

Alaska Sea Grant: Research, Education Services, and Marine Advisory Program
David Christie, Director • Paula Cullenberg, Associate Director
December 2011 Monthly Update

On the schedule:

Jan. 9	Ocean Acidification and Alaska Fisheries Roundtable , Dillingham
Jan. 16	Communicating Ocean Science Workshop , Anchorage
Jan. 26	Ocean Acidification and Alaska Fisheries Roundtable , Kodiak
Feb. 12-15	Pacific Fisheries Technologists Conference , Anchorage
Feb. 13-14	Alaska Young Fishermen's Summit , Juneau
February 17	Applications for Knauss Sea Grant Fellowship due to Dave Christie
March 5-15	Alaska Seafood Processing Leadership Institute - Anchorage/ Boston
Spring 2012	Bering Strait Maritime Symposium, Nome
June 24-28	National Marine Educators Association annual meeting , Anchorage
Sept. 15-21	Sea Grant Week, Girdwood, Alaska
Mar. 26-29, 2013	28 th Wakefield Symposium, Biological Responses of Arctic Marine Ecosystems to Climate Change, and Strategies for Adaptation, Anchorage

Highlights from December:

HEALTHY COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

Torie Baker recruited the Prince William Soundkeeper as a partner in the Cordova Clean Harbor project for summer 2012. Others are City of Cordova Harbor, Copper River Watershed Project, Cordova District Fishermen United, and the Oil Spill Recover Institute.

Gary Freitag was interviewed by KRBD radio about tsunami debris that may show up in southeast Alaska. He explained concerns with the spread of invasive species associated with the debris. See <http://www.krbd.org/2011/12/21/japan-tsunami-debris-heading-this-way/>

Bree Witteveen collaborated with Russian whale researcher Olga Filatova on stable isotope analysis of humpback whales. They are working on a publication describing the stability in isotope signatures from regions throughout Russia.

Bree participated in a winter cruise in Prince William Sound, part of a project funded by EVOS to document the seasonal presence of humpback whales in PWS and, eventually, estimate their potential impact on herring recovery in the region.

Kate Wynne conducted quarterly Steller sea lion diet (scat) sampling on Cape Ugat and Long Island haulouts. She was also involved in verifying the report and photos received of a North Pacific Right Whale present in Uganik Bay – a rare and previously undocumented occurrence. See <http://www.alaskapublic.org/2012/01/05/right-whale-sighting-unusual-for-kodiak-island-waters/>

Gay Sheffield participated in the Climate, Ecosystems & Human Health Work Group (teleconference) and gave a seal disease presentation. The meeting was co-chaired by Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services, EPA, and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

Gay also talked about the seal and walrus disease outbreak at the King Island Community Annual Meeting in Nome. She created and distributed a regional contact flyer to NMFS, the Eskimo Walrus Commission, Ice Seal Commission, and Nanuuq Commission. Gay also facilitated a teleconference with

USFWS, the Eskimo Walrus Commission and the NOAA Marine Mammal Stranding Network national coordinator regarding the Unusual Mortality Event protocols.

Terry Reeve participated in two teleconferences with SFOS geological oceanographer Sam VanLaningham who will be taking bore samples from up to eleven sites on the Kuskokwim River, Baird Inlet just east of Nunivak Island, Hooper Bay and the Yukon River. These bore samplings will take place in several types of strata, and are part of the research looking back 5,000-6,000 years to when the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers were one.

SUSTAINABLE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

Quentin Fong gave a presentation to Hong Kong Helicopter Club members in Hong Kong, to generate tourism business. He surveyed four club members who visited Kodiak for 5 days last summer and spent \$20,000. Responders indicate that Hong Kong high-end tourists are less likely to tolerate Kodiak's weather variability because they would rather spend their money on a reliable adventure. It is suggested that marketing efforts be directed to independent travelers with flexible schedules.

Terry Johnson compiled the December 2011 issue of the [Charter Log](#) newsletter, including information on halibut catch limits and conflicts, medical review standards, and high-ethanol fuel.

Gay Sheffield agreed to serve on the US Army's Steering Committee for the three year "Alaska Deep Draft Arctic Ports" study.

SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD SUPPLY

Paula Cullenberg chaired a meeting of the Allied Fisheries University of Alaska Working Group with UA President Gamble and the UA Chancellors and Provosts. Following a meeting in mid December with the Governor and Ed Rasmuson and President Gamble and members of the seafood processing industry and CDQ group the University of Alaska has committed to go forward with the Allied Fisheries effort by setting up an industry advisory group and carrying out an extensive needs assessment with the fishing, seafood and maritime industries.

Kate Wynne presented training on marine mammal ID, sampling, and data recording for NMFS groundfish observers at the UAA Fishery Observer Training Center.

Sunny and other local fisheries leaders planned events in conjunction with the January Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting in Petersburg. She also arranged videoconferencing for the Petersburg ADFG staff to attend December and January Wrangell BOF Advisory Committee meetings. Reid Brewer attended the quarterly meeting of the local BOF Advisory Committee. Torie attended a Prince William Sound/Copper River BOF meeting in Valdez.

Brian Himelbloom, Julie Matweyou and Ray RaLonde submitted a proposal to NPRB to evaluate a new methodology of sampling for paralytic shellfish poisoning.

Gary Freitag participated in Pacific Salmon Commission meetings in Seattle. Gary and other members of the Chinook Technical Committee reviewed progress reports of grant projects to help provide negotiating data for implementing the Canada-U.S. Treaty.

Sunny was invited to join the Southeast Seafood Regional Development cluster, coordinated by the Juneau Economic Development Council. During their December meeting, discussion focused on sea otter impacts, mariculture, and educating the next generation of fishermen.

[Nineteen egged female blue king crabs](#) were collected near St. Matthew Island and transported to the Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery in Seward for AKCRRAB research. This is good news for ASG biologist Ben Daly, especially because blue king crab larvae have been more challenging to rear at the hatchery compared to the success of red king crab production.

HAZARD RESILIENT COASTAL COMMUNITIES

ASG published the book [Responses to Coastal Erosion in Alaska in a Changing Climate: A Guide for Coastal Residents, Business and Resource Managers, Engineers, and Builders](#), by Orson P. Smith and Mikal K. Hendee. An ASG grant funded Smith and Hendee to write the book.

Terry Johnson participated as a council member in Alaska Boating Safety Advisory Council meeting.

MARINE LITERACY AND STEWARDSHIP

Reid Brewer prepared students for NOSB by giving three lectures and organizing three presentation meetings for the Unalaska Mighty Molluscs. He also organized a quiz bowl competition against the local Unalaska Divers Association.

ASG published a new 2012 paper catalog of publications and videos. The catalogs will be among valuable swag items available to attendees at the Alaska Marine Science Symposium January 16-20 in Anchorage.

ASG and Alaska Cooperative Extension co-published three new booklets: [2012 Tide Tables](#) for southeast, southcentral, and western Alaska. Appreciative users of the ASG tide tables since 2006 include extension agents, subsistence hunters, harbormasters, NOAA researchers, and Prince William Sound Science Center scientists.

RAPID RESPONSE

MAP agents and ASG staff prepared for the Alaska Young Fishermen's Summit, organized a marine refrigeration workshop for spring, helped arrange a March marine electrical class in Juneau, met with Kodiak Wild Source about starting a training program, led a Kodiak Brown Bag discussion, surveyed for dead birds, evaluated the Allen Marine citizen science invasive green crab project, completed Institutional Review Board training, attended board meetings, attended symposium organizational meetings, taught classes,

MAP agents and ASG staff answered questions on the Cordova Kitchen Project, Cordova composting, increases in cod quota and impact on benthic ecosystem, octopus role in directed fisheries, coastal monitoring initiatives, price of crab with decrease in catch, potential for oyster farming in Unalaska, Alaska Sea Cucumber Enhancement Project, invasive species and mine development, buying a gillnetter, testifying and moving a proposal through the Board of Fisheries, the marine mammal observation program, how long to freeze fish before making gravlax, getting a state loan, Petersburg waterfront development priorities,