



## **Alaska Marine Policy Forum**

Summary from Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Host: Ginny Eckert, Alaska Sea Grant

Notes by Holly Kent

***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 [dawn.montano@alaska.edu](mailto:dawn.montano@alaska.edu) to receive email reminders and agendas for upcoming calls, and summary notes following each call. Visit the AOOS website to listen to an audio recording of this call.***

### **Alaska Congressional Delegation Update**

***Carina Nichols, Senator Sullivan's Office***

- Their office has been meeting with new administration nominees including Gina Raimondo, former Governor of Rhode Island, who has just been confirmed as the next Secretary of Commerce. These meetings are focused on introducing the complexities specific to Alaska.
- Senator Sullivan will remain on the same committees as with the prior administration, Commerce, Environment & Public Works, Veteran's Affairs, and Armed Services.
- Senator Sullivan was selected to be the Ranking Member on the Commerce Committee Subcommittee for Oceans, Fisheries, Climate Change, and Manufacturing which also includes the US Coast Guard.
- They have been working on the partisan COVID package.
- Their office has been looking into the decisions that Canada is making regarding border crossings and the cruise ship industry, and getting clarification on the US Coast Guard mask mandate for fishing vessels.
- The senator will be reintroducing the American Fisheries Advisory Committee Act (S.494).
- Senator Sullivan is working with Senator Murkowski on a bill to require clear labeling for genetically engineered (GE) products like salmon.
- The Senator's office is working on priorities for this Congress and is open to hearing from constituents.
- Their office has been hearing a lot about the 30 by 30 concept for marine protected areas, blocking 30% of the Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) from extraction by 2030.

### **Save Our Seas Act 2.0**

***Mary-Eileen Manning, Senator Sullivan's Office***

- The Save Our Seas Act (SOS)2.0 was passed in December 2020 after a lot of effort and consultation with people on this call and others.
- SOS 2.0 is an authorization bill expanding government agency authorities with respect to marine debris. It does not authorize funding.
- There are three parts to SOS 2.0. Clean-up and prevention are the first part with NOAA as the primary agency and they will be establishing a Marine Debris Foundation.
- The second part of the Act expands the US efforts in the global arena.
- The third part of the Act involves the EPA and the development of grant programs designed to prevent marine debris.

- Separate from the SOS 2.0 but related is additional funding going to NOAA's Marine Debris program to be used primarily for additional grants.
- Additionally, there was \$8M in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement dedicated towards marine debris efforts.
- There will be another iteration of the SOS effort in the near future, Version 3.0. Contact Senator Sullivan's office to provide feedback on ideas for what should be in this bill.

### **Young Fisherman's Development Act**

#### ***Brooke Carney, NOAA Sea Grant Program***

- The Young Fisherman's Act was also passed in December 2020 establishing a Young Fisherman's Development program through the NOAA's National Sea Grant Office.
- This will be a competitive grant program to support training and related programming for early career fishermen.
- This is another authorization bill with no funding attached to it for now, but beginning in 2022 there will be up to \$2M authorized for 4-5 years for a competitive grant program to support young fishermen.
- This summer or fall the National Sea Grant Office will have a small competitive opportunity open to existing Sea Grant programs to host regionally-based scoping sessions to receive input from stakeholders on the make-up of regional networks to address this issue.
- The National Sea Grant program will be posting a webpage on their website with more information soon.
- People can sign-up to receive news alerts from the National Sea Grant program [here](#).

### **Announcements**

- Ginny Eckert – Alaska Sea Grant has a [request for proposals](#) out for research projects with pre-proposals due March 1.
- Darcy Dugan – The forum [Alaska Fishermen on a Warming Planet](#) will be held tomorrow as part of the Pacific Marine Expo series. The [Anchorage Climate Action Plan](#) annual report was released recently.
- Molly McCammon – The Alaska Marine Science Symposium (AMSS) concluded on January 28 with 1,500 participants and all recordings of plenary sessions, panels, and keynotes are available on the [AMSS website](#). Additionally, the UN Decade for [Ocean Science Arctic Action Plan public draft](#) is open for public comment on March 13. Lastly, Bob King gave a great [keynote speech](#) at AMSS on the history of salmon fishery management in Bristol Bay, Alaska.
- Timi Vann – The incoming political team for NOAA includes Dr. Karen Hyun as the NOAA Chief of Staff and Dr. Letise LaFeir as Senior Advisor, Emily McAuliffe as Special Assistant, and Walker Smith as General Counsel. Their team has been working on how recent executive orders will affect us in Alaska.

**Next Alaska Marine Policy Forum call: April 21, 2021, 1 pm Alaska time.**