

HIGHLIGHTS

Consortium for Ocean Leadership public policy forum & spring meeting – As a COL Trustee (along with UAF CFOS Dean Brad Moran), Molly attended the forum and meeting in Washington DC March 13-15. The 1-day forum was entitled U.S. Ocean Policy: Past, Present and Future, and used the recommendations of the 2004 report from the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy as a jumping off point to evaluate how U.S. ocean policy evolved in the years following the report, where it is now, and where it might go in future years. Molly moderated the Present Panel which looked at ocean policy today from the perspectives of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources, and one of the regional ocean partnership programs. A fourth speaker highlighted trends in ocean science funding over the past few decades. The forum was attended by more than 100 administration and congressional members and staff, and was followed by 2 days of meetings by the COL members and trustees.



CONFERENCES/MEETINGS/PRESENTATIONS

Japan - U.S. Arctic Science Collaboration: Carol provided an overview presentation “Coordinating Observations of Arctic Change: Increasing sustainable observations and access to information” for the Japan-U.S. Arctic Science Collaboration meeting held in Fairbanks, AK March 4-6, 2019. The International Arctic Research Center (IARC) was founded in 1997 at UAF through an agreement between Japan and the United States “to demonstrate our ability to solve, jointly, problems that are beyond what any one nation can address.” Dr. Akasofu from Japan was instrumental in creating the Frontier Program as well as cooperative agreements with Japanese agencies and the U.S. National Science Foundation. The meeting was held to commemorate IARC’s 20-year anniversary and to reflect on the history of IARC, present state of the art research from the Center, as well as discuss future opportunities for shared collaborative research and observing in the Arctic, in particular, the Central Arctic Basin.

IARPC Collaboration teams and Bering Sea ice conditions – 3 IARPC teams (Environmental Intelligence, Coastal Resilience & Sea Ice) collaborated March 25 on a webinar to discuss the unprecedented 2019 winter sea ice conditions in the Bering Sea and what needs to be done to better prepare for impacts to coastal communities, subsistence users, and fish and wildlife resources. As one of the EI Collaboration Team co-leads, Molly helped plan and host the event. The teams heard from Rick Thoman at the Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy and Gay Sheffield, Alaska Sea Grant extension agent in Nome. Phyllis Stabeno, Jim Overland, Janet Intrieri and Amy Holman provided additional context from NOAA. Proposed action items include: 1) developing a summary of what happened last year and so far this year, what is expected this summer, and what various agencies are doing; 2) examining how to implement a structure similar to that called for by the Bering Sea Elders Executive Order that was rescinded last year to provide for better coordination and collaboration between tribes and agencies; and 3) coordinating research cruises again, similar to the efforts of last year.

Ocean Tuesday presentation – Molly gave an AOOS 101 presentation at a weekly Ocean Tuesday seminar on March 26. This is a program sponsored by the Bering Sea Fishermen’s Association to facilitate an Ocean Cluster economy in Alaska as part of the Blue Economy.

American Fisheries Society-Alaska Chapter Meeting- Alaska Sea Grant Fellow and Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network coordinator Kayla Schommer presented a poster on the Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network during this year's AFS Alaska Chapter meeting in Sitka. This was an effort to reach out to the fishing community and inform them about HABS and the network, while building relationships for the future.

ADMINISTRATIVE

AOOS EXCOM – The AOO Executive Committee met March 1 to take action on how to spend some remaining discretionary funds from the FY 18 IOOS budget. The committee reviewed 2 options and decided to approve additional funds for a new AIS/weather station to be located on the East Cape of St. Lawrence Island. There is high demand from local subsistence hunters for additional weather information in this area. Funds will also be used to incorporate the COASTT seabird die-off surveys into the AOOS Ocean Data Explorer.

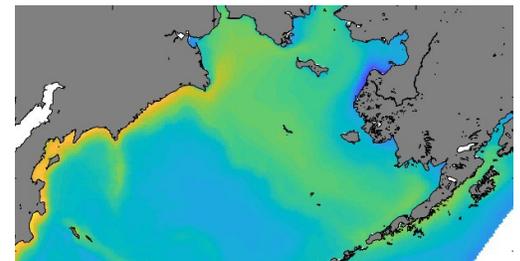
FY 19 Funding – Molly received good news while in Washington DC that AOOS' core funding from the IOOS Program will remain the same as the current year. This will allow us to continue with year 4 funding of our major observing subawards. We will also be receiving additional funds for other projects and tasks, but don't know the final amounts or description of these yet.

IOOS

IOOS Spring Meeting – Molly and AOOS Board Chair Katrina Hoffman attended the spring meeting in Washington DC March 19-21. This was to be followed by a meeting of the IOOS Federal Advisory Committee, to which Molly was just appointed, but that meeting was cancelled due to a glitch with the charter re-approval. The IOOS meeting was very substantive, with lengthy discussions with Nicole LeBoeuf, Acting Assistant Administrator at the National Ocean Service, Jeff Payne, Acting Deputy Director for the National Ocean Service, and Carl Goldman and staff from the US IOOS Office. We also talked with Steve Thur, Marc Suddleson and Rick Stumpf from the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science about the need for sustained Harmful Algal Bloom monitoring, and with Frank Schwing from NMFS about sharing NMFS data with IOOS regions. One new program that is collaborating with the IOOS regions is implementation of Executive Order #13840, which has an allocation in the FY19 budget of \$1.5M. These funds will be divided, in some fashion, among the 4 existing Regional Ocean Partnerships (northeast, mid-Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and west coast), and 5 regional observing systems (Alaska, Pacific Islands, Great Lakes, Southeast Atlantic and Caribbean) to be used for enhancing data management for decision making. More details to follow.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

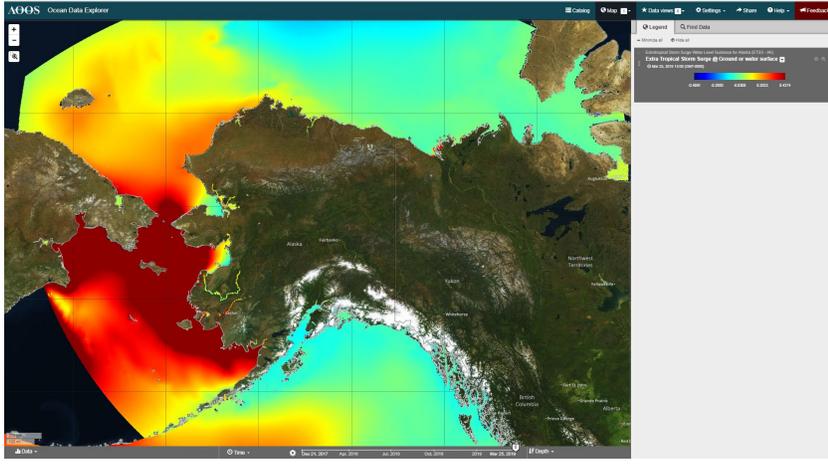
Alaska OA Network – This month's [OA Network eNews](#) included the following stories: OA in the Bering Sea: a look at the recent past, Murkowski re-introduces OA legislation, Cordova National Ocean Science Bowl Team wins with OA research paper, Can acidification affect freshwater?, and Researchers present to a packed audience in Juneau. Also, if you missed the OA posters at AMSS, you can now find them [here](#).



*pH in the Bering Sea modeled from 2003-2014.
Dark blue represents more acidic water.*

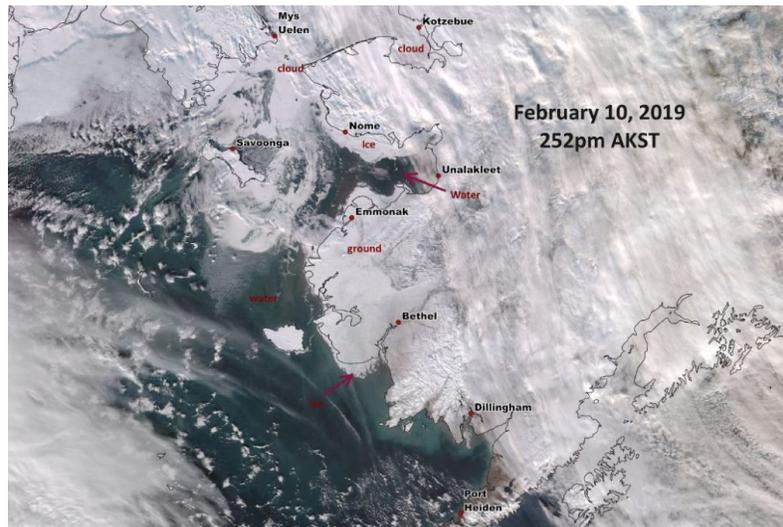
DATA MANAGEMENT

Extra-tropical Storm Surge Water Level Guidance- The Extra-Tropical Storm Surge (ETSS) model is a modification of the Sea Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model using 0.5° Global Forecast System (GFS) wind and pressure input to predict storm surge from extra-tropical storms. The ETSS for Alaska was updated to the latest production version (v2.2) within the AOOS Ocean Data Explorer. The latest version can be interacted with and accessed at [this link](#).



The Extra-Tropical Storm Surge (ETSS) model v2.2 is now available in the AOOO Ocean Data Explorer.

Alaska Water Level Watch Project- The project continues to make progress on improving ways to better serve water level data via the AOOO data management system, including developing data inventories and data quality flags in the portal visualizations. This month the project also explored ingesting high water mark data held by the Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys (DGGs), which they often collect after winter storms in Western Alaska. Ultimately these data would be used to communicate community-wide flood impacts to emergency managers to help better predict future storms. Information about a coastal storm hitting western Alaska in February 2019 can be found on the project website at: <https://aoo.org/alaska-water-level-watch/coastal-storm-hits-western-alaska-in-february/>.



Suomi NPP Satellite image of open-ocean and sea ice along western Alaska in advance of the February 12, 2019 storm, courtesy of UAF/GINA and prepared by Rick Thoman, ACCAP

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Apr 3** – OA presentation at APU (Darcy)
- Apr 9** – AK Sea Grant site review in Fairbanks. (Molly to present)
- Apr 11** – OA presentation to Bartlett Group (Darcy)
- Apr 11-12** Arctic Domain Awareness Center (UAA) Annual Meeting, USCG HQ, WA DC (Carol)
- Apr 25-26** Arctic Encounters, Seattle
- Molly, Carol, Holly, Darcy, Kayla, and Stacey**

Just FYI: Both Molly and Darcy will be on leave April 17 – May 5. Molly will still be available on email.