**Project Title:** The Smelt Chronicles**:** Oral History and Videography

**Project Location:** TBD, may be mostly virtual due to COVID

**Project Co-Mentors:** Danielle Frechette (danielle.frechette@maine.gov) and Natalie Springuel (nspringuel@coa.edu)

**Project Time Frame:** April 2021 – June (or July) 2021

**Total Hours:** up to 520

**Semester Hour Allocation:** 40 hours per week

Maine is home to a diverse group of sea-run fish, which spend part of their life cycle at sea and part in our rivers. These fish have had an important role in Maine’s cultural and economic history. Through a newly expanded citizen science initiative, the Maine Department of Marine Resources, in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and Downeast Salmon Federation, is working to better document the current range and abundance of two of these species, rainbow smelt and tomcod. We are seeking a student with an interest in videography and social science to help augment the citizen science initiative by:

1. collecting and editing video footage and still photographs of rainbow smelt, eggs, and spawning habitat will be used for training citizen scientists and publicizing the citizen science initiative
2. capturing stories of Mainer’s who have fished and/or currently fish for tomcod and smelt in an oral history project to help preserve this rich part of the state’s fishing heritage

The student will also have the opportunity to participate in the smelt surveys and gain experience collecting data in the field as well developing a holistic understanding of how these surveys have been designed to fill gaps in current survey capacity and to inform restoration priorities.

Rainbow smelt move into coastal streams to reproduce at night between April and May. We are looking for a student who can begin their internship in early to mid-April and who is willing to work at odd hours and on weekends. Some travel to smelt streams to collect video footage will be necessary, although we will work with the student to identify streams that are nearest the student’s location.

All work is contingent on being able to conduct it in a COVID-safe environment and appropriate modifications to the scope of work will be made as appropriate.

Opportunities Include:

* Training in story capture and creating oral histories
* Working independently with guidance from mentors
* Interaction with the larger sea-run fish research and restoration community