



Alaska Marine Policy Forum

Summary from Wednesday, May 18, 2016

Host: Molly McCammon

Notes by Holly Kent

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. Contact Sue.Keller@alaska.edu to be added to the list serve to receive a reminder and agenda for the next call, and summary notes following each call.

Ephraim Froehlich, Office of Senator Murkowski – Congressional Update

The Senate is busy working on appropriations and is expected to look at the Department of Commerce funding bill soon. The senator's office is working hard to increase funding for Alaska concerns.

Senator Murkowski's office issued a press release today announcing the passing of the illegal fishing bill. They also sent a letter to Secretary of State John Kerry addressing transboundary mining issues urging the State Department to work with their Canadian counterparts towards a resolution.

Ephraim was in Unalaska and Kodiak last week meeting with constituents and received lots of comments and opinions on Gulf of Alaska rationalization. He toured the UAF Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center, which the senator is working hard to keep open.

The Senate Ocean Caucus plans to host a meeting to talk about invasive species sometime before August.

Barbara Blake, Office of Lt. Governor Byron Mallott

Governor Walker asked her to sit on the National Ocean Council Governance Coordinating Committee which is currently working on producing topic papers on Sea Level Rise; Increasing Ocean Temperatures; Harmful Algal Blooms/Hypoxia; Regional Marine Plans; and Ocean Acidification. Barbara will be sitting on the committees to address two of these topics, Increasing Ocean Temperatures and Sea Level Rise.

British Columbia has issued an **audit report** on environmental compliance and enforcement in the mining sector that relates to transboundary issues. The report includes lots of recommendations for the mining industry. The Lt. Governor's office **responded** to that report, which Barbara will share with the forum.

The State of Alaska issued a letter to the State Department last month on transboundary mining issues but has not yet received a response.

The Governor withdrew legislation establishing a state-managed tier 3 water program, designating outstanding natural resource waters.

James Robinson, USCG – Update on Coast Guard operations in the Arctic

Jamie gave an overview of Arctic Shield 2016, which is focused on advancing seasonal capabilities to perform multiple missions, leveraging partnerships to combine efforts to ensure the safety of the maritime community. The Coast Guard assets will be based in Kotzebue this year, starting about July 1. He also talked about the Arctic Chinook Search and Rescue Mass Rescue Operation Field Training Exercise scheduled for this summer. The 17th district will get a new commander in mid-June.

Jamie said that the Coast Guard cutter Healy will be operating in the Arctic this summer working on National Science Foundation research projects.

Doug Burn, ABSI LCC – Coastal Resiliency Workshop in Nome Debrief

The May 10-11 workshop was well attended by over 70 people, with good representation from 15 local tribes within the region. Attendees were very interested and actively engaged in discussions addressing needs for adaptation and decision tools for climate change, coastal erosion and community relocation, and food security. Workshops are scheduled for three more communities this year including Unalaska, King Salmon and Kotzebue.

Open Floor

Paula announced that Alaska Sea Grant has selected three new Alaska Sea Grant Fellows who will be spending their next year working at the National Park Service (one) and NOAA Fisheries (two). This fall Sea Grant will be looking for agencies to host next year's fellows.

Molly mentioned that the new Alaska Ocean Acidification Network has created a list serve and is working on a website to be launched in June. The network is planning a State of the Science conference this fall for Nov. 30–Dec. 1 in Anchorage.

Important Dates

- Sept 15: Deadline for AOS Ocean Film Contest, <http://www.aos.org/film-contest/>
- Sept 23-26: 8th Polar Law Symposium, Fairbanks and Anchorage
- Nov 6-8: WhaleFest, Sitka
- Nov 30-Dec 1, Ocean Acidification State of the Science conference

Next Marine Policy call: July 20, 2016, 1 pm Alaska time