



# ONCORHYNCHUS

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter, American Fisheries Society  
Vol. XXIX Spring 2009 No. 2

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Katie Palof with catch of POP on 2007 NOAA-Fisheries GOA Trawl Survey. Photo taken by Nancy Roberson.

## The Secret Life of an Alaskan Rockfish

Katie Palof

The genus *Sebastes* is composed of more than 100 colorful and unique species of fish. Of those found in Alaskan waters, Pacific ocean perch or POP *Sebastes alutus* is one of the most plentiful and interesting to biologists and fisheries managers. While much of the life history of POP is a mystery to biologists, we do know that they are susceptible to overfishing because many live to ripe old ages (some to 100!); they mature at 8 to 10 years and have highly variable recruitment. It is important to learn more about POP population structure and life history so that we can effectively conserve and manage this valuable species. Genetics is one tool that can help us to understand more about the secret life of this Alaskan rockfish.



Lisa Kamin with POP on 2007 NOAA-Fisheries GOA Trawl Survey. Photo taken by Nancy Roberson.

Adult POP occur along the continental shelf/slope break and in gullies throughout the Gulf of Alaska, Aleutian Islands, and the Bering Sea. From scientific surveys and fishery catch data, we know that adult aggregations are patchily distributed, and are composed of fish ages five and older. POP, like all rockfish, are live-bearers. Little is known about the timing, location, and frequency of mating, fertilization, or parturition (release of larvae). We know that larvae are released in the spring time to coincide with food availability, but we don't know where this takes place, or what the larvae do for the 6 months to a year they presumably spend "at sea" before settling into shallow nursery areas. The gap in our knowledge of POP life history continues until they recruit to deeper adult populations, starting at age five. The depth of POP habitat and the widespread nature of

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## The President's Corner

*Hamachan Hamazaki*

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Alaska Statehood and the 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. To commemorate, the ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries published a book: *Sustaining Alaska's Fisheries:*



*Hamachan Hamazaki,  
AFS Alaska Chapter President.*

*Fifty Years of Statehood* (<http://www.adfg.state.ak.us/pubs/50years/50years.php>). The book chronicles the history of Alaska's world-renowned fisheries but it is also a testimony of the Alaska Chapter's contribution to the development and advancement of Alaska's fisheries. Turning through its pages, you will find the names of current and past Alaska Chapter members.

The book attributes the success of Alaska's fisheries to three key factors: 1) a healthy ecosystem that supports fish populations, 2) the application of modern fisheries science based on resource protection and sustainability principles from the beginning, and 3) most importantly—an innovative fishery management system that enabled implementation of modern fisheries science through local control, public participation, and marketing. We tend to ignore the last one, but a fishery is not successful unless the fishers are benefitted.

Needless to say, Alaska's fisheries have not always been successful. Some failures were beyond our control, such as the loss and damage of habitats and ecosystems by natural and human activities (e.g., EXXON Valdez Oil Spill), or changes in global fishery markets and economy (i.e., no consumers = no fisheries). Other blunders were caused by too eagerly pursuing the "right" fishery directions (e.g., excessive fish enhancement and hatcheries negatively impacting wild populations, the pursuit of maximum sustainable yields leading to overexploitation, or excessive conservation

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## Alaska Rockfish, continued

marine populations make them hard to study with typical field methods. Common methods, such as mark-recapture or tagging, do not work with POP since they are damaged by the pressure change that occurs when they are brought up from their deep (~200 m) habitat.

Working with opportunistic survey samples, population genetics provides us with a tool to evaluate POP population structure and learn more about their life history. Genetic data can provide important insights into the population structure and life history of marine species. Neutral genetic markers, such as many microsatellites and SNPs (single nucleotide polymorphisms), allow us to measure genetic divergence between geographically separated individuals or collections. In species such as salmon, which return to their natal stream to spawn, collecting individuals from geographically distinct "populations" is relatively straightforward. However, for a marine species that has the potential for high mobility, collecting from distinct populations is difficult because discrete boundaries may not define populations, and if they do they may be difficult or impossible to observe. Studies of the population genetics of marine species simply survey the known geographic range of the species and use genetic tools to look for genetic divergence that correlates with geographic distance to detect subpopulations or genetically divergent stocks.

Understanding the population structure of a species is important for effective conservation and management. When we manage a species on a scale much larger than the population structure, we can erode localized populations and reduce the overall productivity of the species. Having knowledge of the scale of population structure allows fisheries managers to design management measures that conserve local populations and ensures higher overall productivity and genetic diversity.

At the University of Alaska Fairbanks Juneau Center, A.J. Gharrett's lab has used genetics to gain insight into several Alaskan rockfish species, and my work, along with my collaborator Lisa Kamin's work, has focused on POP. We surveyed adult POP in Alaskan waters and showed a significant relationship between geographic distance and

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**President's Corner, continued**

measures destroying fisheries). Examining those blunders, it is apparent that each was considered at the time the right fishery direction, and supported by the majority when it was implemented. While believing that we are moving in the right direction, it is easy to overlook or deny evidence to the contrary. This is a temptation that needs to be overcome.

For the next 50 years, Alaska's fisheries will face many challenges, some are known (e.g., climate change, and ocean calcification) and some are beyond our imagination. Like our predecessors, we will play a significant role in dealing with challenges and contributing to excellence in Alaska's fisheries. I am certain that some of you will be noted as pioneers, some as key policy makers, and some as blunderers, in the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. However, I also know that the success of Alaska's fisheries will not be determined by these few individuals alone, but by all of our collective efforts. It is each of our hard work and dedication that has made, and will continue to make, Alaska a world leader in fisheries. This is the proud legacy that we will continue to keep. 🐟

**Alaska Rockfish, continued**

genetic divergence. This suggests that POP that are closer geographically share more genetic information than those further away. These adult collections were taken at a broad geographic scale, about 400 km apart, and the genetic relationship suggests that the actual genetic scale of populations is most likely much less. This study of adult POP population genetics allows us to recognize that structure exists in Alaskan POP and to estimate the scale of POP genetic neighborhoods.

You may think that it would be difficult for marine species, which have pelagic larvae and mobile adults, to have genetic population structure. However, there are a few simple ways this can occur, first, if all life stages of a species



*Pacific ocean perch (POP). Photo taken by Sean Rooney.*

stay within a local area during their lifetime, and second, if individuals have the ability to home to their natal grounds before becoming reproductively active. Since there is no evidence of POP having homing ability, it is most likely that POP stay within a localized area during their lifetime and that those individuals, either larvae or adults, that stray contribute to the exchange of genetic information, but these are the exception not the norm. Understanding why a marine species, that has the ability to widely disperse, would choose to stay in a local area is difficult to grasp, but this is the story that their genetics are sharing with us. Additionally, many current genetic and other field studies have shown that this is the case for a number of marine species, which were previously expected to have large panmictic populations.

In the past, we've assumed that these long-lived marine fish, which have the ability to widely disperse in the open ocean, have done so, being uninhibited by physical or environmental boundaries. However, our studies show that POP most likely have more localized structure, and to understand this structure we must know more about POP, and rockfish in general. Our research only allows us a glimpse into the lives of these deep-dwelling fish, and there is still so much we do not know about the secret life of this Alaskan rockfish. 🐟

## First Call for Symposia and Session Proposals, Alaska Chapter 36th Annual Conference: “Celebrating professional diversity within Alaska Fisheries”

*Lisa Stuby*

The 36th annual Alaska Chapter Meeting of the American Fisheries Society will take place in Fairbanks this year. This year’s meeting is planned for November 3–5 with November 1 and 2 for Continuing Education Courses and/or workshops. The meeting will be held downtown at the Fairbanks Westmark Hotel. More details will follow in the summer issue of *Oncorhynchus*.

The inspiration for the meeting theme came to me in two ways. First, after reading AFS President William Franzin’s recent “President’s Hook” about professional diversity in AFS. Franzin describes how, while many professional societies tend to be discipline-oriented, AFS is different with “whole Sections proclaiming to be economists, bioengineers, physiologists, geneticists, administrators, information technologists, fish culturists, educators, managers, lawyers, and historians.” This also echoes the theme of Alaska Chapter President Hamachan Hamazaki’s presidency: “Expanding Perspectives of Fisheries.” Secondly, I was inspired by a recent lecture by Nobel prize-winning physicist Murray Gell-Mann. Instead of the public lecture on astrophysics I expected, his lecture was instead on the Santa Fe Institute (SFI). The SFI is devoted to creating a new kind of scientific research community that emphasizes multi-disciplinary collaboration in pursuit of understanding the common themes that arise in natural, artificial, and social systems. Gell-Mann emphasized the importance of trans-disciplinary work and described how, in addition to scientists of many disciplines, the SFI includes writers, artists, and teachers. Listening, I thought to myself, that’s AFS! While he seems to be proposing a radical new way of thinking, we are already there—this inspired the theme of the upcoming meeting.

So, we invite you to submit a symposium and/or session proposal that would add to the “Diversity” theme. Symposia or sessions that include speakers who do not normally participate in the annual Alaska Chapter meeting are especially encouraged. Please submit a symposium or session title and an abstract (<500 words) briefly explaining its scope and any other information to Lisa Stuby at: [lisa.stuby@alaska.gov](mailto:lisa.stuby@alaska.gov). These will be published in the summer issue of *Oncorhynchus* along with abstract submission deadlines and guidelines. I’ve already approached or been approached by a few of you about sessions on genetics, biometrics, marine ecosystems, and North Slope fisheries and I am planning to lead a session on “Evolution of Diversity of Fish in Alaska.” The deadline for symposium or session proposals is May 29. ☺

### First Call for Award Nominations

#### American Fisheries Society Awards, 2009

The AFS Parent Society is seeking nominations and applications for 2009 awards.

These are: the Award of Excellence, (April 17, 2009 deadline), the Carl R. Sullivan Fishery Conservation Award (April 16, 2009 deadline), the Excellence in Public Outreach (May 5, 2009 deadline), Honorary Membership (May 1, 2009 deadline), Meritorious Service Award (May 1, 2009 deadline), Outstanding Chapter Award (June 1, 2009 deadline), President’s Fishery Conservation Award (May 15, 2009 deadline), William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award (May 15, 2009 deadline).

To help your deserving colleagues achieve recognition visit [http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/award\\_nominations.pdf](http://www.fisheries.org/afs/docs/award_nominations.pdf). ☺

### Student Subunit Update

Greetings from the AFS Alaska Chapter Student Subunit! The Juneau and Fairbanks student groups are currently active and planning fundraisers and activities.

The Juneau group is coordinating a Student Symposium for presentations of projects and other research activities. Students from around the state have been invited to attend. The event will occur on Monday April 27 in conjunction with the Lena Point Fisheries Laboratory dedication ceremony. For information, contact Katie Palof ([k.palof@uaf.edu](mailto:k.palof@uaf.edu)).

The Fairbanks group had their annual Experiential Learning Symposium on April 2 at 5:30 pm in O’Neill 201. Students made presentations on their internship experiences, as required by the School of Fisheries. Contact [fbafs@uaf.edu](mailto:fbafs@uaf.edu) for information. ☺

## Committee Reports

All but the Awards Committee and Wally Noerenberg Award Committee reports, which were published in the winter 2009 *Oncorhynchus*, are included below.

### Cultural Diversity

This committee is co-chaired by Jerry Berg and Lisa Stuby. Its primary activity is to select one or more entry-level natural resource professionals to receive a travel award to attend the annual AFS Alaska Chapter conference. The committee selects the top candidate(s) and then tries to get as many recipients to the meeting as possible depending on the meeting location and where the candidate(s) reside. The main goal of this committee has been to help diversify our Chapter membership and get young upcoming people active with AFS.

In 2008, we solicited applications from around the state and received applications from 4 highly qualified individuals. We were able to fund one stellar candidate, Shelley Woods to attend the 2008 meeting in Anchorage. (See the winter *Oncorhynchus* for a note from Shelley.)

After over 5 years of service, Jerry Berg and Lisa Stuby are stepping down as committee chairs. The amount of time needed to be part of this committee has been fairly minimal, and serving has been immensely rewarding. Happily, during the banquet at the 2008 Alaska Chapter meeting, Sara Gilk, a fisheries geneticist for ADF&G at the Gene Conservation Laboratory in Anchorage, and Miranda Plumb, a fisheries biologist with the USFWS in Soldotna, signed on as the new committee chairs.

### Continuing Education

This committee chair position is currently vacant. Hamachan Hamazaki organized numerous, diverse and very well-attended classes in 2008.

### Environmental Concerns

The Environmental Concerns Committee was established by the Executive Committee to provide coordinated technical and policy analysis and Chapter input and comments on environmental issues that affect Alaska's fishery resources. This may occur, for example, when the Chapter's opinion or position is solicited by members or by external organizations or agencies. The committee will formulate, through consensus, a Chapter position on such issues for review by the EXCOM. Such positions should reflect the concerns of the membership as a whole. Due to the time-sensitive nature of many environmental issues, review of positions formulated by the committee will be by the EXCOM.

In 2008, several issues were brought to the Committee for consideration including: whether the Alaska Chapter should submit an *amicus* briefing to the U.S. Supreme Court regarding the Exxon Valdez case, Chinook salmon stocking near Haines, and Chilkat River habitat protection. In consultation with the EXCOM, it was decided that the committee would not take action on these matters.

If you would like to become involved with the committee on issues of concern, please contact Environmental Concerns Committee Chair, Cecil Rich at [cecil@gci.net](mailto:cecil@gci.net).

### Electronic Communications

The committee chair is Allen Bingham. The main purpose of this committee is to maintain and keep current the Alaska Chapter website and the Chapter's email distribution list. During the past few years the website has essentially just been "maintained" (i.e., no new improvements). The website was successfully used to conduct online e-balloting for the elections in the past, but due to changes in the server hosting our site we are conducting e-balloting entirely through email this year, and e-balloting is expected to be used in one form or another into the future. Each newsletter that has been put out during this past year has been made available on our website in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format; and information about training courses and meetings of not only the Chapter but also the Parent Society and the Western Division have been posted. New last year and continued this year was the conversion of the newsletter distribution system from mail/addressed-based system to a mostly email-based system.

The Student Subunit website is maintained as a portion of our site, and has continued to be maintained by the Electronics Communications Committee. Their website address is: <http://www.fisheries.org/units/afs-ak/student>.

The committee continued to maintain an email distribution list for most Chapter members with email addresses in the Chapter's membership database. In 2006, the Parent Society re-implemented support for our Chapter's list server, and all Chapter members with an email address (who have chosen to participate) can be members of that list. During this past year (2008), the server that the Parent

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**Committee Reports, continued**

Society hosts the email distribution system changed to address some SPAM issues, and there were a few growing pains related to that conversion, but it is currently functioning smoothly. Currently, the subscription list for this list server is about 3 months out-of-date, and will be updated in the next few months. Chapter members that have subscribed can

post to the list by emailing from the address with which they subscribed to: [akchap@lists.fisheries.org](mailto:akchap@lists.fisheries.org).

The committee is interested in hearing what members would like to see on our website. The website address is: <http://www.fisheries.org/units/afs-ak>; the e-mail address for sending comments about and contributions to the website is: [allen.bingham@alaska.gov](mailto:allen.bingham@alaska.gov).

*Table 1. Change since December 31, 2007 in AFS Alaska Chapter accounts effective October 2008. Figures are rounded to the nearest \$10 and percentages to the nearest whole percent.*

UBS Accounts	Gain or Loss	% Gain or Loss	Investment Type
Fund A	-18,000	-19%	½ Equities, ½ Fixed Income
Wally Noerenberg	-3,860	-23%	Fixed Income
Cultural Diversity	-3,870	-24%	Fixed Income
Molly Ahlgren Scholarship	-8,600	-18%	¾ Fixed Income, ¼ Mutual Fund Tables
Total	-34,330		

**Financial Report**

The committee chair is Ray Hander. Committee members include Tim Joyce and Lee Ann Gardner. The Chapter’s UBS investment portfolio has lost approximately \$34,000 since December 31, 2007, with individual account losses ranging from 18 to 24% (Table 1). This does not include the UBS checking account that fluxes with Chapter spending needs. This loss is due to the ongoing market volatility. The Chapter’s UBS portfolio is invested using a moderately conservative strategy with an investment horizon of 7 to 10 years as determined by the Finance Committee members in consultation with the UBS investment representative. The Chapter’s strategy is for long-term growth and we will have to weather the volatility of the market.

The Finance Committee has met quarterly with the Chapter’s UBS representative, Todd Fletcher, to receive portfolio status updates and conduct

maintenance of accounts as needed to conduct Chapter business. Lee Ann Gardner is in frequent contact with UBS as she conducts day-to-day Chapter business and informs finance committee members with information on an as-needed basis.

**Membership Report**

Lisa Stuby is the committee chair and Allen Bingham is the membership manager. The membership statistics for 2008 are nearly unchanged from similar figures for 2007, which had dropped substantially from 2006. The 2006 membership numbers were likely above normal due to the membership’s that came with registration at the Parent Society’s annual meeting that was held in Anchorage the previous year (2005). Similarly, the membership figures for 2005 were likely raised by individuals joining and/or renewing on their own in anticipation of the 2005 AFS meeting in Anchorage. Those suppositions aside, there appears to be a continued decline in our Chapter’s membership which may be a cause for concern that should be addressed in the upcoming months. However, recent updates to the Chapter roles indicate that there may be some recovery in our ranks by the end of the year.

The statistics listed for “State/Province” in Table 2 represent the number of different states or locations outside of Alaska where we have members.

Efforts in 2008 to increase and/or maintain  
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**ONCORHYNCHUS**

*Oncorhynchus* is the quarterly newsletter of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. Material in this newsletter may be reprinted from *AFS Diary* and *Western Division*.

<p><b>Editor</b> Gretchen Bishop ADF&amp;G/CF P.O. Box 110024 Douglas 99811-0024 465-4269 wk, Fax: 465-4944 <a href="mailto:Gretchen.Bishop@alaska.gov">Gretchen.Bishop@alaska.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Production</b> Connie Taylor Fathom Graphics P.O. Box 200448 Anchorage 99520-0448 Phone/Fax 272-3305 <a href="mailto:Connie@FathomGraphics.com">Connie@FathomGraphics.com</a></p>
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*Deadline for materials for the spring issue of Oncorhynchus is June 10.*

**Committee Reports**, continued

membership have mainly consisted of writing up reminder letters in mid-May for those people whose memberships had lapsed between 2007 and 2008 and those whose memberships lapsed for more than a year. The letters were constructed with an

emphasis on the many direct and indirect benefits of membership to the parent organization and Alaska chapter. Audra Brase is our incoming Alaska Chapter AFS vice president and will chair the Membership Committee for 2009.

Table 2. AFS Alaska Chapter membership summary for 2003 to 2008 years.

Year and Month (of report)	May 2003	June 2004	June 2005	June 2006	June 2007	July 2008
Active	254	267	288	347	210	205
Life	35	32	23	30	26	24
Retired	7	9	9	11	8	9
Student	51	54	60	41	43	45
Other	18	34	36	20	32	27
Total	365	396	416	449	319	310
Owes Parent AFS dues	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recent Delinquent (paid Parent AFS through previous year)	98	96	105	226	242	135
Owes Chapter	18	20	10	60	9	37
State/Providence (outside of AK)	9	16	13	13	11	15

**Fisheries Communication and Education**

Laurel Devaney is the chair of this committee. She coordinated the continuing education workshop entitled, “Improving Your Scientific Presentation and Speaking Skills” presented by Andi O’Conor, PhD., at the annual Chapter meeting in Anchorage. If you have any questions or suggestions for the Education committee, please feel free to contact Laurel Devaney at [laurel\\_devaney@fws.gov](mailto:laurel_devaney@fws.gov) or 456-0558.

**Molly Ahlgren Scholarship**

The committee chair is Hal Geiger. The Molly Ahlgren Scholarship committee recommended Shelley Woods as the third recipient of the Chapter’s most prestigious scholarship award.

The scholarship fund is far behind our original projections; there is currently approximately \$39,000 in the fund. The guiding principles for the scholarship calls for awards to come from the interest earned when the fund exceeds \$100,000. This year’s interest from the fund’s principle is below what was expected when the Chapter first made plans for this scholarship. There will be no award in 2009 unless the Executive Committee chooses to make a financial offering from the Chapter’s other funds. Additionally, the Committee would like to take this opportunity to suggest that Chapter members consider an additional individual contribution to the scholarship fund.

**Newsletter**

The committee chair is editor, Gretchen Bishop. The *Oncorhynchus* serves as a medium to distribute information to Alaska Chapter members and other interested individuals. The editor compiles articles submitted by Chapter members and then sends the compilation to Connie Taylor of Fathom Publishing who designs, lays out, and mails a few snail mail copies of the newsletter. Allen Bingham then emails it electronically to members. The AFS style conventions described at <http://www.fisheries.org/afs/styleguides.html> are generally followed. Prior to finalizing the newsletter, Electronic Committee Chair Allen Bingham makes a final edit. Each issue includes a front-page feature article with one or more photos. An effort is made to distribute opportunities to write the feature article between agencies and regions of the state. Submissions of articles for inclusion in the newsletter are solicited triennially via the AFS Alaska Chapter list server; photos are encouraged. During the past fiscal year, four electronic issues were printed, one at the beginning of each calendar quarter.

This year, the *Oncorhynchus* has been fully electronic in distribution. This has permitted the distribution of a lengthier newsletter at no additional cost. The goals of changing to electronic newsletter

*Continued on next page*

**Committee Reports**, continued

distribution were primarily to save money and paper but other advantages and opportunities are becoming apparent. The distribution change has also necessitated a more continuous newsletter layout to facilitate readers scrolling through the newsletter; and we have replaced the AFS membership application with a web link to avoid duplication with the website. The AFS, Alaska Chapter logo has been incorporated into the front page of the *Oncorhynchus* and color images have begun to be used. Submission deadlines are the 10th of March, June, September and December. If you have a newsletter contribution, please email Gretchen Bishop at: [Gretchen.Bishop@alaska.gov](mailto:Gretchen.Bishop@alaska.gov).

**Past President's Report**

The 2008 Past President was Jamal Moss. Two new officers that will serve the Chapter well were recruited for 2009. They are Vice President Audra Brase from ADF&G and Assistant Treasurer Cindy Tribuzio from NOAA Fisheries. The EXCOM and Past Presidents had a productive discussion at the Past President's luncheon regarding the most effective way to proceed with a salmon straying workshop

while maintaining the support of hatcheries and hatchery supporters. More details regarding this effort will be released in upcoming newsletters.

**Treasurer's Report**

Lee Ann Gardner presented the 2007-2008 treasurer's report. Primary activities of the treasurer in this past year included developing a spending plan for 2008, completing federal tax returns, and serving on and supporting the Chapter's Finance Committee and the Molly Ahlgren Scholarship Committee.

Currently, markets are down and our investment accounts took a bit of a hit. The Wally Noerenberg and Cultural Diversity funds fell below their \$15,000 principles. There was no Wally Noerenberg award this year and the Chapter expended funds to cover the cost of the Cultural Diversity Travel Award.

Total assets for the Alaska Chapter now stand around \$192,000, although this figure will go down pending payment of meeting expenses. The meeting was well-attended, with 254 regular attendees. Continuing education classes were a big success and accounted for 182 student-days. So far, the 2008 Alaska Chapter meeting grossed \$65,000. Proceeds from sales of *Fishes of Alaska* in 2007 netted \$1,500. ☺



The Fairbanks Student Sub-Unit group is selling hooded sweatshirts, mugs, water bottles, and other items featuring this logo designed by Laura Gutierrez!

See the Fairbanks blog: <http://www.uafafs.blogspot.com>.

## Council Adopts New Arctic Fishery Management Plan

At its February 2009 meeting, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council voted unanimously to adopt a new Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Arctic Management Area. The Council received comments and recommendations from its Advisory Panel, Scientific and Statistical Committee, and Ecosystem Committee, as well as many comments from the public. Written comments were also received from thousands of individuals and groups from throughout the world. The main provision of this new Arctic FMP is a prohibition on commercial fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the U.S. Chukchi and Beaufort Seas from 3 nautical miles offshore to 200 nautical miles. The new FMP contains provisions for opening a fishery in the future when scientific information improves and knowledge of fishery interactions with other components of the Arctic ecosystem are better understood.

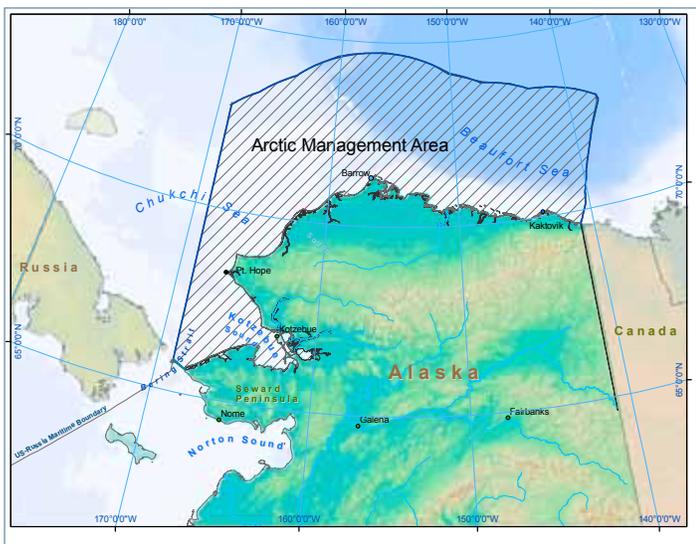


*The Chukchi Sea in winter.*

During its deliberations, the Council expressed concern about the potential effects of this action on a reported, but largely anecdotal, small historic fishery for red king crab in the southeastern Chukchi Sea, and explored this concern with staff and members of the public who are knowledgeable of this historic fishery. The Council's decision includes recognition that any fishery in the Arctic Management Area, including a red king crab fishery, could be considered in the future by the

Council either through an FMP amendment process or through the Exempted Fishing Permit process. The latter could be less difficult and would offer opportunity for exploratory fishing in localized areas to better determine the nature of any crab resource that might be fished in the future.

The Council also adopted an amendment to the BSAI king and Tanner crab FMP to terminate its geographic coverage at Bering Strait, thereby creating a single multi-species FMP for the Arctic Management Area. Future consideration of fishery development for groundfish, crab, and scallops would fall under this new Arctic FMP. This action does not affect salmon management (the entire Arctic is closed to salmon fishing under the salmon FMP) nor halibut management (the Arctic is closed to halibut fishing; future consideration of halibut fishing in the Arctic Management Area would be under the authority of the IPHC). This action also does not affect any subsistence or personal use fisheries, or any fisheries prosecuted or contemplated in State waters of the Arctic.



*The Arctic Management Area is all marine waters in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas from 3 nautical miles offshore the coast of Alaska or its baseline to 200 nautical miles offshore, north of Bering Strait (from Cape Prince of Wales to Cape Dezhneva) and westward to the 1990 U.S./Russia maritime boundary line and eastward to the U.S./Canada maritime boundary.*

## Advocacy in AFS

For some time, you may have been thinking that the Alaska Chapter should weigh in on various fisheries issues, or have wondered how the EXCOM decided to take action about fisheries issues. As a professional organization that is interested in maintaining high standards for the fisheries profession and ensuring the conservation of Alaska's fisheries, the Alaska Chapter of AFS can take the following actions on fisheries-related issues:

1. Provide written comments, recommendations or letters to public or private policy bodies.
2. Draft and publish Chapter resolutions.
3. Prepare position or policy papers.
4. Testify at public hearings, legislative committee meetings, scientific meetings, or other forums.
5. Prepare media releases or letters to printed media editors.
6. Sponsor workshops or symposia.
7. Prepare and file *amicus curiae* or other briefs in legal proceedings.

Before action is taken, the issue must meet 5 criteria:

1. The issue is pertinent to conservation of aquatic resources and habitats.
2. The issue is supported by 2/3 of the Chapter's membership or by a consensus of the EXCOM.
3. The Chapter can provide relevant, science-based information to help resolve the issue.
4. Minority opinions are solicited and included in the advocacy materials released to the public.
5. The Chapter commits to maintain involvement until the issue resolved.

None of the Executive Committee members are shopping around for issues that the Alaska Chapter should weigh in. They must come from you. The chapter will consider taking the above actions, only when we receive a written request for action (ROA) from you, the members. The ROA needs to include 7 pieces of information:

1. A description of the issue of concern.
2. Scientific information that describes how aquatic resources will be affected by the identified issue of concern.
3. The action requested of the Chapter.
4. A list of individuals or organizations, including addresses, phones, and faxes, to whom the requested Chapter action is to be directed.
5. A list of resources the Chapter can bring to help resolve the issue.
6. A minority viewpoint on the issue.
7. The date by which the Chapter advocacy action must occur to be effective.

Not all ROA's are granted and resulted in action. However, the Alaska Chapter will not take action unless it receives an ROA. If you have an issue that you believe the Alaska Chapter should weigh in on, I encourage you to submit an ROA to the President. Get involved! For more information about this process, see the Alaska Chapter procedure manual at: [http://www.fisheries.org/units/afs-ak/procedures/2007\\_procedures\\_manual.html](http://www.fisheries.org/units/afs-ak/procedures/2007_procedures_manual.html) Appendix A. The Advocacy Policy and Procedures are on page 33. ?

## Meetings and Events

### Western Division AFS Meeting

May 3–7, 2009: The 2008 Western Division AFS Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Arizona/New Mexico Chapter of AFS in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The theme of the meeting is Evolution of the Western Landscape: Balancing Habitat, Land, and Water Management for Fish. For more information, visit: <http://www.aznmfishsoup.org/wdafs09/index.htm>.



### AWRA Spring Specialty Conference

May 4–6, 2009: This conference, to be held in Anchorage, is themed: "Managing Water Resources and Development in a Changing Climate," for more information, visit the website at: <http://www.awra.org/meetings/Anchorage2009/index.html>.

**Meetings and Events**, continued

**GEOHAB 2009**

May 5–7, 2009: The 8th GeoHab meeting will be held in Trondheim, Norway. See <http://geohab.org/trondheim.html>.



**NABS 2009**

May 17–22, 2009: The 2009 meeting of the North American Benthological Society will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Visit: <http://www.benthos.org/index.cfm>.



**International Marine Conservation Congress**

May 20–24, 2009: The Marine Section of the Society for Conservation Biology will be hosting its first stand-alone meeting, the International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC), at George Mason University near Washington D.C. For more information on this meeting, visit: [www.conbio.org/IMCC](http://www.conbio.org/IMCC).



**World Aquaculture 2009**

May 25–29, 2009: This meeting will be held at the World Trade Center in Veracruz Mexico. See <https://www.was.org/WASMeetings/meetings/Default.aspx?code=WA2009>.



**2009 World Conference on Natural Resource Modeling**

June 17–19, 2009: This meeting will be held in Juneau. Abstracts are due on May 1, 2009 and may be submitted to [k.criddle@uaf.edu](mailto:k.criddle@uaf.edu). The conference is hosted by the UAF Fisheries Division, NOAA Fisheries, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Blocks of rooms are reserved at the Travelodge (789-9700). Register by mail or fax (796-5446).



**Alaska Chapter of the American Statistical Association (ASA)**

June 24–26, 2009: The 2009 annual meeting of the AK ASA will be held at the Gordon Watson Conference Room, US Fish and Wildlife Service building, 1011 E. Tudor Road, Anchorage. In addition to professional talks by attendees, there will be a two-day short course (June 25–26) by Dr. David Draper of The Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics, University of California-Santa Cruz, on Bayesian Modeling, Inference and Prediction. Contact David Evans at [david.evans@alaska.gov](mailto:david.evans@alaska.gov) for more information or visit <http://www.amstat.org/chapters/Alaska/> for registration form and details.



**139th Meeting of the American Fisheries Society**

August 30–September 3, 2009: The 2009 AFS parent society meeting will be held in Nashville Tennessee. The theme is “Diversity, the Foundation of Fisheries and the American Fisheries Society; are We Gaining Ground?” Visit <http://www.fisheries.org/afs09/>.



**ERF 2009 Meeting**

November 1–5, 2009: The biennial Conference of the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation will be held in Portland, Oregon. The theme is “Estuaries and Coasts in a Changing World.” Abstracts are due May 15, 2009. For more information, please visit: <http://www.sgmeet.com/cerf2009/>.

**ICES/PICES/UNCOVER Symposium 2009**

November 3–6, 2009: This symposium on “Rebuilding Depleted Fish Stocks — Biology, Ecology, Social Science and Management Strategies,” will be held in Warnemünde/Rostock, Germany. See <http://www.uncover.eu/index.php?id=180>.



## Pebble Mine Project Update

The Pebble Mine proposal by the Pebble Limited Partnership (PLP) would be one of the largest gold, copper, and molybdenum mines in the world and is located in southwest Alaska near Lake Iliamna. The project area sits at the headwaters of the Koktuli River and Upper Talarik Creek of the Bristol Bay watershed. The river systems into which these systems drain support critically important fisheries with the Kvichak River supporting one of the world's largest sockeye salmon runs and the Nushagak River, one of the world's largest Chinook salmon runs.

The ore deposits—estimated to be worth in excess of \$300 billion—are known as Pebble West, which would be the largest open pit mine in North America, and Pebble East, in which a block caving method is being considered. Although the details of the proposal are not yet known, it has been proposed that at Pebble West the project would include an open pit about two miles wide and almost 1,700 feet deep, while at Pebble East block caving would occur up to 3,500 feet underground with surface subsidence occurring up to one-third of this depth; the footprint would be similar to Pebble West. These would likely lead to flow impacts to the Koktuli River and Talarik Creek as well as the potential for acid generation and leaching of heavy metals. Although the plans for development of the mine have not been released, there would likely be multiple waste tailings and water supply reservoirs, mill site facilities, the requirement for 500 Mw of power, a camp for workers, a transmission line, and a ninety-mile long road to transport ore-containing slurry and fuel between the mine site along the shore of Lake Iliamna to a port on Cook Inlet. With the downturn in the global economy PLP has scaled back their environmental studies planned for 2009 to less than one-half of that spent in 2008. They intend to conduct some drilling in 2009 to further characterize the mineral resource.

State and federal agency staff have been reviewing and commenting on baseline environmental studies conducted in the project area since 2004 and for the past two years have been meeting with PLP representatives in technical working groups (TWGs) to facilitate coordinated agency review, comment, issue clarification, and resolution regarding environmental and project design studies for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and subsequent project permitting. Agency representatives have drafted a document listing guiding principles for developing study objectives and recommendations to PLP and to serve as a framework for discussions with PLP in the TWGs.

The Environmental Concerns Committee has been monitoring the Pebble Mine Project and will provide comment during the regulatory permitting process. Recent statements from PLP indicate they intend to apply for permits including an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) sometime as early as late 2010. If you have expertise on this issue that you would like to lend to the Chapter's Environmental Concerns Committee (ECC), please contact ECC chair Cecil Rich, [cecil@gci.net](mailto:cecil@gci.net).

### 2009 Alaska Chapter Officers

**President**

Toshihide "Hamachan" Hamazaki, ADF&G/CF, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage 99518-1599; 267-2158 wk, Fax: 267-2442, [Hamachan.Hamazaki@alaska.gov](mailto:Hamachan.Hamazaki@alaska.gov)

**President-Elect**

Lisa Stuby, ADF&G/SF, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks 99701-1599; 459-7202 wk, Fax: 456-2259, [Lisa.Stuby@alaska.gov](mailto:Lisa.Stuby@alaska.gov)

**Vice President**

Audra Brase, ADF&G/SF, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks 99701-1599; 459-7244 wk, Fax: 459-7347, [Audra.Brase@alaska.gov](mailto:Audra.Brase@alaska.gov)

**Treasurer**

Lee Ann Gardner, RWJ Consulting, P.O. Box 672302, Chugiak 99567-2302; 688-1400 wk, Fax: 688-1400, [rwjconsulting@ak.net](mailto:rwjconsulting@ak.net)

**Assistant Treasurer**

Cindy Tribuzio, NOAA Fisheries, Auke Bay Laboratories, Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute, 17109 Pt. Lena Loop Road, Juneau 99801; 789-6007 wk, Fax: 789-6094, [Cindy.Tribuzio@noaa.gov](mailto:Cindy.Tribuzio@noaa.gov)

**Secretary**

Karla Bush, ADF&G/CF, P.O. Box 110024, Juneau 99811-0024, 465-4259 wk, Fax: 465-4944, [Karla.Bush@alaska.gov](mailto:Karla.Bush@alaska.gov)

**Past President**

Bert Lewis, ADF&G/CF, P.O. Box 669, Cordova 99574-0669, 424-3212 wk, Fax: 424-3235, [Bert.Lewis@alaska.gov](mailto:Bert.Lewis@alaska.gov)

**Student Subunit Representative**

Shelley Woods, UAF, P.O. Box 753626, Fairbanks 99775; 699-7435 wk, [shelleywoods@gmail.com](mailto:shelleywoods@gmail.com)

**Feel free to contact the Executive Committee members**