

Malaspina University-College
NEWS RELEASE

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Centre for Shellfish Research Launches New Research Vessel

The Centre for Shellfish Research (CSR) at Malaspina University-College has just launched a custom made, welded aluminum "pocket" research vessel to support scientific investigations in shellfish aquaculture.

This vessel represents a key achievement in the ongoing development of the Centre for Shellfish Research says Don Tillapaugh., Director of the CSR. When the CSR was first formed, it was a stated objective that our activities would support shellfish aquaculture development along the entire coast, even though our main research facility is in Nanaimo. With the availability of our new "pocket" research vessel, that is trailerable, we can now achieve this objective.

The custom designed welded aluminum 26' "Quaycraft" vessel was manufactured in Port Alberni by Kamma and Blake Industries Ltd. Components for the hydraulic system, that is integral to its research capability, were supplied by Cowichan Hydraulics of Campbell River. I think it is important to realize that many jobs in the supply and service sector benefit greatly from the development of shellfish aquaculture along our coast. This boat is a good example of how coastal communities can benefit from shellfish farming.

The research vessel has already played a key support role during a 10-day field trip to the Quadra-Cortes Island area to investigate shellfish raft culture ecological questions. The vessel proved to be an extremely seaworthy craft in strong westerlies and a stable platform for conducting benthic (bottom) sampling. "We were extremely pleased with its overall performance" said Dr. Penny Barnes, scientist-in-charge of the research program. "We would not have been able to complete a very ambitious sampling program if the vessel had not performed so well".

Funding for the vessel was provided through a grant from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the B.C. Knowledge Development Fund and Malaspina University-College Foundation.

The Centre for Shellfish Research was begun in the fall of 2001 with a mission to facilitate the research needs of the B.C. shellfish aquaculture industry, including enhancing industry competitiveness, investigating environmental interactions, undertaking socio-economic and policy research, training and technology transfer, and building shellfish research capacity in B.C.

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