



## **Alaska Marine Policy Forum**

Summary from Wednesday, September 23, 2015

Host: Molly McCammon

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 [Sue.Keller@alaska.edu](mailto: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 – Senate Update**

The Pope in town is this week's big news and next week's big news is the looming government shutdown. Senate Bill 1886 (Coordinated Ocean Monitoring and Research Act) will be marked up in the Commerce Committee in a few weeks. Senator Sullivan is a co-sponsor. The Senator's office is also working on the Coast Guard authorization bill, which passed through the House and is now in the Commerce Committee. The Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing bill is having trouble in the Senate but they are working on it.

Apparently the reauthorization of the National Sea Grant Program, which passed both the House and Senate, was used as the vehicle to propose defunding Planned Parenthood, thus effectively killing both the House and Senate bills. The bill will likely have to go through the House and Senate process again.

### **Scott Leathard, Office of Congressman Young - Congressional Update**

Congress is working on S1886: reauthorizing the Integrated Ocean Observing System Program and the Ocean Acidification Program and negotiating the Coast Guard Bill. S1886 has 26 co-sponsors: 16 Democrats and 10 Republicans. They would like to get a few more Republicans. As follow-up to the President's Alaska trip, the President is trying to accelerate icebreaker funding with potential authorizations to encourage leasing instead of purchases and to have funding come from multiple federal agencies and not just the Coast Guard. The House Ocean Caucus is considering holding a State of Ocean Technology briefing in conjunction with the Marine Technology Society conference being held in Washington DC in October. The budget and the Pope's visit are slowing everything down in DC at the moment.

### **Ephraim Froehlich, Office of Senator Murkowski – Congressional Update**

The Senator's office is working on both the IUU bill and the IOOS bill. Senator Murkowski is holding a marine debris event on October 21 in DC to highlight the immense need for funding on this issue in Alaska. The overall budget news is dicey, but a continuing resolution is likely for the near term, with hopefully an Appropriations Omnibus bill for the remainder of the year. Ephraim will be in Anchorage from Oct. 12-18 and is available to meet with anyone. Contact him directly.

### **Representative Paul Seaton – Legislative update**

Rep. Seaton held several town meetings in Homer and Ninilchik relating to the state's fiscal crisis, with about 80 attendees voting on various options for balancing the state's budget. The Representative just submitted a commentary to the ADN about instream flow reservations.

## **Open Floor**

### **Barbara Blake, Office of Lieutenant Governor Mallot**

Barbara said there has been no progress on responding to the Governor's transition team recommendations to consider reinstating a coastal zone management program. The Lt. Gov is holding listening sessions on the state's fiscal future, including one in Petersburg for the United Fishermen of Alaska. If any organization or community is interested in holding sessions in their area, contact Barbara. Sessions can be tailored to a specific level of effort and the attendees' interests. Paula is thinking about including adding a session to the next Young Fishermen's Summit. This could also be a topic on a future AMPF call.

### **Paula Cullenberg, Alaska Sea Grant**

Erin Shew is the new 2016 National Sea Grant Knauss Fellow from Alaska, and Thomas Ferrugia is the current fellow.

There are two new Alaska state Sea Grant Fellows: Matt Robinson working at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and Marysia Szymkowiak at NMFS in Juneau.

If anyone is interested in hosting a Sea Grant Fellow for next year, please contact Paula. Alaska Sea Grant is recruiting for a new Coastal Resiliency position, a faculty position requiring a masters degree, with a focus on engaging with coastal communities. The position is jointly funded by Sea Grant, NOAA, and AOS.

### **Doug Burns, Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands Landscape Conservation Cooperative (ABSI)**

They just posted a series of GIF animations of marine vessel traffic through the Aleutians and Bering Sea on their website. They are working with Melissa Good at Alaska Sea Grant on organizing the Aleutian Life Forum (ALF) conference with NPRB, ABSI, AOS, Alaska Sea Grant and the Qawalangin tribe to convene in Unalaska in August of 2016, focusing on science in the Aleutian Islands region. The last forum was held in 2006, just following the Seladang Ayu grounding. The website for it is under development.

### **Brian Himelbloom, Kodiak Fisheries Science Center**

The Arctic Science Summit Week will be held in Fairbanks March 12-18 and has a website [www.ASSW2016.org](http://www.ASSW2016.org).

### **Molly McCammon, AOS**

AOS started the Blob Tracker, a blog on the Pacific Anomalies, that can be accessed from the AOS website. Please check it out. The second Pacific Anomalies workshop will be held Jan 20-21 in Seattle and hosted by the University of Washington.

NOAA's panel reviewing proposals to its Coastal Resiliency Grant Program met recently. NOAA will be notifying successful proposers in early to mid October.

### **Topics for next meeting?**

Let Molly or Paula know if you have suggestions for speakers or topics.

### **Important Dates**

Next Marine Policy call: November 18, 2015, 1 pm Alaska time. NOTE: This is a week earlier than usual due to the Thanksgiving holidays.

