



Alaska Marine Policy Forum

Summary from Wednesday, November 18, 2015

Host: Paula Cullenberg

Notes by Sue Keller

The Alaska Marine Policy Forum is a bimonthly teleconference for Alaskans to network and share information about marine policy, budgets, and legislation at state, national, and international levels, sponsored by Alaska Sea Grant and the Alaska Ocean Observing System. Contact Sue.Keller@alaska.edu to be added to the list serve to receive a reminder and agenda for the next call, and summary notes following each call.

Erik Elam, Office of Senator Sullivan

The Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015 became law. It is broadly aimed to get international pirate fishing under control.

Bill S2206, initiated by Sullivan, has passed the Senate Commerce Committee. The NOAA bill has three key aspects: (1) Prevention of sexual assault and harassment. (2) Provide money for charting, mapping, geodetic survey, arctic work, etc. (3) Reauthorize Officer Corps (plane and ship pilots). The bill has bipartisan support and is likely to get through the Senate.

The Sea Grant Reauthorization bill was passed by the Senate last week and will now go to the House.

Ephraim Froehlich and Amy McElroy, Office of Senator Murkowski

Staff from Senate and House Alaska offices worked hard on the IUU bill and are excited to have that passed. The Appropriations Omnibus is coming together. The bill to reauthorize IOOS (Integrated Ocean Observing System) will come up in December. Sen. Murkowski is cosponsoring the bill that will make the NOAA Digital Coast official (<https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/>). The website covers all coastal aspects—demographics, biology, habitat, erosion, etc.

Scott Leathard, Office of Representative Young

The House Ocean Caucus has drafted a letter addressed to director of OMB asking that they include \$1.5M funding for the National Ocean Account in the FY17 President's budget. Since it was not included in the NOAA request, we are trying for OMB intervention. This account would describe the economic value of the ocean and Great Lakes to the national GDP, and would be a critical planning tool to allow ocean related businesses and policymakers to make responsible, effective and economically beneficial

decisions. We are going to follow up with the Senate Oceans Caucus chairs to have them join our effort. In addition, the House and Senate Ocean Caucuses are planning a briefing on this issue in spring.

House and Senate Arctic Caucuses are planning to co-host an Arctic Shipping briefing to educate staff about the burgeoning Arctic shipping industry and how the U.S. is handling this expanding sector in the areas of safety, navigation, and international governance. Thanks to Amy and Ephraim, as Senator Murkowski's office is kindly taking the lead as we put this together. It is intended to coincide with the National Academies of Science "Arctic Matters Day" on January 14th.

The Magnuson Act reauthorization bill is in the Senate now, with Commerce Committee oversight. Moving it forward is a matter of figuring out what will get it passed in the House and Senate.

Staff members are vying to get a Knauss Fellow in Rep. Young's office. Scott gave a presentation to 12 fellows looking at 21 positions. Eleven candidates are coming back for interviews; Scott has three more interviews and hopes to get one of these very qualified Knauss Fellows.

Barbara Blake, Office of Lt. Governor Byron Mallott

Barbara is attending the Co-Management Symposium at UAF in Fairbanks. She passed on the following message:

"A theme of several transition teams was ensuring meaningful public involvement in resource development decisions, as well as a coordinated and efficient permitting process. We're at the beginning phase of an effort to start addressing the issues raised by the transition teams. We should have more information soon. If anyone would like to forward me their email address, we would be happy to add them to the list for future updates." barbara.blake@alaska.gov

Chris Oliver, North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Update on the December Council meeting:

The Groundfish Plan Teams are meeting now, setting allocation for next year. No big changes are anticipated. Large bycatch of halibut has been a problem. In June the Council reduced allowable bycatch by 26%, which was a first step. That month they initiated a halibut framework document to track all halibut issues—including research and management, to improve coordination by IPHC and the Council. At the December meeting there will be a copy of that framework to consider. Also there will be discussion of managing using overall biomass, tying PSC (Prohibited Species Catch) limits to biomass. The Council will look at management mechanisms set for charter and commercial fisheries.

A PSC limit allocation option was added to the suite of options for the Gulf of Alaska rationalization discussion, recommended by the ADFG Commissioner. Anyone with a valid license could be eligible to get a PSC allocation, but it is more complex than it sounds. The Council will look at Gulf of Alaska trawl bycatch management (trawl fishery rationalization) as a strategy for direct management of halibut.

There is a huge suite of alternative EIS (Environmental Impact Statements) next year. NMFS and the Council will have a work plan to get the work done. The analysis will be done late next year.

Paula Cullenberg, Alaska Sea Grant

The 2016 Alaska Marine Science Symposium will be a week later than usual—January 25-29 in Anchorage. Alaska Sea Grant will hold the Alaska Young Fishermen’s Summit in Juneau, on January 27-29. The International Pacific Halibut Commission will meet January 25-29, also in Juneau.

Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship recruitment is taking place now through February 12, and the Alaska Sea Grant State Fellowship application period will soon be open.

Alaska Sea Grant started a state fellowship program last year modeled after the Knauss fellowship program. Currently two Alaska State Fellows are in the program—in the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and at NMFS. They are doing well.

Applications for Alaska Sea Grant Fellowships can be found at the Alaska Sea Grant website.

Tina Buxbaum, ACCAP (Alaska Center for Climate Assessment & Policy)

A new Marine Advisory specialist in coastal community resilience and adaptation will soon be hired by Alaska Sea Grant, UAF. Alaska Sea Grant, ACCAP, AOOS, and a number of NOAA offices and several other groups are jointly funding this position.

Coming Events

January 20-21: University of Washington Pacific Anomalies Workshop, Seattle

January 25-29: Alaska Marine Science Symposium, Anchorage

January 25-29: International Pacific Halibut Commission meeting, Juneau

January 27-29: [6th Alaska Young Fishermen’s Summit](#), Juneau

February 12: Deadline to [apply for 2017 Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship](#)

Next Alaska Marine Policy Forum conference call: February 3, 2016.