

**Rasmuson Foundation Fisheries Education Grant  
Monthly Report  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences  
May 2008**

***Preface:** To keep faculty and administrators at UAF, UAS and the Rasmuson Foundation aware of the ongoing activities of the Rasmuson Foundation grant to UAF for enhancing academic programs in fisheries and ocean sciences, a very brief monthly report will be prepared. This report is intended to be informal and informative. Questions regarding activities in this report should be directed to Dr. Trent M. Sutton (e-mail:[tsutton@sfos.uaf.edu](mailto:tsutton@sfos.uaf.edu)).*

**1. Curriculum Review, Planning, and Development**

Undergraduate Fisheries Coordinator Trent Sutton is preparing documents on the Bachelor of Arts in Fisheries and Minor in Fisheries for submission to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The NCCU is an accreditation organization that must approve our curricula following their acceptance by the UA Board of Regents. Following approval by the NCCU, the degree programs can be officially offered to undergraduate students at UAF.

**2. New Course Offerings**

No new undergraduate courses were prepared for review this month.

**3. Development and Renovation of Physical Facilities and Infrastructure**

a. UAF Facility Services has begun renovations of the laboratory space in the Arctic Health Research Building that will serve as the undergraduate teaching laboratories. These rooms will be completed in time for use prior to the start of the fall 2008 semester.

b. Lena Point Facility continues to be on schedule for late summer 2008 occupancy. (<http://www.sfos.uaf.edu/lenapoint/>)

**4. Expansion and Engagement of Faculty**

a. Dr. Ginny Eckert has accepted our offer to join the SFOS faculty in Juneau as an Associate Professor of Fisheries. Dr. Eckert has significant experience in undergraduate teaching and is well known for her shellfish biology research.

b. Ms. Courtney Carothers has accepted our offer to join the SFOS faculty in Fairbanks as an Assistant Professor of Fisheries. Ms. Carothers is receiving her Ph.D. from the University of Washington in Environmental Anthropology this summer. She has conducted research in Alaska for several years and has worked as a research assistant at both NOAA's Alaska Fisheries Science Center and the Northwest Fisheries Science Center in Seattle.

c. An offer has been made to one of the candidates for the Oceanography faculty position. Eight candidates were interviewed and several outstanding candidates expressed interest in the position.

d. The second tier of candidates is being reviewed for the Physiological Ecologist position, now that the top-two-ranked candidates have declined their offers.

## 5. **Undergraduate Student Recruitment and Retention** (April 26-May 27)

### B.S. Fisheries Admissions Report

- Fall 2008: 16 applied, 15 total admitted (5 admitted pre-major, 1 postponed after admit, 2 withdrawn after admit), 1 incomplete. Currently, 10 new students have indicated they will enroll this fall.

### Recruitment Events

- Katie Murra, Amanda Rosenberger, and Trent Sutton met with prospective undergraduate fisheries student Jenna Carlton from Mt. Vernon, New Hampshire.
- Katie Murra, Amanda Rosenberger, Scott Ayers, and Andy Seitz helped with an SFOS tour for a group of 12 middle school students and 2 teacher/chaperones from Gerstle River, AK.
- Katie Murra organized a tour and accompanied a group of nine elementary and middle school students and 3 teacher/chaperones from False Pass and Akutan, AK. Jim Fish gave a tour of the Fairbanks Experimental Hatchery, we attended the annual ADFG “Fun Fish Day”, and we learned how to navigate the Fairbanks bus system.
- Katie Murra contacted the American Fisheries Society Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology program to get a list of 2008 recipients.

### Retention Events

- Katie Murra worked with incoming fisheries students through phone and office meetings to get them registered for Fall 2008 courses.
- Christina Neumann organized an SFOS site-wide graduate student meeting to begin the process of creating an SFOS graduate student organization.

### University Events

- Katie Murra and Trent Sutton spoke with Kate Sullivan and Barb Morgan of UAS Ketchikan to discuss steps toward developing an articulation agreement between the A.A.S. and B.S. and B.A. Fisheries degrees.
- Katie Murra and Mike Castellini met with Tim Stickel and Len Hightower of UAF Student Enrollment Services to discuss SFOS recruitment practices.
- Katie Murra, Christina Neumann, Madeline Scholl, David Caroffino, Stan Triebenbach, Brandie Weintraub, Jess Johnson, Christy Gleason, Tania Spurkland, Lori Nunemann, and Gretchen Hundertmark helped with the SFOS fisheries station at the annual “Fairbanks Outdoor Days” hosted by USFWS.

- Katie Murra, Trent Sutton, Amanda Rosenberger, Terry Whitledge, Mike Castellini, Denis Wiesenburg, and more attended UAF Commencement.

**6. Participation of FITC/Kodiak and Other SFOS Sites and Programs**

There have been no new developments with the FITC faculty in terms of developing an undergraduate concentration and/or minor in Seafood Science and Technology. Discussions regarding this program will resume in June.

**7. Articulation Opportunities to Existing AA and Certificate Programs**

The articulation agreement between the Fisheries program in UAF SFOS and UAS-Ketchikan is still pending. Additional information from both universities is being collected which will be used to develop the final agreement.

**8. Allocation of Rasmuson Budget and Matching Funds**

Rasmuson: \$1,500,000  
 UAF Match: \$500,000

**Spent and encumbered (as of 5/31):**

Rasmuson: \$1,164,639.34\*  
 Match: \$489,089.08

\* This figure does not include the \$50,000 spent by ANSEP at UAA this year. ANSEP will move the charges to this account in June.

**9. Status of Fund Raising for Match**

On May 23, Governor Sarah Palin signed the state operating budget (HB 310). The University of Alaska budget included the \$1,000,000 matching funds for ‘fisheries.’ On May 28, the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences received its operating budget from the university showing that the matching funds had been added to the base budget of the school as “Fisheries Undergrad Prog” \$1,000,000 (UAF budget page 144 of 268). These continuing funds will meet the required match for FY09 and the following years of the grant.

**10. Program Visibility**

The June 2008 issue of Alaska magazine ran a half-page story “University Offers B.A. in Fisheries.” The article mentioned that the \$5.0 million grant from the Rasmuson Foundation made this possible and featured a picture of Dr. Amanda Rosenberger’s fisheries techniques class in the field. Alaska magazine has a circulation of over 200,000. A scan of the page from Alaska magazine follows.

*Prepared by Denis Wiesenburg, Trent Sutton and Bill Smoker*

# University Offers B.A. in Fisheries

**T**he University of Alaska Fairbanks is spending a \$5 million grant from the Rasmuson Foundation on developing a new arts program—in fisheries.

Starting this fall, students will be able to earn a Bachelor of Arts in fisheries, the newest degree offered by the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences. In addition to the standard science courses fisheries students take, such as biology and chemistry, fisheries students can now study disciplines like business

management, economics, political science and anthropology, according to an Alaska Newspapers report. Program developers hope the new approach to fisheries will help students learn skills that are more suited to the professional environments in which they might find work, especially in Alaska.

The Rasmuson grant is funding five faculty positions and a new learning center, which will include laboratories, lecture halls and videoconference-equipped classrooms, Alaska Newspapers reports. All fisheries students—in both science and arts based degree programs—will now be required to complete internships for hands-on learning. ■



**Students in a fisheries techniques class** at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks practice electrofishing, a technique for stunning fish to study them. The state university system is now offering a Bachelor of Arts program in fisheries.

COURTESY KATIE MURRA