

# Microalgae Production Lead or Microalgae Technician

**Location:** Manchester, WA

**Job Type:** Full-time, hourly, non-exempt

**Pay range:** \$21-26/hour (DOE); highly experienced candidates with extensive experience culturing algae, maintaining systems, and leading teams will be considered at the upper end of the range.

**Special requirements:** (1) Work one weekend day each week (as part of either a Sunday-Thursday or Tuesday-Saturday schedule), and some holidays; (2) accommodate occasional late-night shifts and/or overtime on short notice if required; and (3) successfully complete background investigation and government security clearance required before beginning full-time work at the Chew Center.

**Reports to:** Hatchery Manager, Chew Center



---

## **ABOUT PUGET SOUND RESTORATION FUND**

Founded in 1997, [Puget Sound Restoration Fund](http://www.restorationfund.org) (PSRF) leads a diverse portfolio of projects focused on restoring marine habitats, recovering native species, and improving water quality throughout Puget Sound. Our work centers on rebuilding living marine habitat using structure-forming species such as Olympia oysters and bull kelp, alongside habitat-enhancing species like pinto abalone.

Our team of 25 ecologists, technicians, and support staff plays a vital role in designing, testing, and implementing in-water actions to reconnect people and ecosystems across this vast coastal landscape. Our work happens where it matters most: on the tideflats, in the water, and at our conservation hatchery.

## **POSITION OVERVIEW**

Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF) is seeking a **Microalgae Production Lead or Technician** (level will be determined based on experience, technical expertise, and leadership capacity) to join our team at the Kenneth K. Chew Center for Research and Restoration (Chew Center), operated at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Manchester Research Station in Manchester, Washington on the Kitsap Peninsula.

The position is responsible for the cultivation, maintenance, and monitoring of microalgae cultures to support hatchery production, research, and restoration. This role ensures reliable, high-quality algal feedstock through sterile technique, culture scaling, and environmental monitoring.

The employee will work both independently and collaboratively to maintain culture health, support larval rearing operations, and contribute to laboratory operations and data collection. The role supports accurate production tracking and well-organized hatchery facilities, requires strong attention to detail, effective communication skills, and the ability to complete physically demanding work in indoor and outdoor environments.

PSRF is a small, collaborative organization where staff support one another to ensure shared success. As we grow and evolve each time we bring on new team members, we seek to integrate the technician's existing skills and talents into the role. The ideal candidate is passionate about marine conservation, comfortable working in an aquaculture production setting, and committed to seeing tasks through to accurate and timely completion.

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

This position includes both indoor laboratory and outdoor field work year-round, in all weather conditions and requires strict adherence to all NOAA on-site health and safety protocols, including maintaining a smoke-free and drug-free workplace. Physical and environmental conditions include:

- Lifting up to 50 pounds
- Ascending/descending ladders and step stools
- Exposure to seawater systems, chemicals, and cleaning agents
- Working in cramped spaces with wet or uneven flooring

- Navigating rocky beaches and mudflats
- Sustained moderate noise levels

**Schedule:** One weekend day each week, following either a Sunday-Thursday or Tuesday-Saturday schedule. Working some holidays will also be required. Occasional late-night shifts and/or overtime on short notice may be required to meet the operational needs of a facility that houses live animals.

**Travel:** Primarily based at the Chew Center, some travel to PSRF offices and field sites throughout Puget Sound.

## **CORE RESPONSIBILITIES**

*(Percentages are approximate and may fluctuate depending on the workload across the Chew Center)*

### 1. Microalgae Production & Culture Management - 70%:

- Maintain multiple strains of stock cultures using sterile transfer techniques
- Prepare sterile media and chemical solutions, including operation of an autoclave
- Produce harvest-scale algae using continuous bag and batch culture systems
- Distribute algae to support hatchery feeding operations
- Conduct daily monitoring of growth rates, densities, and overall culture health
- Maintain algae culture equipment, lab spaces, and systems
- Manage inventory and order supplies for production

Lead Level - Additional Responsibilities:

- Train and mentor staff, interns, and volunteers in culture techniques, sterile and safety protocols
- Oversee production planning and quality control
- Lead contamination response and culture troubleshooting
- Refine SOPs and improve production efficiency

### 2. Provide husbandry support for Olympia oyster production - 10%:

- Assist with broodstock, larval, and juvenile culture systems (winter - spring)
- Support spat-on-shell production and inventory
- Participate in broodstock collection and intake
- Assist with transport of oysters for restoration outplanting

### 3. Facilities & Systems Maintenance - 10%:

- Maintain water treatment and life-support systems, including filters, pumps, heaters, and heat exchangers
- Clean, repair, and replace plumbing and culture system components
- Assist with construction and ongoing maintenance of culture infrastructure

### 4. Research & Field Operations Support - 5%

- Assist researchers and partners with data collection and monitoring
- Participate in intertidal fieldwork, including hiking on rocky beaches and mudflats
- Support year-round field operations conducted in variable weather, tidal, and daylight conditions
- Perform heavy lifting associated with field operations

### 5. Bull Kelp Restoration Program Support - 5%

- Provide operational support to PSRF's Bull Kelp Habitat Restoration Program
- Assist with kelp laboratory operations and culture work as needed

## **REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

- Bachelor's degree in marine biology, environmental science, aquaculture, or related field; or 4 years of equivalent hands-on experience.
- Experience working in an aquaculture, laboratory, or hatchery setting.
- Experience with microalgae culturing and sterile transfer protocols.
- Understanding of biosecurity principles, contamination prevention, detection, and mitigation in algal cultures.
- Strong interest in marine ecosystems, aquaculture, environmental restoration, and conservation.
- Ability to perform specialized laboratory tasks for technical or diagnostic purposes.
- Excellent attention to detail with the ability to follow detailed protocols and standard operating procedures (SOPs) while ensuring quality control standards are met.
- Strong record keeping and data management skills.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively as part of a team, contributing to an inclusive and accessible work environment.
- Effective written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to perform accurate data recording.
- Ability to use standard office equipment, including computers and related data management software.
- Valid driver's license and access to reliable transportation.
- **Federal Facility Requirement:** Must be a U.S. citizen, as work is conducted at a federal facility. Successful candidates will be required to pass a federal background investigation, possess a valid REAL ID or other acceptable federal ID (e.g., a passport) and obtain government security clearance prior to beginning employment at the Chew Center. Continued employment is contingent upon maintaining clearance.

## **Preferred Qualifications**

- Experience with marine or aquatic organism care or culture, and/or marine aquaculture; familiarity with relevant marine taxonomy is a plus.
- Knowledge of animal husbandry methods and techniques, including animal identification and breeding; experience with laboratory animal research and data collection protocols.
- Demonstrated experience with microscopy and standard laboratory equipment, operations, and sterilization procedures; Knowledge of lab safety and chemical handling.
- Experience leading or supervising teams, interns, volunteers, or junior staff.
- Mechanically inclined with experience using hand and power tools; ability to assist with building, maintaining, and troubleshooting culture systems, plumbing, pumps, and hatchery equipment, including routine repairs.

## **BENEFITS**

Full-time employees are eligible to receive PSRF's suite of competitive benefits, including group health insurance (medical, vision, dental); voluntary life and disability insurance; paid time off (including vacation; 11 floating holidays, and 78 hours of sick leave annually); and optional contributions to PSRF's SIMPLE IRA retirement savings plan (with 3% matching by PSRF once eligibility requirements are met).

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

PSRF recognizes that people build skills through many types of experiences. We are committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace where team members feel valued, respected, and empowered to bring their authentic selves to work. We actively welcome and encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds especially those underrepresented in marine science and restoration and are dedicated to creating an equitable environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, protected veteran or disabled status, or genetic information.

To apply, please email a resume and cover letter (both required) to [hiring@restorationfund.org](mailto: hiring@restorationfund.org) by March 5, 2026. Questions regarding this position should be directed to Elsa Schwartz, Deputy Director, at [elsa@restorationfund.org](mailto: elsa@restorationfund.org).