

MEDIA RELEASE

**June 27, 2013
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MR13-036**

NIC Secures NSERC Research Chair in Sustainable Aquaculture

North Island College recently learned that it has been successful in securing a \$1,000,000 grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) to fund an Industrial Research Chair for Colleges in Sustainable Aquaculture.

The grant, which will help North Island College develop new, as well as significantly enhance existing applied research efforts in finfish aquaculture, has been awarded under NSERC's College and Community Innovation Program. This funding is intended to support applied research leaders and the development of business-focused applied research programs at colleges throughout Canada.



Dr. Stephen Cross joins NIC as Industrial Research Chair, and his work will strengthen the link between the aquaculture industry and the academic research community.

"This is an extremely important announcement for North Island College," states NIC's President Dr. Lindsay. "It really changes the perception and status of NIC as an educational institution and positions the college well for future expansion into other areas of applied research. The establishment of a Research Chair position at North Island College demonstrates that in addition to being an education service provider, the college also plays a role as an economic driver by supporting local industry through applied research."

This new research will be led by Dr. Stephen Cross, an internationally acclaimed researcher who specializes in the design, engineering and testing of integrated multi-trophic aquaculture systems. The research program will invest in environmental monitoring programs to promote sustainable farming practices. It will examine innovative monitoring of environmental conditions, assess alternative

farming site restoration methods, and develop unique educational tools to increase opportunities for training and awareness.

The BC Salmon Farmers Association's Executive Director Mary Ellen Walling, a very strong proponent of the project, states "It is important to build research capacity in rural and coastal British Columbia and this project does just that. We look forward to working with North Island College on this project and others in the future."

North Island College's Centre for Applied Research, Technology and Innovation (CARTI) will administer the five-year grant. CARTI is located in Campbell River, the primary location for finfish aquaculture operations in BC. Its mandate is to build connections with industry and community partners while extending opportunities for student learning and future employment. It also provides NIC faculty with access to current knowledge in their practice area.

Several key project partners include Marine Harvest Canada, Creative Salmon Co. Ltd., Mainstream Canada and Grieg BC Seafood Ltd.

MEDIA RELEASE

“North Island College understands that scientific research is critical to making good decisions about aquaculture and our environment,” adds Dr. Lindsay. “By working with our project partners, we can facilitate solutions to the challenges confronting these organizations, work to enhance the production efficiency of the industry, and thereby positively contribute to the socio-economic wellbeing of our region.”

NSERC is a federal agency that helps make Canada a country of discoverers and innovators for all Canadians. The agency supports some 30,000 post-secondary students and postdoctoral fellows in their advanced studies. NSERC promotes discovery by funding more than 12,000 professors/faculty members every year and fosters innovation by encouraging about 2,000 Canadian companies to participate and invest in postsecondary research projects.

For further information about NIC’s applied research activities, please visit www.nic.bc.ca/research or call the Centre for Applied Research, Technology and Innovation at 250-923-9719.

-30-

Biography of Dr. Stephen Cross follows.

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Biography

Stephen F. Cross, Ph.D.

NSERC Industrial Research Chair – *Sustainable Aquaculture*

Dr. Cross received his M.Sc. at the University of Victoria in marine quantitative ecology and his Ph.D. at the Aquaculture Institute, University of Stirling (Scotland). He has worked with the Canadian aquaculture industry for the past 27 years, primarily as a private-sector research scientist and consultant, but in 2006 was appointed an Associate Professor at the University of Victoria where he founded the Coastal Aquaculture Research & Training (CART) Network. His Canadian research program has focused on the design, engineering and testing of integrated multi-trophic aquaculture systems, and has involved numerous multidisciplinary M.Sc./PhD graduate students over the past few years. International initiatives have included regulatory framework design for Thailand (UN-FAO), sustainable aquaculture graduate program development and delivery for Mozambique (CIDA), and a variety of industry and government funded research projects in the USA, Australia, Chile, and Brazil.

Dr. Cross is a current Director on the boards of the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance, the British Columbia Shellfish Growers Association, the Pacific Organic Seafood Association, and the Land-based Aquaculture Association of Western Canada.

In his role as an Industrial Research Chair at North Island College, Dr. Cross will strengthen the working linkage between the aquaculture industry and the academic research community, facilitating the development and refinement of sustainable approaches, practices, and innovations for our future aquaculture sector.