

HIGHLIGHTS

Nome Workshop – AOOS and Alaska Sea grant co-sponsored a workshop in Nome July 16-17 to provide an introduction to algal toxins, their effect on humans and marine species, and what we know so far about their presence in western and Arctic Alaska. This workshop was funded by the US Arctic Research Commission and NOAA. This two-day workshop in Nome covered identification of algal species, monitoring techniques, impacts to the ecosystem, and current HABs research results for the region. The workshop also included presentations on changing environmental conditions in the Bering Strait region and the State's role in public health responses to algal toxin poisoning. The first day of the workshop was targeted for local entities and the public. The second day was designed to inform local health care professionals in the region on the symptoms of algal toxin poisoning and how to effectively treat it.

CONFERENCES/MEETINGS/PRESENTATIONS

LCC Staff – Molly and Darcy met with Landscape Conservation Cooperative staff July 2 to receive an update on these programs following their transfer to being housed as programs within the Alaska Conservation Foundation. The LCC staff included Aaron Poe, Aleutian Bering Sea Island LCC director, and Danielle Stickman, Western Alaska LCC director. The 2 programs were originally part of US Fish and Wildlife Service and are still actively involved in promoting climate adaptation activities within their regions. AOOS has worked closely with the LCCs in the past and we are looking forward to doing so in the future.

NOAA NCCOS staff – Molly briefed Sherri Fields, Director of the Charlestone Marine Labs, and Steve Kibler, oceanographer with the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science at NOAA, July 9 on AOOS projects and the need for more support from NOAA for the AK Harmful Algal Bloom Network.

NOAA NOS staff – Darcy and Kayla met with Nicole Fernandes of NOAA's Policy & Constituent Affairs Division on July 24 to brief her on the Alaska Ocean Acidification Network and the Alaska Harmful Algal Bloom Network.

AK Marine Policy Forum – The AMPF met July 17 and heard briefings from congressional staff, and an update on the Unusual Mortality Events in the Bering Sea for Gray whales and ice seals.

Moore Foundation – Molly and IOOS Association Director Josie Quintrell met with several Moore Foundation staff in Palo Alto July 25 and briefed them on AOOS and IOOS activities. AOOS/Axiom received funding from the Moore Foundation earlier this year to digitize the recently released Alaska Marine Atlas developed by Audubon Alaska and funded by Moore. Rob Bochenek and Brian Stone (via webinar) described the new data layers that will now become part of the AOOS Ocean Data Explorer. Molly described the variety of programs that AOOS has in the Arctic and explored possible foundation interest.

USFWS Rural Information Technician (RIT) Training – Darcy presented on ocean acidification to a group of Alaska Native USFWS agents based in communities near wildlife refuges around the state on July 30. They were highly engaged and discussed ways RIT members might help support community-based ocean acidification sampling.

Kodiak Biomass Shellfish Survey – Kayla participated in the Kodiak Area Native Association's (KANA) annual shellfish biomass survey in Kodiak. Kayla helped collect, measure, and shuck shellfish at a local Kodiak beach. Samples were then sent to the Southeast Alaska Tribal Ocean Research (SEATOR) lab for toxin analysis.

ADMINISTRATIVE

AOOS Funding & EXCOM – AOOS received its final funding award for this year and will receive a total of \$4,141,512. Of that amount, \$773,409 is pass-through to UAF for projects that had originally been funded through the UAF Cooperative Institute. The Executive committee met July 17 to formally accept the funds and to adopt a final spending plan for the year. Staff are now in the process of developing all the subawards and contracts for the year.

IOOS

Regional Association & Program Office Planning Retreat – Molly and the 10 other RA Directors and senior program office staff met in San Francisco July 23-24 to plan IOOS program-wide activities for the next 2 years. A major discussion topic was the future of the IOOS Fill the Gaps Campaign which has been successful in increasing national funding levels for the IOOS program. Should we declare success and end the campaign, or should we continue with efforts to build the program? We also talked about the structure of the upcoming Federal Funding Opportunity for our next 5-year cooperative agreement.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Gulf of Alaska Ecosystem Moored Observatory (GEO) deployed – AOOS PI Seth Danielson (UAF-CFOS) and the crew of the Sikuliaq successfully deployed the new GEO on July 11. This mooring array consists of 3 moorings and is designed to collect concurrent datasets spanning multiple trophic levels. A variety of sensors will measure the biological and physical environment with high temporal and spatial resolution, including the under-sampled and poorly-understood winter season when waves, wind, and freezing spray often preclude ship-based sampling. Observations will bring unprecedented views into the biogeochemical pump and major ecosystem components in the Gulf of Alaska to facilitate the monitoring, detection and diagnosis of ecosystem change. This project is the result of successful funding collaborations with the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, AOOS, UAF, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustees Council, and the National Science Foundation. [Real-time data from this mooring array](#) is available on the Ocean Data Explorer.

Kodiak Wave Buoy – AOOS has successfully engaged in a loan agreement with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to maintain and operate a DataWell wave buoy currently deployed offshore of Kodiak Island. This buoy was deployed in February 2018 to make observations of the wave and current fields for a renewable energy project. AOOS has agreed to take over the operation and maintenance of this valuable asset in order to keep it in the water another 2 years. The Coastal Data Information Program (CDIP) that operates wave buoys nationwide is partnering with AOOS by providing processed and quality controlled real-time data services. Other partners include the U.S. Coast Guard in Kodiak, who have agreed to support a site visit this fall to swap the buoy. Special thanks to Levi Kilcher (NREL) and Julie Thomas (CDIP) for proposing this opportunity. [Real-time data from this wave buoy](#) is available on the Ocean Data Explorer.

Coastal Data Information Program (CDIP)
46264 - Kodiak, AK (236)



Alaska Ocean Acidification Network update – this month’s OA Network eNews includes stories on research capacity expanding in the Gulf of Alaska, what we’re learning in Kachemak Bay (hint: lots of nearshore variability!), an interview with Kodiak community-sampling program initiator Stephanie Mason, a video presentation by Nina Bednarsek on pteropods and OA in Alaska, and a snippet on why glacial outflow can exacerbate ocean acidification. [Read it here.](#)

DATA MANAGEMENT

Axiom Business Plan – Molly met with Rob Bochenek on July 26 to talk about a draft business operations plan that Axiom is developing in anticipation of a new contract next year. The plan will address future data management costs, partnerships and cost-sharing with other regions, intellectual property rights, and staffing needs.

COLLABORATIONS

HABs Team – Molly, Darcy and Kayla met with Kathi Lefebvre and 15 other researchers on July 17 at NOAA to discuss what we know so far about HABs in the Arctic and the plans for leveraging cruises and research missions this August to collect as many samples as possible with vessels of opportunity. Kathi is leading an effort on a small budget to maximize our ability to document what’s going on during an unprecedentedly warm year in the Bering and Chukchi seas. Funding through NOAA’s ECOHAB program is expected next year to help process the samples.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 7	Congressional staff visit to AOOS
Aug 21	IOOS Federal Advisory Committee virtual meeting
Sept 4-6	Arctic Futures 2050, Washington DC (Molly)
Sept. 16-20	Ocean Obs 19, Honolulu HI (Molly & Kayla)

Sept 23-24 Debra Esty from IOOS PO visit to ASLC & AOOS
Sept 26-27 OA Alliance Coast to Coast meeting, NYC (Darcy)

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