



**Alaska Marine Policy Forum**  
**Wednesday, May 21, 2014—Summary**  
**Host: Darcy Dugan, [dugan@aoos.org](mailto:dugan@aoos.org)**  
**Notes by Sue Keller**

The Alaska Marine Policy Forum is a bimonthly teleconference for Alaskans to network and share information about marine policy, budgets, and legislation at state, national, and international levels, sponsored by Alaska Sea Grant and the Alaska Ocean Observing System

**Bob King, Office of Senator Mark Begich**  
**Congressional Update**

Senator Begich continues work on reauthorization of the Magnuson–Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act. Discussion in the state has been helpful, and some modifications have been written into a new draft based on the input. The new draft should be available in mid June.

Senator Begich is also continuing his work on the Coast Guard reauthorization bill, with particular focus on two components: housing and Arctic preparedness in the face of an increasing Arctic mission. Points that are being addressed include funding, shipbuilding, cargo preference, and NTSB permits.

The Vessel Incidental Discharge Act, implementing tougher standards for ballast water, now has more than 30 co-sponsors. This will be of interest to the fishing fleet and small vessel owners.

Senator Begich is working with the state and stakeholders on the Alaska fish disaster allocation in the amount of \$20.8 million, for the Yukon-Kuskokwim and Cook Inlet areas. It is proceeding well.

The GAO report, *ARCTIC ISSUES: Better Direction and Management of Voluntary Recommendations Could Enhance U.S. Arctic Council Participation*, was released a few days ago. The United States will assume the chairmanship of the Arctic Council in 2015. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-14-435>

Bob King will be in Juneau the week of May 26. King has been watching Alaska fishing reports around the state, especially observing that some are early this year.

Jay Sterne, Office of Senator Murkowski, will speak on electronic monitoring of fisheries in Anchorage May 27. NMFS has agreed to work with Alaska's fixed gear groups to design and implement EM cooperative research in 2014.

**Alaska State Representative Paul Seaton**  
**Alaska Legislature Update**

The legislature is in recess. Rep Seaton was a sponsor on HB 131, Abandoned and Derelict Vessels, which passed and became law. Seaton also sponsored HB 89, an act relating to the rapid response to, and control of, aquatic invasive species and establishing the aquatic invasive species response fund.

HB 89 did not pass. HB 77, on Land Use/Disp/Exchanges and Water Rights, passed the House but not the Senate, in part because of permitting restrictions.

Seaton sees good reason to bring back the issue of an Alaska Coastal Zone Management Program. Alaska's CZM program was dropped a few years ago. The Alaska LNG project and Chinook decline issues in Cook Inlet are issues that will get attention in the near future.

### **Nikoosh Carlo, Alaska Arctic Policy Commission Executive Director** **Alaska Arctic Policy Commission Update**

The Alaska Arctic Policy Commission is creating a plan to help shape Arctic policy. A video recording of the May 2014 Commission meeting will soon be on their website, <http://www.akarctic.com/>. The group recently reorganized their implementation plan around vision statements. The public and experts are invited to give input to the Commission on their Strategic Action Plan worksheets and to take a survey on the website. Some issues the Commission is addressing now include Law of the Sea, marine transportation, security, defense, fisheries, and sustainable communities. The next meeting will be in August 2014.

### **Dave McGuire, University of Alaska Fairbanks/USGS** **National Climate Assessment**

The National Climate Assessment summarizes the impacts of climate change on the United States, now and in the future. The third National Climate Assessment was released May 6, <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>. The assessment is mandated periodically; the first two were released in 2000 and 2009. Based on changes in rulings, the assessment will come out every 3-4 years in the future.

The chapter on Alaska was written by Stuart Chapin, Sarah Trainor, Patricia Cochran, Henry Huntington, Carl Markon, Molly McCammon, David McGuire, and Mark Serreze. The chapter presents five key messages: (1) Arctic summer ice will disappear by 2050; (2) Most Alaska glaciers are shrinking, which will impact hydropower and fisheries; (3) Permafrost—rising temperatures are increasing fire vulnerability; (4) Ocean—higher temperatures are changing water chemistry and will affect fisheries; and (5) Native communities are vulnerable but have been resilient to change in the past.

### **Darren Stewart, The Nature Conservancy/ShoreZone** **Alaska ShoreZone Summer Activities**

The Alaska ShoreZone project is a consortium of 40 agencies, local governments and NGOs. ShoreZone gathers coastal information via low altitude aerial imagery during summers, and turns it into map attributes on the website <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/shorezone/>. The information is made available to the public and to scientists, who use it for fishing, traveling, research, etc. The project was begun after the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

About 78% of the Alaska coast has been incorporated into ShoreZone maps. The areas that are incomplete are the Aleutians, the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, and Norton Sound. In summer 2014 two surveys will be made on 2,500 miles of shoreline along the Y-K Delta. Data will include photography, video, and expert narrative.

Alaska ShoreZone members have discussed the upcoming data collection with community residents living in the area to be surveyed; residents are welcoming and eager to use the maps and information.

Many of the ShoreZone images are beautiful, and have been on display in various locations. At the moment ShoreZone maps/photos as art are on display at the Anchorage Sheraton Hotel.

### **Sue Keller, Alaska Sea Grant**

#### **29th Wakefield Fisheries Symposium Briefing**

May 13-16 in Anchorage Alaska Sea Grant hosted the 29th Wakefield symposium on worldwide fisheries bycatch. Nearly 120 people from 14 nations attended. Participants appreciated the quality of information presented and hearing from the experts on fisheries bycatch.

The bottom line is that over the past 20 years steady, balanced progress has been made in reducing bycatch in many fisheries—from big trawlers to artisanal fisheries.

UAF fisheries professor, Gordon Kruse, chaired the scientific steering committee and will be lead editor of the peer-reviewed proceedings book. Kruse was honored at the symposium for serving on eleven Wakefield symposium steering committees, and chairing nine of them.

Steve Murawski was keynote speaker and gave a summary at its conclusion. He is from University of South Florida and has served as chief science advisor for the National Marine Fisheries Service. Murawski said that Alaska fisheries provide a good model for the rest of the world in enabling innovation through partnerships with industry, government scientists, academics, and NGOs.

Speakers demonstrated excluder and nontarget fish release innovations in underwater videos, and heard about gear modifications and other techniques to avoid marine mammals, turtles, and seabirds; and reducing the impacts of flatfish trawls on the seafloor.

Student awards went to Melanie Underwood, Institute of Marine Research, Norway, for best oral presentation; and Susie Zagorski, Alaska Pacific University, for best poster.

### **Notes**

AOOS is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. One event is a film contest with a \$1000 prize; short films are due September 15. <http://www.aoot.org/film-contest/>

### **Upcoming Events**

- June 8           World Ocean Day
- June 10-12     Capitol Hill Oceans Week 2014, Washington DC
- June 16-17     International Ocean Conference, Washington DC (Secretary of State John Kerry will speak) <http://www.state.gov/e/oes/ocns/opa/2014conf/index.htm>
- June 22         [Anchorage Coastal Cleanup](#)
- July 20         Aquatic Invasive Species Conference

**Next Marine Policy Forum—July 23, 2014, 1 pm Alaska Time**