



Alaska Marine Policy Forum

Summary of Wednesday, Jan 30, 2013 call

Hosts: Molly McCammon, mccammon@aoos.org

David Christie, david.christie@alaska.edu

Summary notes by Molly McCammon

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.

Stefanie Moreland, Office of Governor Parnell

The Sandy supplemental Bill that passed out of the Senate included funding for Alaska's salmon disaster but unfortunately that funding was stripped out in the House, and ultimately the final Bill. The Governor's DC office, as well as offices of Senator Begich and Murkowski did extensive education/outreach with other state offices and congressional staff to no avail. We will circulate their talking points to the policy forum listserv. The points being made include:

1. All past disaster supplementals in Congress have rolled together multiple pending disaster requests. Non-Sandy disaster funding requests should not be viewed as "local pork."
2. The \$150m in fisheries disaster funding included funding for Alaska Chinook (\$35m) as well as for fishery disasters in the northeast (groundfish), and the Gulf of Mexico (shrimp and shellfish).

The final Chinook salmon research plan can be found on the ADF&G website at http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=chinook_efforts_symposium_research_plan. This will be used to guide the \$10m in research funding requested by the Governor in this year's budget.

The state is awaiting the pending release of the National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan, and future guidance on Coastal Marine Spatial Planning, and Regional Ocean Partnership guidance. Also expected soon is the Interagency Arctic Management Plan, developed by federal agencies at the request of the President. Stefanie says the state has provided some input, but has yet to see the recommendations in the final draft.

Bob King, Senator Begich Office

The Senator's office is still working to get an extension to the public comment period (now Feb 24) on the FDA announcement approving developing of Genetically Engineered fish (Frankenfish). Senators Begich and Murkowski are trying to garner

additional senate opposition to this, but it would be helpful to hear from more Alaskans on the issue.

Bob said the Senator will be re-introducing a package of his Arctic science bills soon – Arctic science, Arctic ambassador, health, adaptation, and revenue sharing. They are working with Senator Rockefeller to introduce and support Senator Inouye's fisheries bills (seafood fraud and pirate fishing) to highlight and honor the recently deceased Senator's fishery legacy. Senator Widen may take the lead on Inouye's bill to amend the fishery capital construction fund.

Bob will be in Barrow next week for the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission's conference.

Peter Murphy, NOAA marine debris program

NOAA held a workshop in Anchorage on Jan 17 with other federal and state land managers to discuss priority areas for cleanup, building off the state's aerial survey of shorelines conducted in late summer. This was followed by an evening public workshop during the Alaska Marine Science Symposium to identify opportunities for data collection from existing field research programs conducted by other entities (USFWS, National Park Service, various NGOs). And finally, there will be multiple sessions on marine debris at next week's Alaska Forum on the Environment (AFE), with Monday focused on general marine debris information on research and outreach; Tuesday focused on tsunami debris; and Wednesday highlighting several removal efforts. Ethel Patkotak from Barrow asked about the possibility of seeing debris in the Bering Sea or the Arctic. Peter responded that so far the models don't indicate debris extending that far, although the ocean current models do extend through the Aleutians, so it is something to watch out for. Kate Wolgemuth, a First Alaskans Institute fellow in Rep. Bob Herron's office, asked about how the \$5m in funding from the Japanese government would be distributed among all the states affected (Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska). Peter said an amount (still to be determined) will be distributed equally to all the states, and then the remainder based on priority needs.

Amy Holman, NOAA Regional Coordinator for Alaska

Amy reported on personnel changes in NOAA: Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco is leaving at the end of February. Dr. David Titley has left, and David Kennedy, recently the head of National Ocean Services (NOS), is taking Titley's place as the deputy undersecretary for operations, the highest civil service (non-political) position at NOAA. Kennedy should be familiar to Alaskans from his days here as an Air Force pilot, and working on the EVOS oil spill, and OCSEAP studies. He will be replaced at NOS by his deputy, Dr. Holly Bamford, who will also be Tuesday's keynote speaker at AFE. Bamford will be assuming some Arctic duties.

BOEM's national director Tommy Beaudreau, is also visiting the state and will be in Barrow next week during the AEW, as will NOAA's Margaret Spring.

Rob Earl, staff to Rep. Bob Herron, Bethel

The newly established Alaska Arctic Policy Commission is awaiting some final reshuffling of Alaska Senate appointments, and then hopes to hold its first meeting soon.

Rep. Herron has introduced HR 5, which requests Alaskan involvement in the Department of Interior's review of 2012 Arctic oil and gas operations (attached).

David Christie, Alaska Sea Grant, UAF

Sea Grant is sponsoring a Bering Strait Maritime Symposium in Nome Feb 5-6, focused primarily on local citizen concerns and issues. The 28th annual Lowell Wakefield Symposium sponsored by Alaska Sea Grant is this March 26-29th in Anchorage. The theme of this year's symposium is "Responses of Arctic Marine Ecosystems to Climate Change". Find more information here:

<http://seagrant.uaf.edu/conferences/wakefield/index.html>

The deadline for pre-proposals for this year's research funding opportunity is Feb. 8.

Doug Woodby, NPRB interim director

974 people attended last week's Alaska Marine Science Symposium, and 10% were students. 51 side meetings and workshops were held. Doug thanked the 32 sponsors and more than 40 volunteers. Website: <http://www.alaskamarinescience.org/>. A survey will soon be circulated to participants asking them to provide feedback to the symposium organizers. Next year's symposium dates: January 20-24, 2014.

Doug also noted that former NPRB director Cynthia Suchman has left NPRB, and a position announcement for a new director will soon be released.

Molly McCammon, Alaska Ocean Observing System

Annex #2 to the NOAA-industry MOU data sharing agreement has been signed and the environmental studies data from industry research (\$75 million dollars worth) is now available through the AOOS website. Contact Rob Bochenek, AOOS data lead, at rob@axiomalaska.com if you would like to access this data.

The National Climate Assessment draft report is now out for public review with comments due April 12: <http://ncadac.globalchange.gov/>. The draft report will be discussed at several sessions at the AFE next week.

Upcoming Events:

Feb 4-7: Alaska Forum on the Environment

Feb 5-6: Bering Strait Maritime Workshop, Nome

March 19: National Research Council Committee on Arctic oil spills meets in Fairbanks; see <http://dels.nas.edu/Study-In-Progress/Responding-Spills-Arctic/DELS-OSB-09-02> for more information.

March 20-22: Western AK Science Conference, Nome; abstracts due Feb 15

March 26-29: Wakefield Symposium in Anchorage

Next Alaska Marine Policy Forum: Wednesday, March 20 at 1pm