

HIGHLIGHTS

Congressional testimony - Molly was asked by the House Water, Oceans and Wildlife Subcommittee of the House Natural Resources Committee to testify at a House hearing May 8 on reauthorization of the Integrated Coastal Ocean Observing System (ICOOS) Act and the National Sea Grant College Program. Molly gave several examples of the value of these programs to Alaskans and their benefit to each other.



Molly prepared to testify.

CONFERENCES/MEETINGS/PRESENTATIONS

NOAA Science Advisory Board's Ecosystem Services Management Working group – Molly attended this meeting by teleconference May 14-16. The committee is developing a report on new technologies (such as autonomous vehicles, eDNA, otoliths, etc.) to help with NMFS fishery stock assessments. It's clear that these technologies will not be a complete replacement for ship-based surveys, but rather, will complement and enhance existing tools.

NOAA Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) Arctic Research Program (ARP) PI Meeting – Carol gave a presentation May 1, 2019 covering AOOS activities in the Arctic. The meeting objective was to promote dialogue, create awareness and facilitate cross-program research collaborations, and AOOS was invited to participate as a collaborative entity.

SEATOR Spring Workshop and Training- Kayla attended this event held in Sitka May 6-10. The Workshop focused on training SEATOR partners to monitor and collect for Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) and phytoplankton in their communities. Kayla gave a presentation on the HABs network and participated in the training. It was beneficial for the HABs coordinator to meet with the SEATOR partners in person and get a better understanding of how the monitoring and data collections occur.



Collecting specimens in Sitka.

University of New Haven class – Darcy and Carol met with a group of students and professors from the University of New Haven on May 30 to talk about ocean acidification, HABs, and AOOS operations.

ADMINISTRATIVE

AOOS Board meeting – The board met May 22 to approve the budget and work plan for AOOS' core FY 2019 budget, which starts June 1. AOOS is receiving flat funding for core projects, with additional funding for a suite of new projects including additional radars in the Bering Strait region, new glider transects to support commercial fisheries, and ocean data sharing. Once we get our final award, we will provide a more detailed report in this update. The board also heard from Peter Murphy, NOAA's Director of Alaska's Marine Debris program, and from AOOS investigators Jeremy Kasper and Rachel Potter from UAF.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Central Beaufort Sea Wave and Hydrodynamic Modeling Study PI Meeting – Carol, Ian Gill (Axiom), and Chris Turner (Axiom) participated in a project PI meeting on May 16 at the AOOS office in Anchorage. During year 1, PIs were assimilating and evaluating the historical data records for the region and preparing a data synthesis and annotated bibliography. The modeling effort is focused on the nearshore areas of Stefansson Sound near Foggy Island Bay east of Prudhoe Bay, and much of the historical data will be used for model validation in hindcast runs. This project, funded by BOEM, will address how more pervasive periods of less sea ice, longer periods of open water, and changes in ocean and atmospheric temperature may lead to changes in wave and storm surge conditions, greater coastal erosion rates, and impacts to the design of offshore structures leading to potential changes in the field logistics and marine operations in

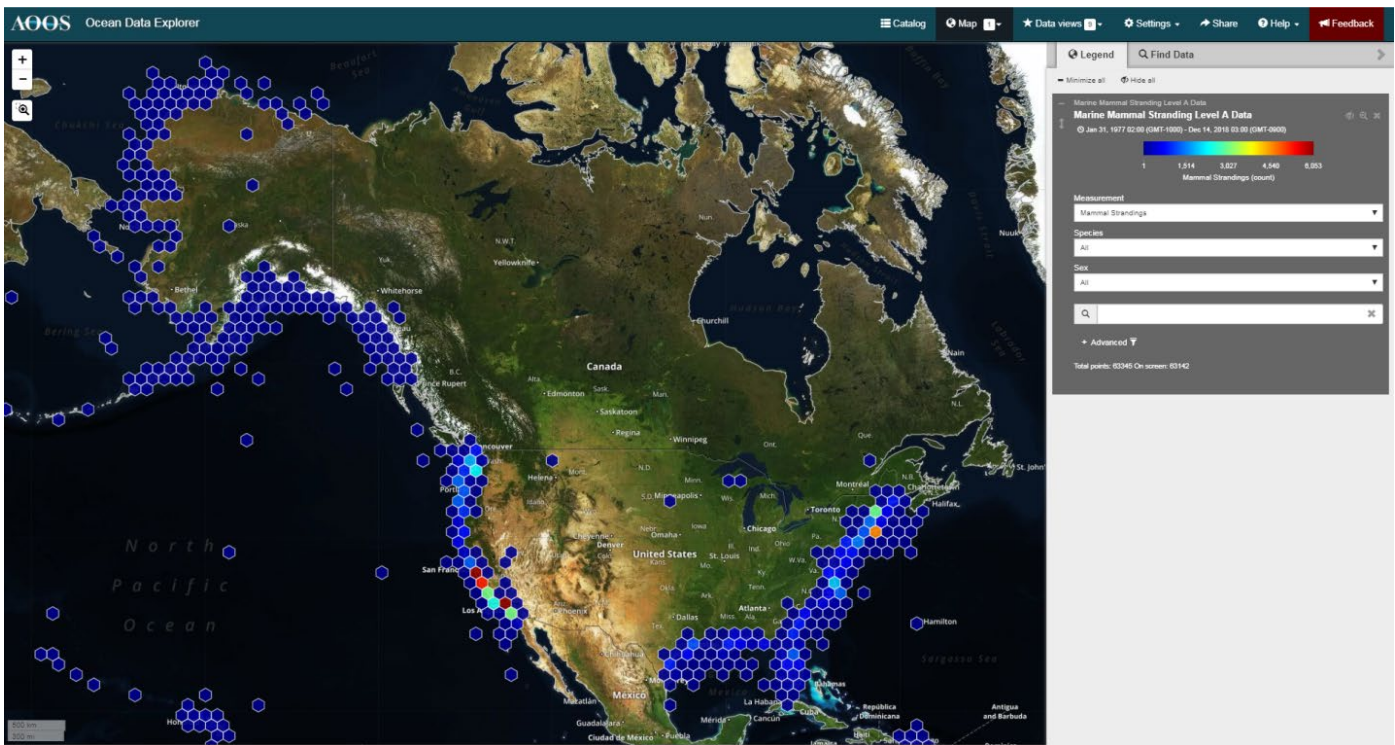
the eastern Beaufort. For more information, including upcoming field work plans for 2019, please visit the project webpage: <https://aoots.org/foggy/program-update/>

Alaska OA Network steering committee – The OA steering committee met on May 16, facilitated by Darcy, and reviewed the gap analysis components and recommendations submitted by the network’s working groups on outreach, fishing industry engagement, K-12 education, policy, and Tribal monitoring. The recommendations have turned into a work plan for these groups. The steering committee also discussed the need for a data synthesis pulling together what we know about OA in Alaska so far. The goal will be to produce a special issue for a journal article, as well as a summary in layman’s terms.

OA Network highlights – The OA Network helped organize community presentations/Q&A sessions in Nome (May 13 by Jeff Hetrick) and Homer (May 29 by Amanda Kelley). Stories from the [May OA eNews](#) include a new project on the response of herring roe to OA and climate change, an interview with Christy Harrington of the Alaska Marine Highway System OA ferry project, an OA video from Airport Heights Elementary 4th graders, and a piece from the New York Times answering questions about how to shop, cook and eat in a warming world. Join our list serve on the [Alaska OA Network homepage!](#)

DATA MANAGEMENT

Marine Mammal Stranding Level A Data- Data has been collected over the past 100 years by members of the U.S. National Marine Mammal Stranding Network on all stranded cetaceans and pinnipeds (excluding walrus) along U.S. coasts under the oversight of the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service. Data are gathered using a series of forms that collect valuable stranding information through a process known as Level A data collection. Stranding network responders use these forms to collect basic information on stranding events, as well as morphology, life history, biology, and general health. Scientists and natural resource managers use the information in these forms to help promote the conservation of marine mammal species, as well as to respond to and mitigate threats to marine mammal populations. In partnership with the NOAA Fisheries, Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program and IOOS, a prototype version of the National Stranding Database subset is now available through the AOOs Ocean Data Explorer. Data related to the location, species, morphology, and condition of Level A strandings along the Alaska and U.S. coastlines can be accessed at [this link](#).



Data related to the location, species, morphology, and condition of Level A strandings along the Alaska and U.S. coastlines available in the data portal.

Central Beaufort Sea Wave and Hydrodynamic Modeling Study Historical Spatial Database – Axiom was integral in acquiring, ingesting and curating all available and relevant historical data records for this eastern Beaufort Sea/Stefansson Sound regional modeling project. Data often came with complicated formats and missing metadata. The data record is being used to produce an annotated spatial database and bibliography. Currently there are 47 unique projects stored in the AOOS Research Workspace that comprise over 25,960 historic data files. The total volume of data stored as of March 31, 2019 is approximately 74.7 GB. The historical data will be used for validating a forty-year wind/wave hindcast reanalysis dataset (~1979-2019). All data will be made available on the project data portal hosted by AOOS, significantly increasing the amount of historical data now available for the eastern Beaufort region on the AOOS data system. For more information on this project, please visit: <https://aoot.org/foggy/>

Shell Arctic Acoustic Data Rescue project awarded - Axiom Data Science, in partnership with AOOS, is pleased to have a data rescue proposal selected for NPRB funding. In this effort (beginning July 2019), approximately 220 terabytes of acoustic data collected by the Shell Oil Company (Shell) during its Arctic drilling exploration in 2007-2015 will be transferred, standardized, and made publicly-available. These data represent one of the largest and most comprehensive sets of underwater acoustic data for the Arctic in existence and represent a valuable ambient baseline acoustic time series for the greater scientific and resource management community. At the time of Shell's project completion in 2016, these data were cleaned, organized, and transferred to AOOS. By leveraging information processing technologies, this project will make this unique data asset discoverable and accessible by the scientific community, which will enable timely research into the rapidly changing, highly sensitive environment of the Arctic.

AOOS COLLABORATOR MILESTONE Warren Horowitz, a leading oceanographer for decades of Arctic programs from the Alaska Region BOEM office will be retiring end of May. We would like to personally thank Warren for all of his contributions to oceanographic data efforts and research across Alaska during his tenure here, and in particular for his involvement with AOOS and promoting significant data acquisitions within the AOOS Data Portal System. Thanks for your service and congratulations Warren! See you at the South Anchorage Farmer's Market!

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 5-6	IARPC Team Leaders Workshop, Anchorage (Molly)
June 18-19	NOAA Facilitation Training, Juneau (Darcy, Holly, Kayla)
July 23-24	IOOS RA Director and Program Office Work Session, San Francisco (Molly)

Molly McCammon, Carol Janzen, Holly Kent, Darcy Dugan, Kayla Schommer and Stacey Buckelew