

**Marine Habitat Mapping Technology for Alaska:
Workshop Report and Published Monograph**

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A workshop entitled Marine Habitat Mapping Technology for Alaska, sponsored by the North Pacific Research Board and organized by Alaska Sea Grant, was convened in Anchorage on April 2-4, 2007. This workshop examined existing technologies that would be effective for mapping subtidal benthic habitats in the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands, and Arctic. The purpose was to increase understanding of benthic habitat mapping and to help guide selection of technologies for future habitat mapping programs. The focus was on technologies rather than specific habitat mapping projects, although Alaskan examples were used as illustrations. The workshop covered five general topics: (1) Motivation for the workshop, i.e., what is marine habitat mapping and why do managers need it? (2) Remote sensing technologies for seafloor mapping, primarily acoustic technologies for multibeam sonar, side-scan sonar, and sub-bottom profiling, and these technologies may be deployed from ships, small boats, or undersea vehicles. Airborne bathymetric LIDAR was also discussed. (3) Technologies for visual surveys, specifically manned submersibles, remotely operated vehicles (ROVs), autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs), and towed video sleds. (4) Translating data into habitat classification through analysis of video data, construction of databases, and classifying areas of the seafloor with specific habitat characteristics. (5) Case histories of major habitat mapping programs from Heceta Bank (Oregon) and the Exclusive Economic Zones of Ireland and Australia, which described several approaches to effective habitat mapping of large regions.

Alaska Sea Grant published a peer-reviewed monograph containing papers developed from presentations by the invited speakers in October, 2008. The publication contains 16 chapters plus the full workshop report and an index. It is available in CD format (no charge) from Alaska Sea Grant at <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/bookstore/pubs/AK-SG-08-03>. The chapters and index are also available online through the web sites of Alaska Sea Grant (bookstore) and the North Pacific Research Board (Project 615).

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