

HIGHLIGHTS

Office Shutdown –AOOS office staff continues to abide to Anchorage and Alaska guidelines in response to COVID-19. For the near future we will all continue to work from home. If you need to reach one of us, please look on our website for our email and cell phone contact information.

Covid-19 impacts on AOOS activities – AOOS continues to move forward in the COVID-19 atmosphere albeit in a mostly “virtual” manner. Our collaborative efforts continue through virtual means, data management has largely been unaffected, but research projects have slowed while Principle Investigators work out the kinks in travel and research cruise cancellations/postponements. Many long-term monitoring efforts that rely on spring turn-arounds of sensor arrays have been delayed. Several water level station site visits for maintenance and repair have been put on hold indefinitely, and AOOS is working on alternative plans for servicing other assets in the region. UAF PIs have been coordinating with local organizations on the North Slope to assist them with getting the Chukchi Sea coastal High Frequency Radar array up and running. We are still uncertain about plans for the Bering Strait radars. AOOS has been waiting to swap out the Lower Cook Inlet CDIP Wave buoy since January, due first to weather and later due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. We are coordinating with the KBNERR and NOAA on that buoy turn around once an appropriate vessel can be identified and a plan for safe deployment is in place. The install of a replacement CDIP buoy for NOME has also been put on hold. Overall, AOOS continues to function and find solutions in this new climate.

Sikuliaq embarks on limited research cruise –Scientific operations were allowed to proceed on the research vessel Sikuliaq for one week beginning May 4, preserving an unbroken string of 22 years of ecological data collection along the Seward Line. Special permission was granted by the Alaska Governor’s office, the University of Alaska and NSF for a small team of researchers from the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (UAF) to collect water samples in the northern Gulf of Alaska. This was the first time a vessel in the U.S. Academic Research Fleet was allowed to engage in research activities since COVID-19 grounded the fleet, which is coordinated by the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System. The scientists self-quarantined for two weeks prior to boarding the vessel, and adhered to health mandates while conducting their research. For more on this story, visit: [EOS:What it’s like to social distance at sea](#).

ADMINISTRATIVE

AOOS Board –The AOOS Board met virtually May 14 to approve the core work plan for Year 5 of the AOOS cooperative agreement with NOAA that begins June 1, 2020. This year’s core plan, at \$2.7 million, includes continued funding for the new high frequency radars in the Bering Strait, as well as additional funds for ecosystem/fisheries/marine mammal glider transects in the Gulf of Alaska, and Bering and Chukchi Seas.

Proposals funded – AOOS received word this week that a proposal from UAF’s Seth Danielson and Hank Statscewich, partnering with the National Marine Fisheries Service and University of Washington, will receive funding this year from NOAA’s Office of Marine and Aviation Operations. This project will use AOOS/IOOS funded gliders to support a NOAA International Year of the Salmon cruise in the Gulf Alaska next winter (2021). Congratulations team!

AOOS and our data contractor Axiom Data Science also received a 2-year award from the Office of Naval Research to continue to host the national [Animal Telemetry Network Data Assembly Center](#) (ATN DAC). Those funds were previously routed through the IOOS Program Office, but now are coming directly to AOOS from ONR. The portal recently reached a milestone of incorporating data from 1,000+ satellite telemetry tags.

Three RAs Meet – Since SECOORA, CeNCOOS and AOOS all use Axiom Data Science as our data contractor, we have started to meet (most recently on May 21) to explore opportunities to leverage data products and capabilities that each of us are developing.

FY21-25 AOOS Proposal development – We are now reviewing submitted proposals and proposal ideas submitted in response to our recent Request for Ideas. An external review team will meet in late June to review these. AOOS staff have been meeting with our partners (ADAC, ACCAP, AK Sea Grant, Ocean Cluster, ABSI, WAKP, AHAB, AK OA Network,

NOAA's AK Regional Collaboration Team, NPFMC, AK Water Level Watch, etc.) to get additional input as we develop a proposed framework for that proposal to be considered by the AOOS Board in late summer.

IOOS

IOOS Association – The IA is updating its strategic plan for the next 5 years. This will be approved at the next IA meeting in August (Molly and Katrina Hoffman, AOOS Board Chair, are IA board members). The IA is also working with the IOOS Program Office and the Interagency Ocean Observing Committee on further development of proposed IOOS Grand Challenges that could become part of the UN Decade of Ocean Science.

IOOS Advisory Committee – The Vision and Strategy working group met May 22 (with Molly as member) to talk about where to focus IOOS development in the coming years.

CONFERENCES/MEETINGS/PRESENTATIONS

NOAA Ecosystem Sciences Management Working Group – As a member, Molly met with the group by video on May 5-6. Our next report will be on “Managing under deep uncertainty”.

Gulf Watch PI Meeting – Carol and Stacey (Axiom) met with the Gulf Watch Alaska (GWA) project investigators on May 13 and presented on the current status of data submissions and archival for this long-term program, which is funded in 5-year increments. AOOS/AXIOM are the data management team for GWA as well as the Herring Research Monitoring (HRM) programs funded by the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council. Also discussed were possible changes to the summer 2020 field program plans. At this time, all projects that require travel to remote coastal areas are on hold.

Ocean Tuesday – Molly gave a presentation on AOOS strategic plans to the Ocean Cluster's Ocean Tuesday webinar series on May 19. The presentation sparked interest in some potential collaborations.

COLLABORATIONS

Arctic ERMA - AOOS and Axiom staff met with NOAA's Arctic ERMA staff on May 18 to discuss ways to continue sharing data layers and capabilities that are desired by both programs.

OAR Arctic Program – Molly met with NOAA's Arctic Program Director Dave Allen and Program staff Kelley Uehlig on May 29 to discuss potential collaborations between AOOS and NOAA's Arctic Program.

Statewide Climate Conversation – Darcy joined a meeting organized by the Alaska Climate Action Network on May 27 designed to connect leaders around the state working on climate-related topics.

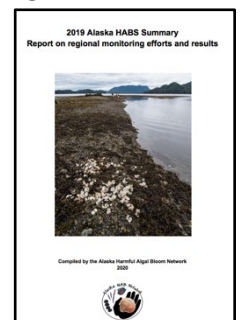
Alaska OA Network – The Alaska OA Network steering committee met on May 6 to begin developing a build-out plan for OA monitoring in Alaska. Darcy also convened a call with community samplers from around the state so they could meet each other, hear about what we're learning so far from the data, and ask questions. You can learn about which communities are sampling and what's involved on the new [Alaska OA community sampling page](#). Additionally, the network welcomed UAS professor and researcher Sherry Tamone who is launching a new lab study on shrimp response to OA. [Read her interview](#).

Alaska HAB Network – As we come upon HABs season, the Alaska HAB Network has continued its monthly coordination calls to hear about current conditions and how research and monitoring is adapting under COVID19. Also this month, the network released a [2019 Alaska HAB Summary by Region](#), describing the monitoring, research, results and outreach that took place across the state.

Research Cruise status report – A joint project between AOOS and the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) has developed a [status report](#) on Alaska research cruise activity that will be maintained and posted on the AOOS and IARPC websites.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Bering Ocean Data Sharing Initiative – Jill began meeting with stakeholders to solicit input on their data needs and requirements. Meetings were held with Bering Sea Crabbers (Jamie Goen), Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation (Scott Goodman), Ecosystem Conservation Office of the Aleut Community of St. Paul (Lauren Divine), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Sabrina Garcia), and AFSC (Jim Murphy). Meetings will continue over the next few weeks with other stakeholder groups. Contact Jill at prewitt@aoos.org if you would like to be surveyed. The website (including the Bering Data Portal; www.beringregionoceandata.org and Facebook (@BeringRegionOceanUpdate; please “like” us!) pages for the BODSI project are both now live. The spring Bering Ocean Update report (in collaboration with ACCAP) is still in review and expected to be finalized and printed the first week of June. Jill presented the BODSI project to the Regional



Ocean Data Sharing Partnership webinar May 27, where each region/partnership that are part of the national program presented their projects.

ENGAGEMENT METRICS

Audience Name	Type of Presentation	# of people
OA Community samplers	Facilitation	23
Ocean Cluster’s Ocean Tuesday webinars	Program presentation	25
Regional Ocean Data Sharing Partnership	Project Status	35
BODSI Stakeholders	Information/Input interviews	5

UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 24-25 AOOS Core Program Project Ideas/Proposals review committee – virtual (all staff)
- July 14-16 IARPC Team Leaders planning workshop – virtual (Molly)
- Aug 4-6 IOOS Federal Advisory Committee - virtual (Molly)
- Sept 16-18 Sustaining Ocean Observations workshop - virtual (Molly)

Molly McCammon, Carol Janzen, Holly Kent, Darcy Dugan, and Jill Prewitt, and our data team at Axiom Data Science