

## **A Salmon “Season-Vane” Sculpture and Environmental Education Center For Soldotna Creek Park DDF Grant Application – Three RI Areas of Focus**

**Context:** Soldotna Rotary Club proposed a highly visible, large, and innovative, salmon-themed public art work for the very heavily visited Soldotna Creek Park. In a sense, this project continues in a modern way the age-old Pacific Northwest tradition of summer salmon run art work.

On the artistic and technical fabrication side of the project, Soldotna Rotarian Cam Choy, Professor of Art at University of Alaska, Kenai Peninsula College campus, will construct a 16 foot long semi-abstractly-styled salmon sculpture to aerially mount on a 12-foot pylon at Soldotna Creek Park, as generally shown in the attached PDF file. Professor Choy has previously completed other, somewhat similar yet more technically complex, commissioned sculptures for internal use by Central Peninsula Hospital, Soldotna. PDG Joe Kashi is handling the public outreach, organizational, and fund-raising aspects of this project.

The proposed sculpture will be a highly visible signature project for Soldotna Rotary Club and appropriately signed as such, with additional acknowledged assistance of Kenai Rotary Club (mechanical engineering design) and Kenai River Rotary Club (production of educational panels). Soldotna Creek Park is one of the two most-visited locations on the entire Kenai Peninsula, the other being the Homer Spit.

The City of Soldotna will host the sculpture on a permanent basis at its Soldotna Creek Park. The attached file includes a 2023 City Council resolution approving this proposed Rotary project and a letter of support by Soldotna Mayor Paul Whitney on behalf of the City. The attached PDF file also contains drawings showing general left and right views of the 16-foot long aerial sculpture as well as the approved conceptual pylon mounting approach and location, which is highly visible from the park entrance.

The piece is intended as the centerpiece for the area around the existing rain garden within the low split rail fencing visible in the photos. The overall project will be devoted to educating visitors and residents about the environmentally sustainable needs of the Kenai River and to providing information about the river's world-famous salmon runs and the environmental/habitat issues confronting the Kenai River watershed. Thus, this project touches upon several RI areas of focus, public education, environment and sustainability, and community development

The sculpture will be approximately 16 feet long and about 12 feet off the ground. Professor Choy envisions doing this piece in the semi-abstracted sculptural style of Brancusi, which is likely a sweet spot producing a work that would bridge and appeal to both popular tastes and more art-sophisticated groups. Initial drawings are included in the attached PDF file.

This work is designed to be a "season vane", with one side powder-coated metallic blue and silver, the "summer migration side" and the opposite side power-coated red and green, spawned out salmon "winter side". It will swing in the wind upon a heavy industrial bearing.

As the prevailing summer winds there are from the southwest and the prevailing winter winds are from the northeast, the sculpture will be balanced and mounted on its heavy pylon-top bearing so that the blue-silver side points upstream during the summer spawning season, symbolizing the upstream salmon migration, and in winter weather patterns, the spawned out red/green side will point downstream.

The base work will be fabricated out of a single sheet of aircraft grade aluminum fabricated by an industrial fabricator. We hope to include some small undulations in main frame of the overall piece so that the overall sculpture may shift in the breeze, mimicking a swimming salmon.

In line with the intended use as the center-piece for a salmon-centered educational exhibit, Soldotna Rotary Club is soliciting thematically-related 2D art work us put together some 4'x8' educational aluminum panels for the low area surrounding the sculpture at the rain garden. Specifically, we have funding for 3-4 4x8 aluminum sheets that can be mounted low and used to both attract attention and also provide educational narrative? As an example, attached, we hope to use an enlarged reproduction of Kaitlin Vadla's famous red salmon image, attached.

We anticipate working with Cook Inlet Keeper and area sport fishing and commercial fishing organizations to put together other educational panels. Soldotna-based ArtSpace, Inc. a 501 c 3 corporation run by Soldotna Rotarians, will also be working with Soldotna Rotary Club on this project to assist with local fund-raising. Professor Choy has also applied to Rasmusen Foundation for financial assistance through a \$10,000 individual artist grant to him to help with materials cost.

This project can go forward to an appropriate point this year even if Rasmusen money is not available this year.

**Construction Budget - Multiyear:**

Fabrication of main sculpture per Metal Magic bid \$16,500  
Powder-coating the sculpture \$ 4,000  
Heavy-duty pylon bearing per engineer \$ 2,500  
Production costs \$24,000

**Funding:**

DDF Grant \$ 7,000  
Soldotna Rotary Club match \$ 7,000

Combined Rotary funding is critical to the completion of this project and the project will be deemed and labeled as a Rotary project acknowledging the contributions of other funding sources. In order to ensure timely completion of this project, Soldotna Rotary Club is not requesting any other DDF funding for 2023-2024.

Phase II of this project involves designing the supporting pylon and installing the completed sculpture. Soldotna Rotary Club will address that aspect at a later time in other funding requests



**SOLDOTNA**  
City of Soldotna, Alaska

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Monday, February 13, 2023

Joe Kashi  
via email: [kashi@alaska.net](mailto:kashi@alaska.net)

Dear Mr. Kashi

The City of Soldotna is pleased to offer this letter of support for your application to the Rasmuson Foundation, for funding the Seasonal Salmon Sculpture in Soldotna Creek Park.

You have been an effective champion of public art, spearheading many projects that showcase artwork in our public spaces, including Soldotna Creek Park and the Joyce K. Carver Memorial Library. This project will add to the cultural offerings in our community, and I thank you for your important contributions.

The Seasonal Salmon Sculpture will highlight the local talent of Cam Choy, an acclaimed sculptor and Associate Professor of Art at Kenai Peninsula College. And it will further the City of Soldotna's vision of encouraging and providing public access to art and cultural resources that preserve and promote the area's history.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance through this process, and thank you again for bringing this project to Soldotna.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Whitney  
Mayor

Introduced By: Chilson, Parker  
Carey & Hutchings  
Date: February 8, 2023  
Action: Adopted  
Vote: 6 Yes, 0 No

CITY OF SOLDOTNA  
RESOLUTION 2023-008

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE SEASONAL SALMON SCULPTURE PROJECT TO BE  
LOCATED IN SOLDOTNA CREEK PARK, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY COUNCIL TO  
SUBMIT A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO SUPPORT FUNDRAISING EFFORTS BY THE  
PROJECT SPONSORS

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WHEREAS, Soldotna Rotary Club member Joe Kashi, and Kenai Peninsula College Art Professor and Soldotna Rotary Club member Cam Choy have proposed to install a salmon sculpture within Soldotna Creek Park; and

WHEREAS, the City of Soldotna's *Envision Soldotna 2030 Comprehensive Plan* includes a vision that, "Soldotna will encourage the arts and cultural services and facilities to preserve and promote the area's history, and to provide adequate public access to art, music, and other cultural activities"; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Endowment for the Arts, arts, culture, and design can help to strengthen communities by bringing new attention to community assets and issues, injecting new energy and enthusiasm into a place or local economy, and connecting communities, people, places and economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai River and the wild salmon it supports are central to Soldotna's identity and culture; and

WHEREAS, at their September 1, 2022 meeting, the Soldotna Parks & Recreation Advisory Board voted to approve the placement of the salmon sculpture in the fenced rain garden area at Soldotna Creek Park; and

WHEREAS, the placement of this public art piece in Soldotna Creek Park will add aesthetic value to the park, highlight the role of salmon and the Kenai River in our community, and enrich the park experience for visitors to Soldotna Creek Park; and

WHEREAS, the project sponsors have begun the process of fundraising to support the fabrication and installation of the sculpture through private contributions; and

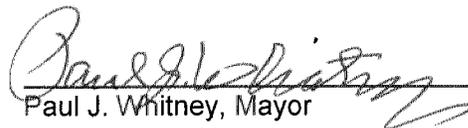
WHEREAS, a letter of support from the Soldotna City Council endorsing the placement of the sculpture in Soldotna Creek Park will assist the project sponsors in their fundraising efforts;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOLDOTNA, ALASKA:

Section 1. That the Soldotna City Council supports the placement of a seasonal salmon sculpture in the fenced rain garden area at Soldotna Creek Park.

Section 2. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

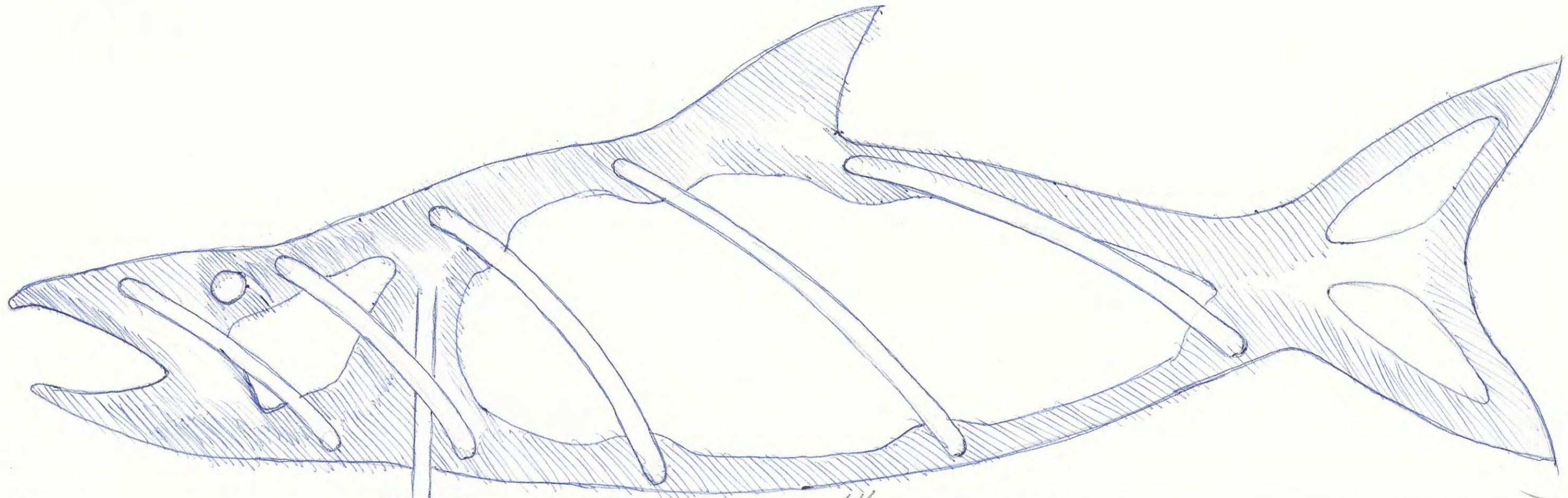
ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL THIS 8TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2023.

  
Paul J. Whitney, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
John Blankenship, MMC, City Clerk

Yes: Carey, Chilson, Hutchings, Nelson, Parker, Wackler  
No: None



16'

12'



