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Common Aquaculture Lease Application Mistakes

This document was generated by DMR staff and reflects mistakes that are routinely identified during the review of experimental and standard lease applications.

1. Detail for a Public Audience

- The application needs to be written for the general public, not just DMR or other stakeholders that may be more familiar with aquaculture.

2. General Formatting

- The application needs to be on the most current version of the application form, which is available on DMR's website.
- All figures and diagrams need to be labeled.
- Answers to application questions should be typed or written in pen.
- Applicants should be sure the pages are numbered correctly and in order.
- Pages should either be all single-sided or all double-sided, not a combination.
- Applicants should remove any pages of the application that don't pertain to their proposal or are left blank (e.g. the "Landowner/Municipal Permission Requirements" section of the application, which only applies to applications that are intertidal or propose to use private property for site access).
- Applicants should use consistent referencing and naming throughout the application, so that it is clear what is being described (e.g. using terms like oyster cages and oyster ranches interchangeably throughout the application makes it difficult for the public to understand what is being proposed).

3. Carefully Read Each Question and Provide Complete Answers. Partially Answered Questions or Missing Information Often Include:

- Figures (overhead and cross-section view, gear drawing, etc.): applicants often don't include the north arrow, scale bar, source of coordinate data, or separate overhead and cross section views for overwintering. Applicants should be sure to include all gear types that are listed in the gear table in the appropriate figures (e.g. the overhead view(s) should show the layout of *all* proposed gear types on the site).
- Species: Applicants that are proposing more than one species often forget to include harvest information, gear types, etc., for each species being proposed (e.g. someone proposing to cultivate oysters and scallops might only describe oyster cultivation).
- Existing uses section: This asks applicants to describe other observed uses of the area (e.g. kayaking, fishing, etc.). Applicants will list an activity but won't describe the frequency at which the activity occurs or where it occurs with relationship to the proposed lease site.
- Current operations: Applicants should list the acronyms for all current leases and LPAs, and what the plan would be for those upon approval of the proposed lease.

- Corporate applicants: make sure the Corporate Applicant Form (available on DMR's website-linked below) and Articles of Incorporation are included with the submitted application.
- Standard leases: Applicants should make sure the cover page includes the dates of any pre-application requirements and the dates that applications were submitted.
- Escrow account/performance bond: Applicants should be sure to select which escrow account/performance bond requirement is applicable.

4. Intertidal Sites

- Intertidal sites have certain written permission requirements as noted in the respective application. The applicant needs to include written permission with their initial submission.

5. Site Boundaries

- Applicants should be sure all gear, including moorings and associated buoys, fit within the boundaries of the proposed site at all tidal stages. Applicants should take into account gear swing at lower tidal stages.

6. Riparian Landowner List

- The riparian list needs to be legible and include complete mailing addresses based on the municipal tax records.

7. Incomplete Letters

- After reviewing the initial application submission, DMR may send an incomplete letter if items or details are missing from the application.
- Applicants should carefully review and address any items noted in the incomplete letter. If something isn't clear, applicants should contact DMR for clarification (DMRaquaculture@maine.gov). Failure to address every item in the incomplete letter will result in an additional round of review, which delays the application from moving forward in the process.
- Revised applications should be submitted in a timely manner.

8. Requests for Technical Assistance

DMR reviews and processes all applications in accordance with law and rules. DMR does not offer technical assistance with site selection, mapping, or any other aspect of compiling a proposal. Applicants seeking technical assistance may wish to consult with a marine extension agent (Sea Grant), industry association, nonprofit, or other individuals/entities that provide such services.

Website Resources

Application Forms:

<https://www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/applications-and-forms>

This includes copies of additional riparian forms and corporate applicant forms.

Resources for Growers and Applicants

<https://www.maine.gov/dmr/aquaculture/resources-for-growers>

This webpage contains several resources that applicants may find helpful as they prepare their proposal including a riparian mapping guidance document, sources of stock, application processing information, etc.