



Alaska Marine Policy Forum

Summary of Wednesday, May 15, 2013 call

Hosts: Molly McCammon, mccammon@aoos.org

Paula Cullenberg, paula.cullenberg@alaska.edu

Summary notes by Ellen Tyler

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.

Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS) and Alaska Sea Grant (ASG) have been hosting these bi-monthly calls for the past three years and will be circulating a short survey to solicit feedback from past participants and the Alaska Marine Policy Forum notification email list. To be added to that list, please contact sue.keller@alaska.edu or Dugan@aoos.org.

Bob King, Office of U.S. Senator Begich: Congressional Update bob_king@begich.senate.gov

Bob discussed the Senator's [Arctic Deepwater Ports Enhancement Act](#). Earlier this month Senator Begich held a hearing before his Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and the Coast Guard, highlighting marine shipping, the absence of deepwater ports in the Arctic and the high costs of Federal budget cuts, particularly for NOAA and the US Coast Guard stationed in Alaska. He joined Senator Murkowski in offering an amendment to the to the Water Resources Development Act of 2013 to allow the US Army Corps to get started planning, designing and constructing deep water ports in the Arctic region.

May 7-9 was the third "[Managing our Fisheries](#)" conference in DC, beginning the dialog on the Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization. Bob expects that this reauthorization will touch on many contentious issues. Though Alaska is generally supportive of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, reauthorization will provide an opportunity for tweaks and updates to the core legislation.

The public comment period on the FDA's Draft Environmental Assessment and

preliminary finding of “no significant impact” from the rearing of genetically engineered (GE) salmon closed last month. 12 Senators and 20 House members, including the entire AK delegation, wrote letters to the FDA raising concerns with the Draft EA and urging the agency not to approve permitting for GE salmon.

Two national strategy documents have recently been released: An [Arctic Strategy](#) and Final [National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan](#). The Senator generally supports the recommendations of both of these reports and is looking forward to hearing Alaskans’ comments.

Finally, visa issues remain at center stage for guest workers, and the Senator continues to work to find solutions to fishing industry needs for J1 Exchange Visitor visas for guest workers in Alaska.

As always Bob encouraged callers to be in touch via e-mail (above) with any further questions or comments and reiterated that his office is always interested in hearing from Alaskans.

Q: What is the status of the proposed consolidation of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and other NOAA education programs including several Sea Grant Graduate Fellowship programs in the president's budget?

A: Senator Begich’s office is looking into this reorganization and directed folks on the call to contact Prue Fitzpatrick at prue_fitzpatrick@begich.senate.gov with additional questions, concerns and comments.

Paul Milotte, Office of Rep Don Young: GE Salmon bills
Paul.Milotte@mail.house.gov

Paul also shared concerns about the FDA’s findings in their draft Environmental Assessment of GE Salmon, particularly that the full range of impacts was not assessed and partner federal agencies were not consulted. He noted that desire for this regulation is motivated not only by the potential economic impact to Alaska’s salmon fishery, but also potential damage to natural stocks in the region

Rep. Young has introduced two bills this year:

H.R. 584 Labeling Bill

- If GE salmon were permitted, this bill would require all genetically engineered fish sold for consumption to be labeled as such
- Companion to Senator Begich’s S.248

HR1667- Prevention of Escapement of Genetically Altered Salmon in the US Act

- Companion bill to Senator Begich’s S.246
- Prohibits transport, sale, possession or release of GMO Salmon until full EIS and NEPA risk analysis is completed.

Discussion about how this GE salmon issues interacts with other national controversies around plant and agricultural GMOs ensued and Representative Bob Herron suggested that a short presentation at the upcoming Pacific NW Economic Region Annual Summit (PNWAR) in Anchorage this July 14-18th could present a good opportunity to show how and why the FDA test is the wrong test for GE Salmon, particularly since decision makers in Idaho will be in attendance.

- Molly McCammon volunteered to see how this could be incorporated into an Ocean Policy Panel
- Gail Vick volunteered to help build support in the Interior, perhaps through written articles in the paper etc and was willing to spread the word nationwide.

Paul encouraged folks to contact him with additional ideas or questions.

Rep. Bob Herron, State Legislature: Alaska Arctic Policy Commission (AAPC)

Rep. Herron updated the group on progress of the Alaskan Arctic Policy Commission and increasing Alaska's voice in high-level decision-making regarding America's Arctic. Following its inaugural March 23rd meeting, the Commission organized into six policy teams each covering several issue areas below:

Oil & Gas Development, Resources, Mining

Team Captain: Senator Cathy Giessel
Lisa Pekich- Conoco Phillips
Pat Pourchot- Dept. of the Interior
Stephen Trimble- URS Corp

Science, Traditional Knowledge, Research, Climate Change, Energy

Team Co-Captain: Rep. Beth Kerttula
Team Co-Captain: Rep. Bryce Edgmon
Stefanie Moreland- Governor Parnell's Office
Mayor Reggie Joule- Native Village of Kotzebue

Governance, Indigenous Issues, Arctic Council

Team Co-Captain: Senator Gary Stevens
Team Co-Captain: Senator Lyman Hoffman
Elizabeth Moore- NANA
Layla Hughes- Environmental Representative
Kris Norosz – Icicle Seafoods

Planning and Infrastructure Development

Team Captain: Rep. Mark Neuman
Nils Andreassen- Institute of the North
Denise Michels- Nome, Mayor
Jake Adams- North Slope Borough

National/Homeland Security, Coast Guard

Team Co-Captain: Rep. Alan Austerman

Team Co-Captain: Senator Donny Olson
Chris Hladick- City Manager of Unalaska
Dr. Lawson Brigham- UAF Distinguished Professor

Marine Transportation, Fish & Wildlife

Team Co-Captain: Senator Lyman Hoffman
Team Co-Captain: Senator Gary Stevens
Rep. Mark Neuman
Stephanie Madsen- Sea Processor Assn., Fisheries Rep
Peter Garay- American Pilots Assn., Marine Pilots Rep

These teams will be developing draft recommendations for a preliminary report to the State Department and White House and Rep. Herron encouraged people to contact these team leaders and representatives as soon as possible, as the hope is to have a preliminary report together by the end of June.

On June 12-13 the Commission will meet in Barrow for a listen-only forum where commissioners will hear presentations and testimony from local stakeholder groups, followed by a full commission meeting with a focus on oil, gas, and natural resource development. The Commission will meet August 28-29 in Unalaska (at the same time as the Arctic Research Commission and the legislative fly-in) and October 23rd in Fairbanks. Rep. Herron included a one-page overview to be included with the notes and mentioned that he would have an op-ed forthcoming (also included in the notes).

The Commission has not yet picked an executive director but the list has been narrowed to about a dozen people.

Rep. Paul Seaton, State Legislature: Marine Policy Update

Rep. Seaton shared a number of updates from the AK State Legislature.

- HB131 "An Act relating to abandoned and derelict vessels" passed both the House and Senate in April
- HB89 "An Act relating to the rapid response to, and control of, aquatic invasive species and establishing the aquatic invasive species response fund." is awaiting a hearing
- June 3-11th the North Pacific Fishery Management Council will meet in Juneau and final action on GOA Chinook salmon bycatch in non-pollock trawl fisheries is expected. The full agenda for that meeting is in the [Federal Register](#).
- In Juneau, a Tidal Energy Incubator Project recently deployed a suite of instruments to test and design new sensors at the Homer Deep Water Dock. Additional incubator testing projects will be attached to docks throughout AK.

Paula Cullenberg asked for an update on HB77, which was introduced by Governor Parnell and would have drastically revised Alaska's water and land use laws. This bill did

pass the House but could not get through the Senate. Rep. Paul Seaton was opposed to the bill because of restrictions to public comment and the proposed limits on tribal applications for water reservation. Rep. Herron said that HB77 was a very difficult vote, and also voted against the bill.

Tim Robertson, Nuka Research: Cook Inlet Risk Assessment
timrobertson@nukaresearch.com

Tim was unfortunately not able to join the call but asked that his apologies for missing the call be shared in the notes. He had planned to discuss the Cook Inlet Marine Risk Assessment, which is assessing vessel traffic greater than 400 GT or over 10,000 gallons of fuel. The project is managed by a team including the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Coast Guard Sector Anchorage, and the Cook Inlet Regional Citizen's Advisory Council. The project includes an Advisory Panel consisting of mariners and other stakeholders. Three technical studies have been completed and the Advisory Panel has considered over two dozen suggestions for ways to reduce risk of marine accidents and resulting oil spills. The Advisory Panel has selected 11 Risk Reduction Options (RRO) to recommend for immediate implementation. Additionally, 5 RROs are being further evaluated before a final recommendation can be made. The project website is <http://www.cookinletriskassessment.com/>. A report on the initial recommendations will be available within a month and Tim can be contacted via e-mail (above) with any questions.

Amy Holman, NOAA Region

The Arctic Council meeting in Sweden had just started. During the Kiruna Ministerial Meeting, Arctic Ministers signed the Kiruna Declaration, Vision for the Arctic, Senior Arctic Officials Report to Ministers, and an Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic. In addition, several scientific assessments and reports by the working groups, task forces, and expert groups of the Arctic Council were also approved. [View the documents here.](#)

Amy also shared that Tommy Beaudreau, Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior and head of BOEM is coming for a visit to Alaska.

Jamie Robinson, US Coast Guard District 17
James.P.Robinson2@uscg.mil

The Coast Guard announced its Arctic Shield 2013 plans and directed folks to read the [press release](#). People can [e-mail](#) him with further questions.

Darcy Dugan, Alaska Ocean Observing System

Publicly released in late January, AOOS launched an [Arctic Data Portal](#) through the STAMP project (Spatial Tools for Arctic Mapping and Planning). This portal is a regional data integration and mapping application for research, planning, management and decision support in the US Arctic. This week, data from two large-scale projects were added. [Read more.](#)

AOOS will be conducting a short survey about the future of the Alaska Marine Policy Forum and asking participants whether they feel it is meeting their needs and expectations. Please keep an eye out for a link via email.

Other Events:

Pacific NW Economic Region Annual Summit (PENWAR) will be in Anchorage this July 14-18th

North Pacific Fishery Management Council meets June 5-11 in Juneau. See <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/>.

The next Marine Policy Forum call will be at 1:00 PM on July 17th. As always, be in touch with Molly or Paula with any questions, comments or suggestions for speakers or topics.