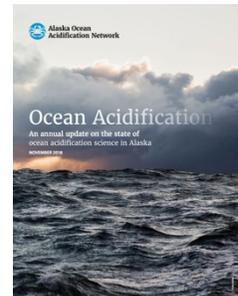


HIGHLIGHTS

Government Shutdown – Parts of the federal government that AOOS works most closely with, including NOAA and the Dept of Interior, shut down at midnight December 21 and remained closed as of January 4, 2019.

Earthquake Rattles Anchorage – Anchorage staff and offices were impacted by the 7.0 earthquake that hit the Anchorage area about 8:30 am Nov. 30. Holly was the only AOOS staff in the office at the time. The office weathered the event with pictures askew and some cracks in the drywall, but otherwise appeared ok. Staff experienced some damage to personal items in their homes, but otherwise, no serious damage. We continue to experience frequent aftershocks, which has all of us a bit unsettled.

New Ocean Acidification Report – The Alaska Ocean Acidification Network released a new “State of the Science” report for stakeholders, covering species response, regional influences, forecasting, and more. The report was produced in response to a request from the fishing industry and is expected to be updated [annually](#).



CONFERENCES/MEETINGS

Cook Inlet Regional Citizens Advisory Council – Molly attended the first day of the winter meeting in Anchorage Nov. 29, which reviewed the status of CIRCAC’S strategic plan, including current and planned environmental monitoring activities for Cook Inlet. Day 2 was cancelled due to the earthquake. Molly was thankful she was still at home and not caught on the 15th floor of the Sheraton!

ESMWG TO NOAA’S SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD – Molly attended portions of the Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group’s Miami meeting by teleconference Dec 12-13. The working group focused much of its discussion on addressing new technology advances (eDNA, AUVs, etc.) to assist with managing fisheries.

AGU in Washington DC – Alaska and Arctic issues were highlights of many of the sessions at the American Geophysical Union’s 2018 meeting Dec 10-14. Molly co-chaired a poster session, an oral session and a town hall highlighting the unprecedented environmental changes now seen in the northern Bering Sea. The town hall was streamed live over Facebook to Alaskans. Alaska Sea Grant’s Gay Sheffield from Nome described what Bering Strait residents are experiencing. Other scientists such as NOAA’s Phyllis Stabeno and UAF’s Seth Danielson discussed the possibility of the Bering Sea having reached a tipping point with warmer waters and lack of sea ice, which could have big implications for future subsistence use in the region, as well as commercial fish harvests. The annual Arctic Report Card was also released at a press conference, numerous sessions were held highlighting the new National Climate Assessment 4, which includes an Alaska chapter, with Molly as co-author, and the Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S. (AOOS is a member) held a board strategy session. ASTRA, who is working with AOOS on developing operational GPS reflectometry systems for water level observing also presented at the conference, showing results from recent efforts in Homer (*Tidal Measurements Using GNSS-R in a Location with Receding Tides*).

ADMINISTRATIVE

AOOS Board Meeting – The AOOS Board met in Sitka Nov 2 and re-upped the current officers for another 2-year term: Katrina Hoffman, Chair; Ed Page, Vice-Chair; Cheryl Rosa – Secretary; and Jim Kendall – Treasurer. The Board also made some minor adjustments to the 2018 budget.

Axiom/AOOS quarterly meeting – AOOS and Axiom staff met Dec 20 for our quarterly review of the AOOS Data Management Work Plan. All of our planned activities are currently on track.

AOOS Audit – Staff supported ASLC staff in conducting the annual audit of AOOS finances. We should be getting a draft of the audit soon.

AOOS Semi-annual Report Submitted to NOAA – Even though the report wasn’t due until December 30, we decided to submit early on December 21, ahead of the government shutdown.

IOOS

IOOS Association – The IA met with IOOS Program staff on Dec 12 to talk about the proposed congressional ask for the Fill the Gaps Campaign for the coming year.

A Sound System for U.S. Waters – The IOOS regions were briefed Dec. 18 on a new Ocean Noise Reference Station & Passive Acoustic Data Archive being developed by NOAA to enhance NOAA’s ability to characterize aquatic soundscapes and assess long-term trends and changes.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

AK Sea Grant Advisory Committee – Molly serves on the advisory committee, which met in Anchorage Nov. 6-7 with the new Alaska Sea Grant Director, Heather Brandon.

Hendrick Tolman meeting – Molly joined a meeting by teleconference hosted by the Alaska Region National Weather Service with Hendrik Tolman, Senior Advisor for Advanced Modeling on Nov 26 to discuss NOAA’s strategy for unified weather modeling at both the national and Alaska regional levels. A major question is how best to use research models to develop better Alaska operational weather models.

ACCAP STAFF – Molly and AOOS Board Member Amy Holman met with AK Center for Climate Assessment and Policy’s leads Sarah Trainor and John Walsh Dec 7 to brainstorm possible options for incorporating more economic information into climate decision-making in Alaska.

ADAC – Carol presented final results for the AIS PAC project during the ADAC Year 5 Quarterly meeting on Nov 26 in preparation for the Dec 5-6 ADAC Annual meeting. This meeting was postponed in light of the Nov 30 earthquake, and has been rescheduled for February, pending the government shutdown resolution.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

ADAC AIS PAC Data Portal demonstration workshops – AOOS and Axiom hosted two demonstration workshops on the ADAC AIS PAC (AIS for Prioritizing Arctic Charting) on Nov 9 in Anchorage, and Nov 15 in Juneau. Those attending included the project steering committee and stakeholder groups interested in using AIS data for a variety of applications. Jessica Austin (Axiom) and Carol (AOOS) ran the workshops while seeking stakeholder feedback on developing data products for the portal, which is now public (Please visit <http://aoos.org/ais-4-bathy/> for more details on this project).

EVOSTC Program PI meetings – The EVOSTC-funded projects Gulf Watch Alaska, Herring Research and Monitoring, and Data Management Program held their PI meeting in Anchorage Nov 14-16. Stacey Buckelew and Chris Turner of Axiom presented a data management status update at this meeting and held one-on-one metadata training sessions for PIs working on this project.

GIS Prioritization Survey Planned – Molly and ADNR’s Jaci Overbeck met with Coastal Mapping Strategist Marta Kumle to review the latest version of a survey to be circulated soon that will help determine priorities for GIS mapping of coastal Alaska. Currently, most of the state’s coast is not mapped to national standards, which makes it difficult to decide where to focus mapping resources. The survey will help determine priorities for a statewide strategy that will be developed by the state with broad input from communities, industry, and state and federal agencies. Marta’s position as coastal mapping strategist is an AOOS position, housed at ADNR, with funding from state and federal agencies.

Alaska OA Gap Analysis – Working groups from the Alaska Ocean Acidification Network have been meeting to discuss research, monitoring, and outreach priorities and put forth recommendations for a gap analysis. The network steering committee will meet in late January to review the priorities and begin developing a document.

OUTREACH

AOOS Stakeholder Listening Session – Southeast Alaska residents shared their observations about changes they see in the marine environment in the Sitka region, and what additional monitoring and research would be helpful, at a public session November 2 hosted by AOOS and the Alaska Marine Conservation Council (AMCC).

Pacific Marine Expo – Darcy attended the expo in Seattle Nov 17-19, hosting a booth for the Alaska Ocean Acidification Network and facilitating a panel of NOAA and University of Washington scientists. The event provided the opportunity to talk with fishermen from across Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. Thanks to the Alaska Marine Conservation Council for sharing booth space.



Yakutat Ocean Acidification Outreach – the Alaska Ocean Acidification Network sponsored an OA presentation and Q&A session in Yakutat on Nov 17. Esther Kennedy from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska provided an overview on OA, answered questions, and spent time with OA community contact Jennifer Hanlon from the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe. As of this winter, the community of Yakutat is collecting water samples in three locations.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Portal version release- The version 2.9 of the Ocean Data Explorer was released, which features improvements to the existing search functionality and introduction of a new method for accessing help docs. Changes were made relative to AOOS and other IOOS Regional Association stakeholder feedback received at meetings and through the portal feedback tab. A summary of the version releases is below and full release notes can be found at:

<https://axiomdatascience.com/portal-updates/>.

New stations and data layers- The following new data were added to the AOOS Ocean Data Explorer:

- three water level sensors (owned by the State of Alaska Div of Geological and Geophysical Surveys) were added for the communities of [Deering](#), [Kotzebue](#), and Dillingham;
- a 2018 Harmful Algal Bloom Coordinated Data Collection data layer that shows phytoplankton and toxicity testing locations in the Bering Sea and the U.S. Arctic;
- six real-time weather stations (owned by the Marine Exchange of Alaska), including:
 - [Kodiak Gull Island](#)
 - [Kaktovik Wx](#)
 - [Wainwright](#)
 - [Captains Bay](#)
 - [Point Arden](#)
 - [Dutch Harbor Pilot Station](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 16	AK Marine Policy Forum
Jan 28-31	AK Marine Science Symposium, Anchorage
Feb 11-15	AK Forum on the Environment
Feb 16	AK Marine Gala, Ocean Leadership Awards

Molly, Carol, Holly, Darcy, and Stacey