



**2024**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

## Dear Local Catch Network

We are pleased to share our Annual Report for 2024. Buoyed by the growing community of small businesses, entrepreneurs, thought-leaders, funders, and community organizers in our network, we have sought to continue to work to strengthen and uplift community-based seafood systems through network building, technical assistance, and research.

The highlights outlined in this report cover all three of these interconnected areas of work and are a reflection of the collective efforts of innumerable individuals and organizations. While much uncertainty lies ahead in the upcoming year, we anticipate that 2025 will bring new clarity to our mission, vision, core values, and strategic activities as we finalize and begin to implement our first-ever strategic plan. This clarity will help us lean into the work we are already doing well and pursue new initiatives that will create exciting opportunities for coalition building and partnership.

As you read through the report, I hope you will share my enthusiasm for everything we have accomplished this past year and feel energized by the opportunities that we – as a community – have on the horizon.

Thank you for being on this journey together.



**Joshua Stoll**  
Associate Professor, University of Maine  
Local Catch Network



# Annual Report

## 4 Our Network

## 5 Photo

## 6 Numbers

## 7 Areas of Work

Network Building  
Technical Assistance  
Research

## 11 Future Outlook

## 12 Funding

Join Our Community

**LOCAL CATCH NETWORK**

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Frances Bursch**, Commercial Fisherman & Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association

**Shareen Davis**, Chatham Harvesters Cooperative

**Elizabeth Dubovsky**, Feeding Change Consulting

**Nelly Hand**, Drifters Fish

**Buck Jones**, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

**Jordyn Kastlunger**, Rhode Island Seafood Collaborative

**Victoria Oh**, Fishadelphia

**Tyson Rasor**, Ecotrust

**Sonia Strobel**, Skipper Otto Community Supported Fishery

**Amanda Waysewski**, Kvichak Fish Company

**Christy Whitmore**, Skeena Fisheries Commission

## PHOTOGRAPHY & DESIGN

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## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

University of Maine

North American Marine Alliance

## NETWORK COORDINATION

**Laughton Elliott-DeAngelis**, University of Maine

**Jon Russell**, North American Marine Alliance

**Joshua Stoll**, PhD, University of Maine

Cover photo by Andrew Bydlon, Kvichak Fish Co

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# Our Network

**Established in 2011, the Local Catch Network (LCN) is a hub for knowledge exchange and innovation to support and catalyze local and community-based seafood systems.**

Today, the network, which is anchored at the University of Maine, is made up of more than **2,250 people**, including over **225 seafood businesses** from across the United States, Canada, the Pacific Islands, and Caribbean. Members of the Local Catch Network align with a set of core values that aim to create a higher level of accountability and trust, both internally within the network and externally to the public. Local Catch Network members include seafood harvesters who sell their catch locally and regionally through direct marketing channels as well as those engaged in research, technical assistance, and community organizing. We invite you to **join our network** and become part of the community.

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PHOTO BY  
ANDREW BYDLON



# By the Numbers

#1

Largest network in North America dedicated to small-scale fisheries and food systems

76

Interviews conducted to inform our forthcoming strategic plan

\$1,615,037

Funding solicited or secured to strengthen local and regional seafood systems

30,000

People who visited the Local Catch Network **Seafood Finder**

58

New members that joined the network (**become a member**)

12

Newsletters highlighting up-to-date resources, funding, and technical assistances (**sign up today**)





JORDYN KASTLUNGER

# Areas of Work



Facilitating **network building** and collaboration across our network

Providing **training, technical assistance, and resources** to strengthen seafood operations engaged in local and regional seafood systems



Catalyzing **transdisciplinary research** related to local and regional seafood systems





# Network Building

This year, for the first time in our 13-year history, we embarked on a **strategic planning process** to refine our mission, vision, and collective work for the next five years. The process, which we expect to finish later this winter, has been led by our **Executive Committee** and informed by a network-wide survey and more than 75 interviews. We also used 2024 to co-produce a code of conduct for our network ("**community agreement**") and continued to expand our Executive Committee, welcoming three new members into our leadership team: **Shareen Davis**, **Nelly Hand**, and **Victoria Oh**. To complement these activities, we continued to invest in new strategic partnerships. In particular, we focused on building connections to USDA's **Regional Food Business Centers**. We also continued to invest in network building through storytelling. As part of this work, we hosted our second season of the **Surf & Turf podcast**, which focused on the topic of privatization in fisheries. Lastly, we launched our planning process for our **2025 Local Seafood Summit**. These summits are our flagship network-building events and occur every three years. Our next summit is slated for Fall 2025.

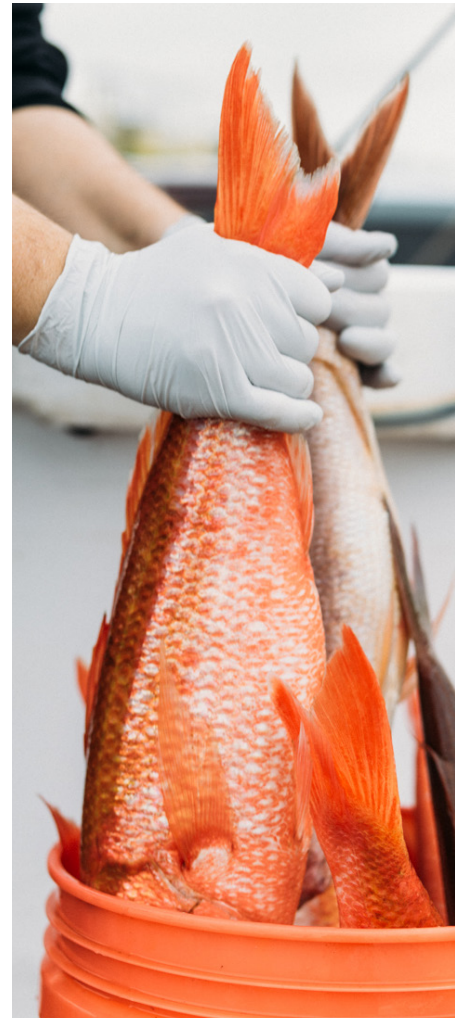




ROBERTO CORTEZ

# Technical Assistance

To support and strengthen local and regional seafood systems, we continued to provide technical assistance through training, workshops, research, and 1-on-1 support to businesses and communities. This year we focused on establishing our new umbrella program, which we are calling our **Seafood Accelerator & Innovation Lab (SAIL)**. Nested within our SAIL umbrella, we focused on two core programs. The **SAIL Catalyst** program, formerly Scale Your Local Catch, is a nationwide, producer-centered business accelerator developed to strengthen local and regional seafood systems by addressing challenges associated with direct marketing and by building the knowledge, skills, and networks needed for direct marketing seafood businesses to scale up their operations and increase their capacity and viability for long-term resilience. The program is run in partnership with **Ecotrust** and independent consultants are hired to provide content-specific expertise. This year, for the first time, we offerED the program during the summer rather than winter. The **SAIL Mentorship** program, as the title suggests, is a mentorship program designed to build capacity and resilience of participating seafood businesses through direct mentorship. Through the program, mentees receive one year of coaching related to their businesses. This new program was established in partnership with **Skipper Otto's**, a well-established seafood business in the Local Catch Network. In our inaugural year of the program, we selected four businesses to participate.





# Research

We made significant progress on multiple research fronts in 2024. Four accomplishments warrant particular attention. First, as a partnership between **USDA**, **NOAA Fisheries**, and the **University of Maine**, we completed the first-ever national assessment of seafood marketing practices in the United States through the **American Seafood Harvesters Marketing Practices Survey**. The purpose of the research was to fill gaps in our understanding of the domestic seafood market in the US and bring greater focus to the socioeconomic contributions of seafood in the nation's local and regional food systems. This research was featured in NOAA's Fisheries Economics of the United States Report and published in the journal **Marine Policy**. Second, we conducted a national assessment of seafood production in the United States to better understand the potential for US seafood

production to meet demand. This analysis of "self-reliance" was published in Nature's **Ocean Sustainability Journal**. Third, we partnered with the **National Sea Grant Law Center** to conduct a review of the legal framework governing direct sales of seafood products of the 31 coastal states across the country. The aim of this work is to help identify regulatory best practices for supporting direct seafood marketing. Finally, through case studies, a literature review, workshop, and focus groups, we finished the research to support our forthcoming **national action plan** to strengthen local and regional seafood systems. This plan is slated to be finished this coming year.

Researchers, students, and others who are interested in collaborating can contact Joshua Stoll ([joshua.stoll@maine.edu](mailto:joshua.stoll@maine.edu))



ROBERTO CORTEZ



# Future Outlook

# 2025

The upcoming year promises to be a period of innovation, growth, and collaboration as we advance multiple ongoing projects and launch several new ones. Here are a few highlights to set the stage for the next 12 months:

We invite  
you to

# Join Us

in this  
work

## **We are rolling out our first-ever strategic plan.**

With support from the Meridian Institute, we have been putting together a strategic plan to help guide our work for the next 3-5 years.

## **We are releasing a national action plan focused on strengthening local and regional seafood systems.**

The action plan takes stock of the diverse strategies, approaches, and pathways that are or could be used to strengthen local and regional seafood systems and how they fit together to advance transformative change in our food systems.

## **We are hosting the 2025 Local Seafood Summit.**

This keystone event brings together community leaders, entrepreneurs, and all those who are working to strengthen local and regional seafood systems across the US, Canada, and territories.

## **We are launching new technical assistance to help seafood harvesters access federal funding.**

Building off prior success, we are reinvesting in our work to help small- and mid-size seafood businesses apply for federal grant funding.

## **We are helping to elevate the role of seafood in our food systems.**

Through research and strategic partnerships, we are working to bring attention to the role of seafood and fisheries in our food systems.



# Funding Support

Our work is made possible by the generous financial support of the following individuals and organizations:

**University of Maine**

**Builders Initiative**

**National Marine Fisheries Service**

**Oak Foundation**

**Sitka Salmon Shares**

**Local Ocean Seafoods**

**Joshua Stoll**

## Join Our Community

**Support Our Work**

[localcatch.org/how-to-support](http://localcatch.org/how-to-support)



**Join The Network**

[localcatch.org/join](http://localcatch.org/join)



**Follow Along**

