



HIGHLIGHTS

This is my last monthly update as AOS Executive Director. Starting January 1, Sheyna Wisdom will be taking on that role – and I wish her all the best. I’ll be staying on as AOS Senior Advisor for an indeterminate amount of time. I’m hoping that means I get to aid the transition and work on other “fun stuff”. But knowing how AOS works – that we are all one team with everyone pitching in wherever needed – I’m sure I will continue to work with many of you on a lot of our priorities. I started this publication back in 2009 as a way to communicate regularly with the AOS Board about the variety of activities AOS is involved with. The recipient list has grown past our board members to include the IOOS Program Office and staff and other key partners. Looking back – that variety of AOS activities has only increased, especially as our program and associated staff have grown. I would never have imagined that a desert rat from California with a journalism degree from UC Berkeley would end up in Alaska managing large scale marine science programs for more than 25 years. But here I am, and I have loved every minute (well, most of them!). As I told the AOS Board earlier this week, this is the best job in the state of Alaska. We’ll be sending out a special eNews in the next weeks to our big listserve to share some of my reflections on the history of AOS and the growth of ocean and coastal observing in Alaska. My email and cell phone will stay the same, so keep in touch and stay safe. With gratitude, Molly



ADMINISTRATIVE

We did it! The AOS proposal to NOAA for funding for the next 5 years will be officially submitted Monday, December 21 at the latest. This was a herculean effort, and much thanks goes to the AOS team, and especially Holly Kent, Jill Prewitt and Carol Janzen, who worked tirelessly on all the pieces of this proposal. Thanks also to Tara Miller and Carley Swartz at the Alaska SeaLife Center for their technical support and ensuring a seamless submission.

AOS Board – At its Dec 15 meeting the board approved new officers for a 2-year term. Re-elected as chair was Katrina Hoffman, PWSSC; as secretary, Cheryl Rosa, US Arctic Research Commission; and as treasurer, Jim Kendall, BOEM. Elected for a first term as vice-chair was Sara Longan, deputy commissioner of the AK Department of Natural Resources.

AOS Diversity and Inclusion Working Group – This working group, which includes 5 board members and 2 non-board members (Wáahlaal Gíidaak Blake (First Alaskans) and Kaare Erickson (UIC) met on December 8 and discussed a recommendation to expand the AOS board to include more tribal representation. They also identified proposed changes to AOS standard operation procedures, the AOS MOA, and the AOS 5-year strategic direction. The next meeting will be in January and the AOS board will further discuss and take action on the recommendations of the working group in the spring.

Pending OA/HABs proposal – AOS staff collaborated with UAF, Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery and KBNERR on a letter of intent for a NOAA NOFO. The proposed project would work with the shellfish aquaculture industry to build resilience by mitigating impacts of ocean acidification and harmful algal blooms on shellfish farm operations.

IOOS

ICOOS Act Reauthorization – It passed and we’re celebrating! The ICOOS Act was originally authorized in 2009 for 5 years. Reauthorization of this non-controversial legislation has truly been a slog – but the stars finally aligned and it received final Congressional passage on December 16. Reauthorization sends a strong signal from Congress that our program has strong bipartisan support and is essential for a sustainable ocean. Many thanks to Congressman Don Young for his sponsorship on the House side, and to Senators Murkowski and Sullivan for their co-sponsorship and support in the Senate. Much of the credit should also go to IOOS Association Executive Director Josie Quintrell, whose non-stop relationship building with Congressional staffers helped grease the wheels for its passage.

CONFERENCES/MEETINGS/PRESENTATIONS

Alaska Coastal Mapping Summit – The annual summit was held virtually Dec 9-10. Molly gave a lightning presentation on Alaska coastal activities, including support for the AK Coastal Mapping Strategist position, the AK Water Level Watch coordination, website and data portal, water level observations. Summit materials (including participant contact information, presentation PDFs and recordings) will be up on the [AGC website](#) soon. Thanks to AOOS staff and Alaska Coastal Mapping Strategist Marta Kumle for her efforts in putting on the summit.

UNDOS Arctic Planning– Several working group chairs organized a special 2-hour session December 8 to solicit more Indigenous input from Alaska and Canada into the planning process for the UN Decade of Ocean Science Arctic Action Plan. Molly participated in the overall Task Force meeting December 10 and then the Working Group co-chair meeting on December 16. Contact her if you'd like more information.

COLLABORATIONS

Alaska Sea Grant Advisory Committee – The committee met Dec 9 to receive updates on the transition of ASG from the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences to the UAF Provost Office. Committee members, including Molly, also talked about emerging issues, and heard from ASG staff members, including Director Ginny Eckert, also an AOOS Board member.

Alaska Ocean Acidification Network – Darcy facilitated a meeting with the six ocean and coastal acidification networks active across the US on December 4 with main topics focusing on outreach approaches during Covid, K-12 education curriculum, ideas for the Jan 8 "OA Day of Action", and Congressional hearings.

Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network – Thomas has undertaken the majority of the listening sessions with AHAB network members and is currently updating and completing the AHAB Action Plan. Members of the new AHAB steering committee have been identified and the first meeting of the committee will take place in early 2021.

Bering Data Sharing Initiative – A new Community Advisory Panel (CAP) has been established for the Bering Science series of publications. The panel is comprised of members representing the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska, Bering Sea Elders Group, Association of Village Council Presidents, Aleut Community of St. Paul Island, and the Alaska Tribal Health Consortium. The CAP is also seeking additional representation from the Bering Sea region. The main role of the CAP will be to advise on content and review the publication before publishing. The first meeting of the CAP was held on December 14th to start planning for the next publication, planned for March 2021.

DATA MANAGEMENT – This month a version 2.13 of the Ocean Data Explorer and other AOOS regional portals was released. This version features improvements to time slider performance, including brush selection for timeseries charts and introduces a user time zone selector. Enhancements were made to the data download UX to allow users to queue multiple datasets for download, add datasets to a download 'shopping cart', and share download compilations with other users. For applicable portals, custom draw and measuring tools are available in the main portal map. Additionally, users can add annotations to the map view and print the image to a pdf for integration in presentations and reports. For release notes and animations of some new features, see: <https://axiomdatascience.com/portal-updates/>.

ENGAGEMENT METRICS

Audience Name	Type of Presentation	# of people
AK Coastal Mapping Summit	AOOS coastal activities lightning talk	143
AK Sea Grant Advisory Committee	ASG annual planning & discussion	25
IARPC EI, CR & ME Teams	Post-summer sampling research cruise update	60
Coastal Acidification Network (CAN) meeting	Coordination between OA networks in the U.S.	11

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 27-29 AK Marine Science Symposium

Happy Holidays from Molly McCammon, Carol Janzen, Holly Kent, Darcy Dugan, Jill Prewitt, Thomas Farrugia, Marta Kumle and our data team at Axiom