



Alaska Marine Policy Forum

Summary from Wednesday, March 20, 2019

Host: Darcy Dugan, Alaska Ocean Observing System

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 to be added to the list serve to receive a reminder and agenda for the next call, and summary notes following each call.

Amy Kirkham, Sen. Murkowski's office

- Amy is the Sea Grant Fellow working with Ann Robertson, the legislative assistant covering fisheries, oceans, and other environmental issues.
- Senator Murkowski introduced the Coastal Communities Ocean Acidification Act on March 14, 2019. The legislation addresses ocean acidification by identifying and assessing communities which are most dependent on coastal and ocean resources that may be impacted by ocean acidification.
- Senator Murkowski continues working on the Genetically Engineered Salmon Labeling Act, co-sponsored by fellow Republican Sen. Dan Sullivan along with Democratic Sens. Maria Cantwell and Jeff Merkley of Washington and Oregon.
- The Senate Oceans Caucus (chaired by Senators Murkowski and Whitehouse), will soon announce news on their efforts with respect to the role of ocean data in supporting the blue economy. Senator Murkowski is looking for input on this effort, please contact Amy at amy_kirkham@murkowski.senate.gov.
- The Senator continues to work to prioritize funding for the Sea Grant program in the budget.
- Amy and Ann Robertson will be attending the Bering Sea Fisheries Conference in Seattle April 18, 2019.

Molly McCammon, Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS)

- Molly has been in Washington D.C this week meeting with the Alaska Congressional Delegation.
- The offices of Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Congressman Young are all very interested in and supportive of AOOS projects working on ocean acidification, harmful algal blooms, increasing water level instrumentation, and marine debris.
- The Senate Oceans Caucus had set priorities for the current congress and have almost completed work on those. They are looking to set new priorities and welcome input from constituents. Please contact the offices of Senators Murkowski or Sullivan with your input.

Davin Holen, Coastal Community Resilience Specialist, Alaska Sea Grant

- The workshop *Setting Priorities for Health, Social, and Economic Disruptions from Spills in Alaska: Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future* was held in February as part of a national series sponsored by the Sea Grant Oil Spill Science Outreach Program to improve community preparedness for oil spills.
- The aim of the project was to identify regional-level needs and priorities for improving preparedness.

- The workshop focused on the topics of public health and social and economic disruption from spills in three parts:
 - research and lessons learned from the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill,
 - the current state of oil spill preparedness in Alaska, and
 - how to prepare communities for the next technological disaster.
- There were over 60 participants representing a very diverse group including elders from most regions within Alaska.

Darcy Dugan, Alaska Ocean Acidification Network

- The Alaska Ocean Acidification Network hosted a public presentation in Juneau in February with the support of local partners. NOAA researchers Jessica Cross and Bob Foy covered topics ranging from expected geographic hotspots to lab response of individual species. Over 100 people attended the presentation which was immediately followed by a question and answer period that lasted for almost an hour with a very engaged audience.
- If you are interested in an ocean acidification presentation to your community or organization, contact Darcy at dugan@aoos.org.
- The network recently published [*Ocean Acidification: An annual update on the state of the science in Alaska*](#). The report was produced in response to a request from the fishing community and is an easily readable 8-page brochure describing the latest research on species response in the lab, current forecasting efforts, and what is known so far about regional drivers and influences. Email Darcy if you'd like a stack of hard copies.
- The Alaska Marine Highway Ferry *Columbia* has now collected a year's worth of ocean acidification data while in transit between Bellingham, WA and Skagway, AK. The network will be circulating graphs of this data in the next few months to help people understand conditions in Southeast Alaska.

Next Alaska Marine Policy Forum call: May 22, 2019, 1 pm Alaska time.