CRRC, ASLC, Ocean Alaska Science and Learning Center (OASLC) National Park Service and UAF Seward Marine Center planning committee, called Steward of the Bay. The presentation highlighted regional trends in harmful algal species and toxins in Seward.

NATIONAL OCEAN SCIENCE BOWL

Chemistry Lab Manager Sierra Lloyd has joined the National Ocean Science Bowl as a coach, supporting Seward high school students in oceanography and marine biology. This year's project theme is marine conservation and restoration, and one team is researching APMI's beach restoration work.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

HIGH SCHOOL INTERN SUCCESS

Former CROM intern Maddie Haus is preparing her college applications, featuring her experience working with algae and blue mussel samples in the Biology Lab. Congratulations, Maddie! 🥳

2025 TRIBAL FISH & WILDLIFE RECAP



PHOTO CREDIT: RAVEN CUNNINGHAM



COHO SMOLT



MADDY ELECTRO FISHING



NET PEN PARTS IN RIVER BEING REMOVED

PROGRAM UPDATES AND PARTNERSHIPS

CRRC continues to support community based research, monitoring, and restoration through regional partnerships.

NANWALEK SALMON ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

The Nanwalek Salmon Enhancement Traditional Ecological Knowledge Project documents the cultural and ecological connection between the people of Nanwalek and their salmon fisheries. Partners include the Nanwalek IRA Council, Alaska Pacific University, and the Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledge and Science. The project will be featured at the National Museum of Natural History beginning April 20, 2025.

CORDOVA SUBSISTENCE SURVEYS

CRRC, Native Village of Eyak, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Forest Service are conducting updated subsistence surveys to assess harvest changes since 2014.

WILDLIFE MONITORING

Moose population studies in Lower Cook Inlet and King's Bay are underway to support subsistence hunting. CRRC and ADFG are also compiling deer and black bear harvest data to create a hunting pressure map.

eDNA MONITORING

A new eDNA lab in Seward is analyzing water samples to track herring presence and harmful algae trends beyond Chugach region communities.

BOARD OF GAME TRAINING

CRRC hosted a Tribal Fish and Wildlife Department Board of Game training to strengthen understanding of the process and support unified subsistence advocacy.

SALMON STREAM SURVEYS

CRRC and ADFG surveyed salmon streams in Port Graham and Nanwalek to identify and protect anadromous fish habitat.

ENGLISH BAY LAKES CLEANUP

CRRC's Tribal Fisheries Program and the Nanwalek removal crew completed Phases 2 and 3 of the English Bay Lakes cleanup. Remaining hatchery era debris was removed and will be repurposed for community trail improvements, fish passage restoration, and lagoon dock construction.

STAFF UPDATES

Hanna Hellen joins CRRC as Tribal Marine Mammal Biologist. Dustin Carl has been promoted to Department Director following four years as Wildlife Biologist. Rick Merizon has also joined the CRRC team.



HANNA HELLEN
Tribal Marine
Mammal Biologist



DUSTIN CARL
Tribal Fish & Wildlife
Director and
Tribal Wildlife Biologist



RICK MERIZON
Tribal Wildlife
Biologist



ASCP

Alaska South Coast Partnership

ALASKA SOUTH COAST PARTNERSHIP



INTRODUCING ALASKA SOUTH COAST PARTNERSHIP (ASCP)

The Alaska South Coast Partnership (ASCP) is here to enhance community resilience across the Sugpiaq/Alutiiq and Eyak homeland through collaborative partnerships. We're responding to community calls for a regional network that can bring together partners to share resources, uplift local leadership, and implement community-driven solutions in South Central Alaska.

WHAT IS ASCP?

ASCP is supported by the Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRRC), the Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute (KALI), and the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA), and includes a variety of additional partners, ranging from Tribal governments and Native corporations to local farmers and scientists. Our network is based on a commitment across organizations and individuals to a common goal, shared infrastructure, and mutually reinforcing activities.

OUR VISION

Together, we envision a future that is equitable, prosperous, and deeply rooted in reciprocity, well-being, and joy. A future where children play freely along clean shorelines and berry-filled tundra, culture is celebrated as a living and evolving part of daily life, and ecosystems, economies, and culture flourish side by side. This is the world we are building—a network of thriving, self-determined communities rooted in place, connected in purpose, and unified by a vision of shared abundance.

MEET YOUR CRRRC COMMUNITY CATALYSTS

Community Catalysts are hired across our partner organizations—at CRRRC, KALI, and KANA—to work directly with communities on locally prioritized projects. Here are two of your CRRRC Catalysts:



BRIAN HETRICK • NANWALEK

Brian is working to restore traditional access to Dogfish Bay and eventually establish a cultural camp where elders can teach youth traditional practices—from hunting and fishing to berry picking and medicinal plant gathering. He's also exploring other projects including senior housing, waste management, and game processing workshops.



DIANE SELANOFF • VALDEZ

Diane leads cultural revitalization workshops throughout the region on traditional skills like sea otter pouches, fur flowers, and fish skin work—reconnecting youth with cultural knowledge. She's also working on additional initiatives including Tribal recognition efforts, food security, and subsistence access.

CONTACT



ISAAC PACOR • ANCHORAGE

Alaska South Coast Partnership (ASCP) Coordinator
Chugach Regional Resources Commission
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KIDS CORNER + ELDER SPOTLIGHT



KIDS CORNER

SEWARD SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM STUDENT DAY

This year's Seward Science Symposium Student Day brought Seward High School juniors and seniors together with Stewards of the Bay partners, including the Alaska SeaLife Center and CRRC, for a day of hands on learning and creativity.

Students toured the Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute with CRRC staff, explored sunflower star discovery tanks and sleeper shark research with SeaLife Center educators, and created marine themed surrealist collages with local artist Bethany Waggoner. A panel of local researchers and experts also shared insights on career pathways in science and natural resource work.

COMMUNITY DAY HIGHLIGHTS

During the community day, researchers from CRRC, the Alaska SeaLife Center, and the Prince William Sound Science Center shared current research and Indigenous led science from the Seward area and the Gulf of Alaska.

CRRC's Biology Laboratory Manager, Allison Carl, and Mariculture and Production Manager, Michael Mahmood, highlighted mariculture and monitoring work at Alutiiq Pride Marine Institute and shared CRRC's mission to conserve resources, protect subsistence rights, and support a subsistence way of life.

Quyana to all who made the 2025 Seward Science Symposium informative and engaging, including our Stewards of the Bay partners and the students and community members who attended.



MICHAEL
MAHMOOD

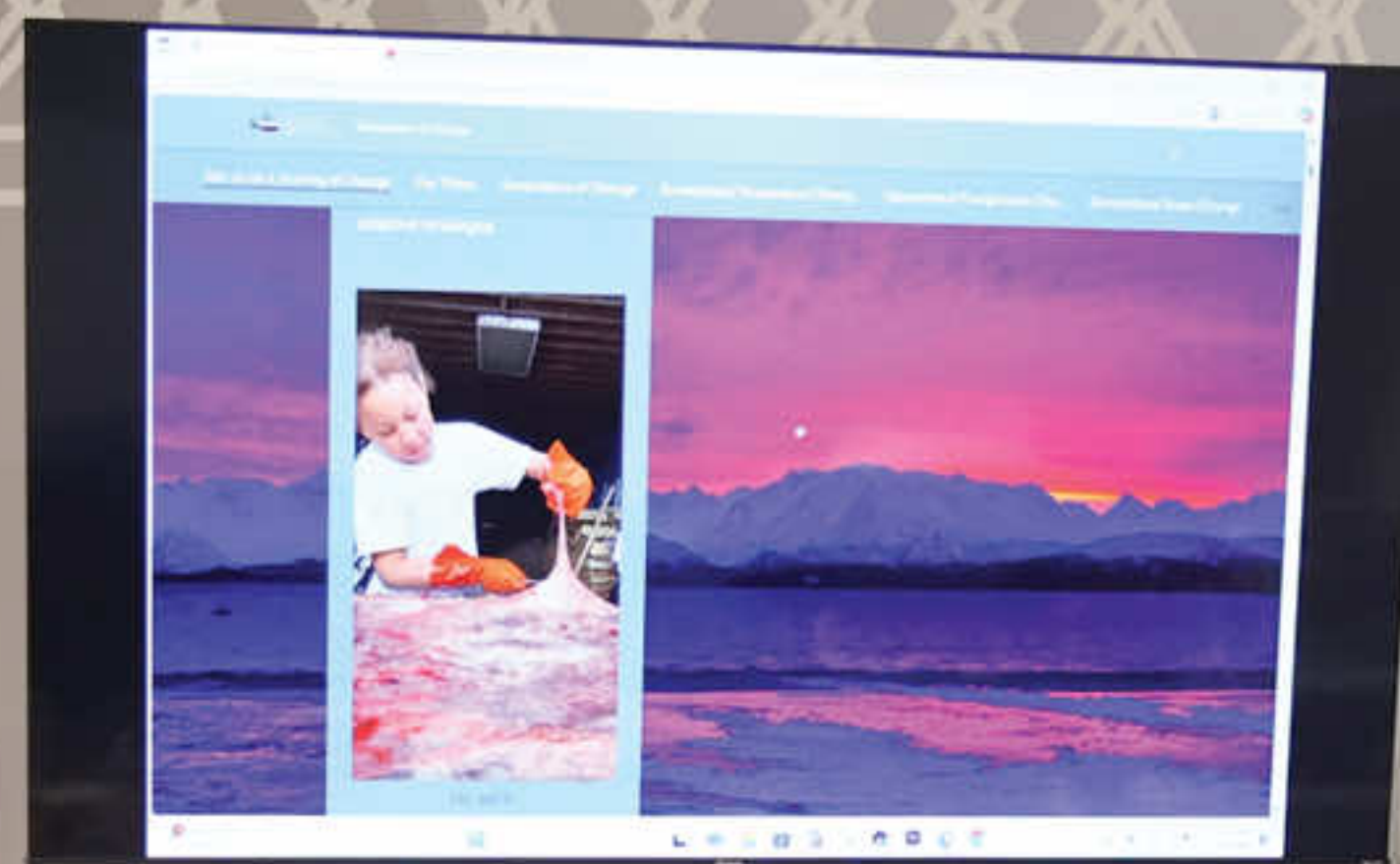
ELDER SPOTLIGHT

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AT QUTEKCAK

In October, CRRC met with Elders at Qutekcak Native Tribe in Seward to share observations of climate change and marine ecosystem shifts. Over a shared meal, Elders discussed changes in winter conditions, harmful algal blooms, marine heatwaves, and impacts to subsistence harvests.

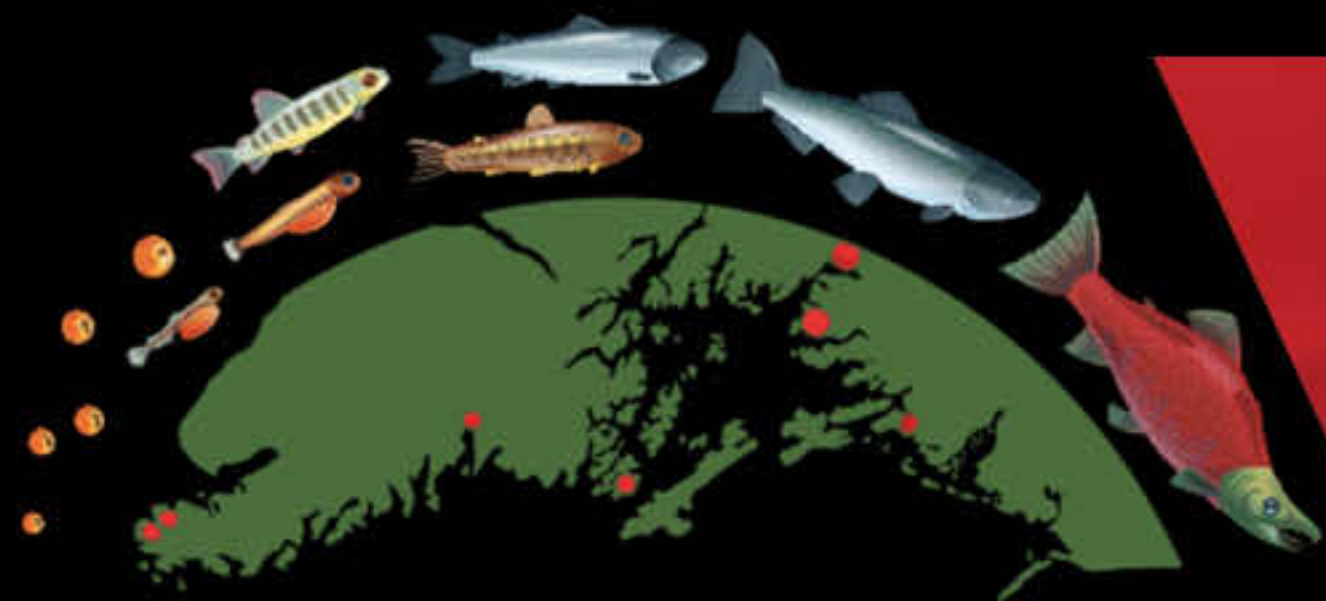
This gathering is part of Qangyut, Ocean Waves, a project that brings together Traditional Knowledge and Western science to understand how extreme ocean events affect subsistence resources. In partnership with the International Arctic Research Center and the Alaska Ocean Observing System, CRRC is supporting the development of forecasting tools to help communities prepare for future harvest seasons.

Quyana to the Elders, Qutekcak Native Tribe staff, and project partners for sharing knowledge and supporting this important work.



CAROL CONANT

SAVE THE DATE



Chugach Regional Resources Commission

24TH ANNUAL SUBSISTENCE MEMORIAL GATHERING

Engaging Every Community

2026 ANNUAL SUBSISTENCE MEMORIAL GATHERING

MARCH 18TH, 2026

CHANGEPOINT || ANCHORAGE, AK

WORKSHOPS 9AM - 4PM

EVENING CELEBRATION 5PM- 9PM

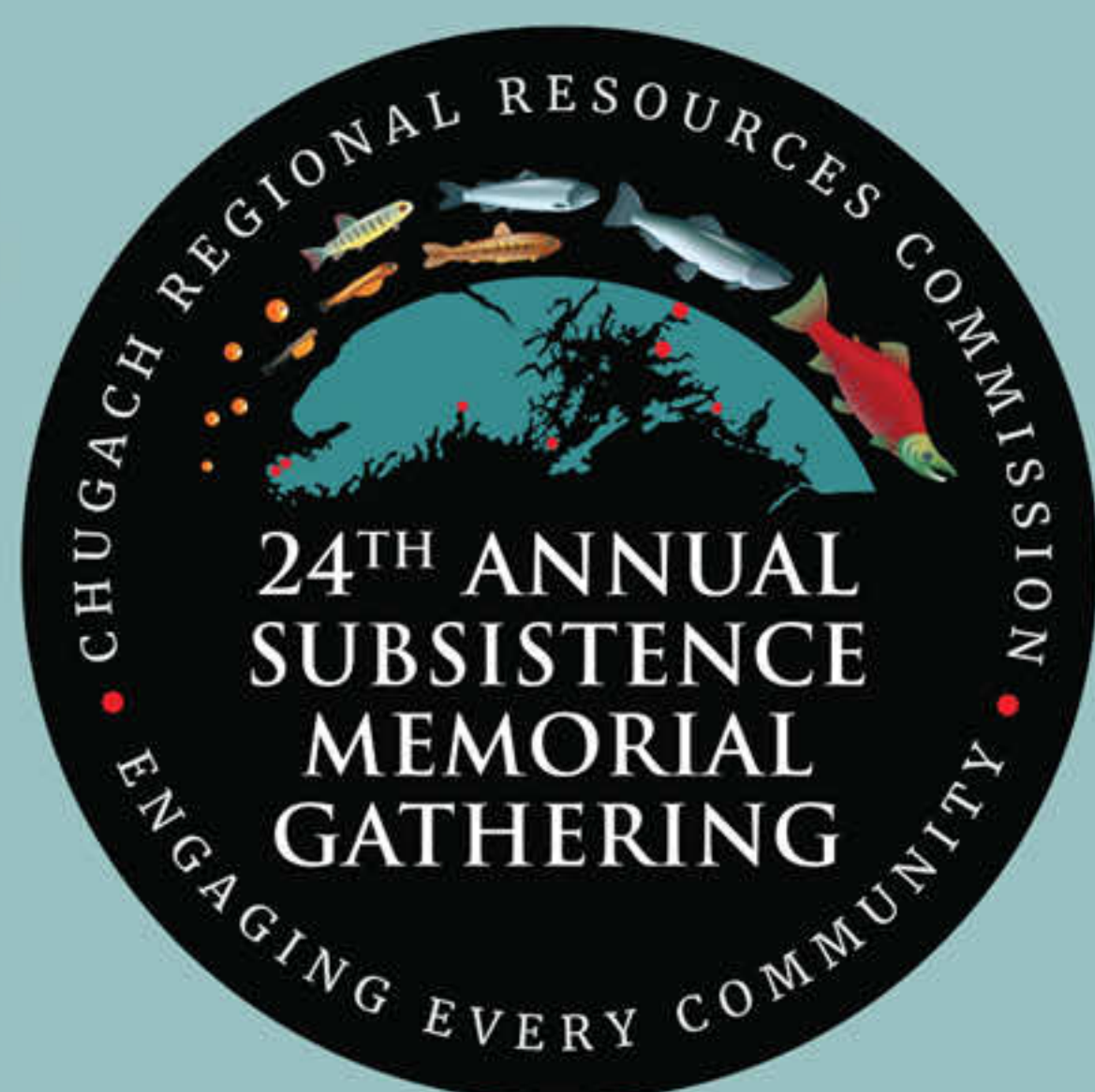


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TRADITIONAL FOODS *donations*

CONTACT DIANE SELANOFF FOR
MORE INFORMATION AT
DIANE@CRRCALASKA.ORG



LOOKING FOR CHUGACH REGIONAL ARTIST

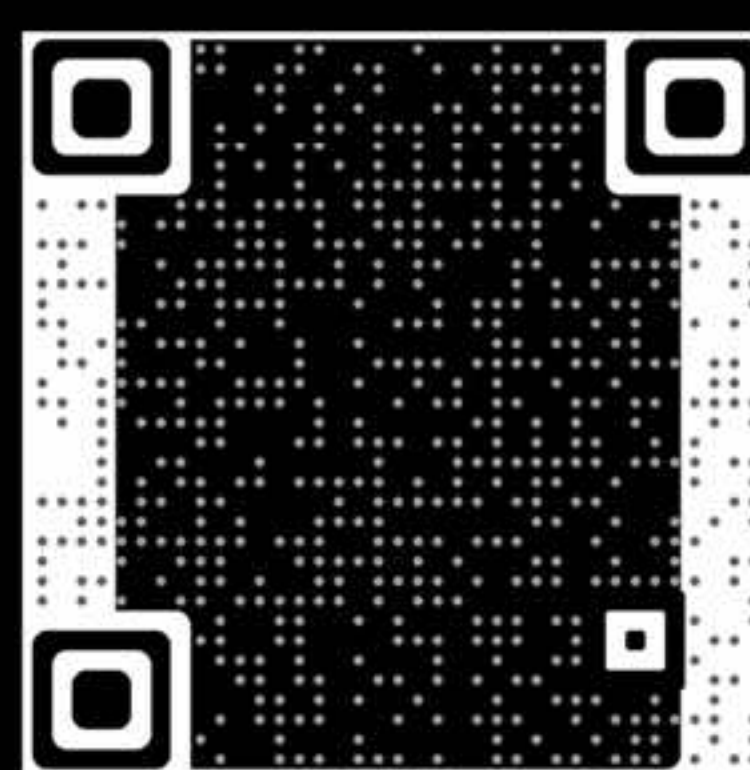
MARCH 18, 2026

24TH ANNUAL
SUBSISTENCE
MEMORIAL
GATHERING

TABLE REGISTRATION
\$60 OR DONATION TO
OUR SILENT AUCTION

CONTACT CAROL CONANT AT
CAROL@CRRCALASKA.ORG
OR REGISTER HERE

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

• JAN •
26-30

**Alaska Marine
Science Symposium**
Anchorage, Alaska

• FEB •
2-6

**Alaska Forum
on the Environment**
Anchorage, Alaska

• FEB •
12-15

**Cordova
Science Gathering**
Cordova, Alaska

• MAR •
10-13

**Mariculture Conference
of Alaska**
Anchorage, Alaska

• MAR •
17-18

**Southcentral Regional
Advisory Council Meeting**
Anchorage, Alaska

• MAR •
18

**Annual Subsistence
Memorial Gathering**
Changepoint, Anchorage, Alaska

• APR •
7-9

**Collective Alaska
Native Perspectives**
Alaska Marine National Wildlife Refuge
Visitor Center, Homer, Alaska

Have an event coming up in your community?

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

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

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



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Chairman
Port Graham



BOYD SELANOFF
Chairman
Chenega IRA Council



NANCI LEE ROBART
Vice-Chairwoman
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Qutekcak Native Tribe



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Alternate Member
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