



ONCORHYNCHUS

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In this issue:

Feature Article

President's Corner

Student Happenings

Bristol Bay Mining Update

2013 Molly Ahlgren
Scholarship Award

2014 Annual Meeting of
the Alaska Chapter

Meetings and Events

and more ...



Sue Mauger of Cook Inletkeeper and volunteer Debbie Oudiz collect field samples. Figure from Cook Inletkeeper.

Protecting Fish Habitat – Scientists and Science Must Work Together

Bob Shavelson

In January 2014, the Western Division of the American Fisheries Society sent a letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) supporting the findings of the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment and strongly recommending the EPA use its authority under the Clean Water Act to prevent large scale mining that would pose significant risks to the water, fisheries, and recreational resources of this area. This was remarkable – and critical! While the voices of scientists and the role of science in policy decisions are often marginalized, critical thinking, healthy debate, and data are all important safeguards against catastrophe and incompetency.

Twenty five years ago, in March 1989, the Exxon Valdez oil spill (EVOS) rocked our perceptions about safe and responsible oil transportation. While the EVOS commanded nightly news coverage, and prompted serious reforms in Congress, another event unfolded that year in Alaska's Cook Inlet. The Mount Redoubt volcano began erupting in December 1989. Pyroclastic flows swept massive debris fields in and around the Drift River Oil Terminal, located at the base of Mt. Redoubt. The Drift River tank farm contained over 20 million gallons of crude oil at the time, and there wasn't a response scenario to address a worst-case release from the facility. With EVOS oil seeping into Lower Cook Inlet, and 20 million gallons of crude sitting beneath an erupting volcano, Alaskans around Cook Inlet grew worried. This wasn't the first time Alaskans' livelihoods and cultures were threatened by short-sighted development.

Continued on next page

The President's Corner

Phil Loring

Spring in Alaska, well, in Fairbanks anyway, is a time when people are starting to get restless. OK, let's be honest—manic. The days are getting longer at warp speed, but the cold, death-grip



Phil Loring AFS Alaska Chapter President.

of winter holds on nonetheless, keeping people inside (way) more than they like. This is usually the time that I start day-dreaming excessively about fieldwork on the coast, or, better yet, on a fishing boat in Cook Inlet. Now that I live in a place about as land-locked as possible, Saskatchewan, that daydream seems to lurk, laughing at me, around every corner.

Yet, there is good news: 2014 is shaping up to be a spectacular year for fisheries professionals and scientists, with a multitude of interesting conferences and field schools happening over the next six months. There really is something for everyone coming up this year.

Here are some examples:

As many of you already know, the AFS Western Division meeting is in Mazatlán, Mexico this year, falling on April 7–11. This meeting is a special occasion for many reasons, but perhaps mostly in that it both celebrates, and is hosted by, the recently formed Mexico Chapter of AFS. The theme of the meeting is "The Future of Fisheries Science;" and the schedule, which you can peruse at <http://wdmeeting2014.wordpress.com/>, looks fantastic.

Even if you can't make this trip, Mexico may not be off the table for your 2014 travel plans. From September 21–25, the 2nd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress will be held in Merida, Mexico on the beautiful Yucatan Peninsula. Hosted by "Too Big to Ignore" and a number of other organizations, this conference

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Protecting Fish Habitat, continued

Two years prior to the EVOS, in 1987, the tanker *Glacier Bay* hit a rock in Upper Cook Inlet, spilling over 200,000 gallons of crude oil and closing local fisheries. Equally disturbing, Cook Inlet was (and remains) the only coastal water body in the nation where the oil and gas industry legally dumps billions of gallons of toxic waste annually into prime fish and whale habitat.

For some concerned Alaskans, enough was enough. In 1994, a small group of scientists, fishermen, Alaska Natives, lawyers, and activists decided to do something about the rapid changes being observed in Cook Inlet. Looking across the nation, the group found a compelling model in New York's Hudson River Valley where local fishermen had embraced the notion of a "Riverkeeper." The concept dates back to old England where the "Riverkeeper" would prosecute polluters and poachers in local waters. The Hudson Riverkeeper was the first Waterkeeper in the United States. Established in the early 1970s, Riverkeeper followed a set of no-nonsense principles – connecting people to place and taking action against anyone polluting the ecosystems that supported their local economies and way of life.

The people in Cook Inlet had found their model. In 1995, Cook Inletkeeper formed as a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the Cook Inlet watershed and the life it sustains. From the start, Inletkeeper sought to foster meaningful change, despite the political context for this work. Inletkeeper's founders had seen how Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, the Unocal platform blow-out in southern California, and the burning Cuyahoga River in Ohio decades before had galvanized the largest protest in world history – the first Earth Day in 1970. But they also knew that large corporations exist to serve shareholders, often using financial and political influence to dilute the effectiveness of well-intentioned laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

As a result, Inletkeeper's Board of Directors set out to combine science, education, and advocacy to provide Alaskans with the tools they need to

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The President's Corner, continued

has the theme of "Options and Opportunities for Small-Scale Fisheries." From what I hear, this conference may prove to be the global fisheries event of the year.

For graduate students looking for travel and learning opportunities, there are also two field schools to note. The first is hosted by the International Comparative Rural Policy Studies program (ICRPS), in Toluca, Mexico, at the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Mexico. This summer institute will focus on rural policy studies in a very broad sense, and covering everything from aquaculture to international trade agreements; if you are looking to broaden your horizons, this may be for you. Plus, my lab, the Human Dimensions Lab at the UAF Water and Environmental Research Center, has funds to send FOUR grad students to this summer school. For more information send an email to lab manager Sam Norlin at snorlin@alaska.edu.

Later this summer, Oregon State University will host a "Transdisciplinary Academy in Marine Resource Sustainability," from August 25 to September 5. This 2-week summer training academy offers graduate students and postdocs an opportunity to learn and practice

collaborative, transdisciplinary approaches for addressing problems in marine resource sustainability. Interested students should visit the web page at <http://www.marineresearchnetwork.org/transdisciplinary-academy/>.

Finally, our annual AFS Alaska Chapter meeting will be held in Juneau this year at the Centennial Hall from October 20–24. This year's meeting will be a joint venture among our chapter, the Alaska Water Resources Association, and the Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership. This means our conference should be bigger and more exciting than ever! Keep an eye on our Chapter website, at <http://www.afs-alaska.org/>, for more information.

Finally, our Chapter is currently replacing our email list-serve; we previously relied on the parent society for this functionality, but this service has been discontinued. We have found a solution, however, so be on the lookout for one or two "test" messages being sent to verify that everything is working properly. Also, thanks as always to Hamachan Hamazaki for being our interim solution.

I hope you all have a productive and exciting spring, and I hope to see you at one or more of these great events! 🐟

Protecting Fish Habitat, continued

protect their public water and fishery resources. The directors understood the need to build credibility with resource managers, scientists, and politicians through basic science and educational outreach focused on clean water and healthy fish habitat. But such efforts alone would not promote the policy changes needed to stem the ever-growing tide of impacts around Cook Inlet. That's why Inletkeeper also embraced detailed policy analyses and strident advocacy, including litigation, to translate science and education awareness into legal and political change.

Today, Inletkeeper is one of Alaska's leading voices for clean water and healthy fish habitat. To better connect stakeholders to the splendor of the Cook Inlet watershed, and to encourage grassroots involvement in resource management decisions, Inletkeeper focuses on common-sense projects which help Alaskans test their drinking water,

reduce pollution from boats and harbors, recycle their electronic waste, and monitor and sample local water bodies. This helps Inletkeeper and local communities build relationships that result in broad and diverse support for more sustainable resource management.

At the same time, Inletkeeper recognizes climate change and ocean acidification as the most pressing issues threatening Cook Inlet's people, resources, and economies. However, because carbon regulation has been elusive with some people continuing to question the human role in changing atmospheric conditions, Inletkeeper embraced a strategy to address climate change in an area that matters to most Alaskans: with research focused on impacts to salmon and their habitat. A growing body of scientific evidence has

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Protecting Fish Habitat, continued



Inletkeeper teamed with local fisherman in Kachemak Bay near Homer to help highlight the threats posed by climate change and ocean acidification, 2008. Photo from Cook Inletkeeper.

linked warming temperatures with stress in cold-water fish, potentially increasing vulnerability to pollution, predation, and disease.

In 2002, Inletkeeper initiated a pilot program on four salmon streams on the Lower Kenai Peninsula, the Anchor and Ninilchik Rivers and Deep and Stariski Creeks, to understand temperature changes in these popular non-glacial systems along the Alaska road system. Inexpensive temperature monitors, programmed to capture readings every 15 minutes, were deployed in spring and retrieved in fall. Data were then compared to Alaska Water Quality Standards, defined under the federal Clean Water Act, which set temperature limits of 13° C for spawning fish and 15° C for migrating fish, with a “do not exceed” upper threshold of 20° C.

Initial results were surprising; every stream system violated the standards at different times and conditions, with some exceeding the upper threshold for days at a time. Inletkeeper then correlated available historical air temperature data with current instream data to forecast water temperatures under various climate change models, revealing a disturbing trend of warming in all studied systems. Recognizing the significance

of this work, Inletkeeper subsequently expanded the pilot project to cover 48 non-glacial systems around the Cook Inlet watershed.

Today, data from around Cook Inlet reinforce what now may appear to be common knowledge: non-glacial fish streams are warm and will get warmer with continued climate change. The next question became, “What do we do about it?” Because the effects of climate change can’t be reversed overnight, one alternative involves adaptive strategies that will facilitate resilience in anadromous fish. First and foremost would be to take a precautionary approach to managing fish habitat.

Salmon movement and productivity in the open ocean remains poorly understood, but countless examples exist from Europe to New England to the Pacific Northwest showing fish need healthy habitat. As a result, Inletkeeper works to inject fish habitat safeguards in planning and permitting decisions at local, state, and federal levels. For example, Inletkeeper worked with a diverse coalition to secure riparian buffers on over 2,300 stream miles throughout the Kenai Peninsula

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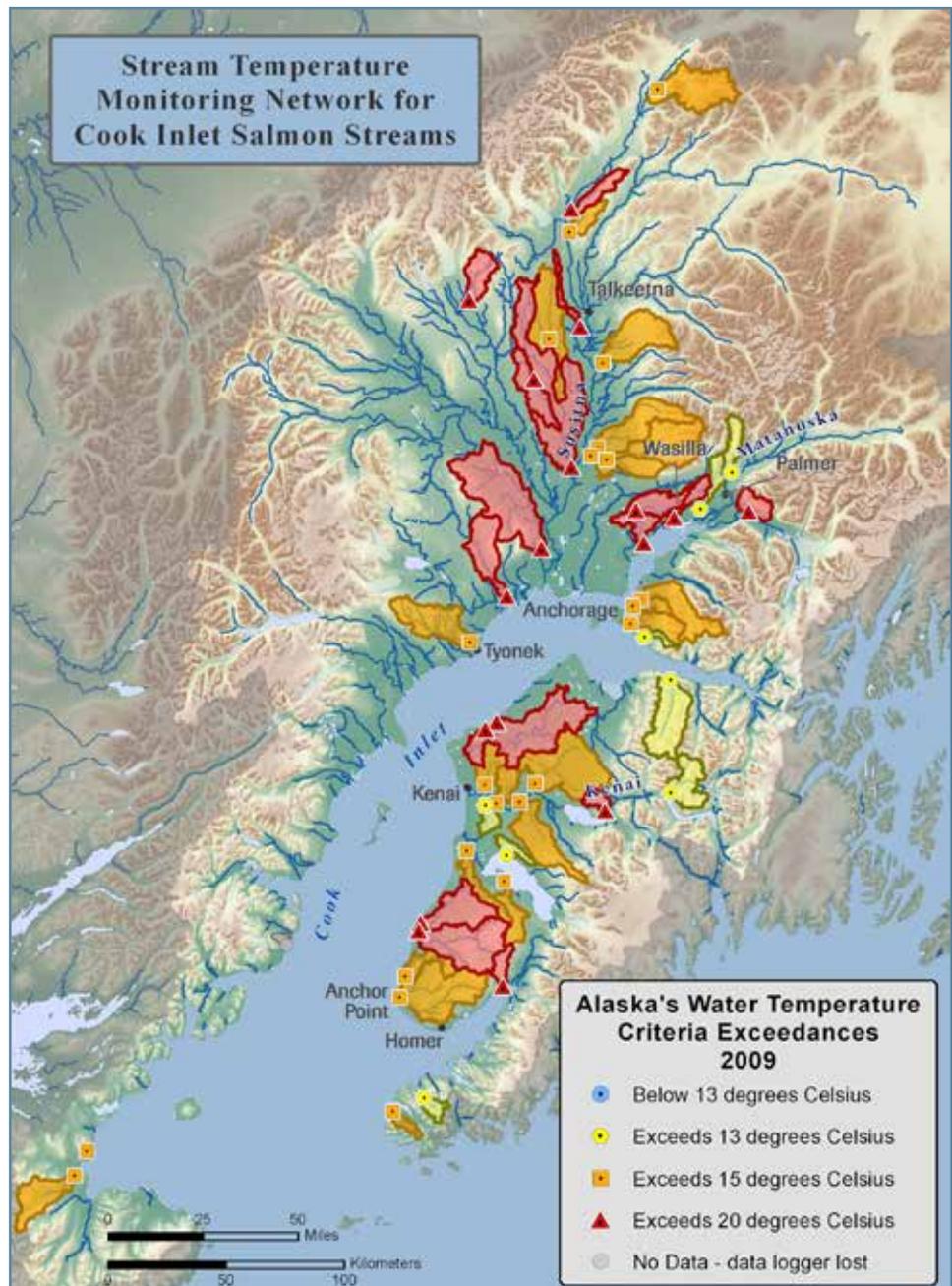
Protecting Fish Habitat, continued

Borough in 2013, and we're working now to stop rollbacks in some of Alaska's most special areas – areas defined in state statute as critical habitat, fish and game refuges, and wildlife sanctuaries.

Inletkeeper understands the inherent challenges in properly managing increasing human growth and urbanization around Cook Inlet salmon streams. We also recognize the importance of ground and surface water interactions for maintaining healthy fish habitat. As a result, Inletkeeper teamed up with scientists to map springs, seeps, and other upwelling areas using aerial infrared imagery on targeted systems, with the understanding these areas could provide the "thermal refugia" fish need to successfully migrate and spawn as temperatures increase. In addition, Inletkeeper works with the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust and willing land owners to purchase or otherwise protect these special areas with the hope that the temperature-buffering effects of ground water additions to surface water systems can help salmon navigate through a changing landscape.

But adaptation is only part of the solution. When it comes to climate change and ocean acidification, we must also focus on mitigation. In Alaska, mitigation poses special challenges: how do we get a state where over 85% of general fund revenues derive from fossil fuels to wean itself from its vast reserves of oil, gas, and coal? The massive tides, active volcanoes, and ample winds that surround Cook Inlet provide tremendous opportunities to transition our energy consumption to world class renewables. But to date, we have yet to make the investments in renewable technologies to make them competitive with fossil fuels, and subsidies for oil, gas and coal development continue to create an uneven playing field.

Meanwhile, huge new carbon producing projects remain on the table, like the proposed Chuitna coal mine in Upper Cook Inlet. In addition to its carbon and mercury implications, the Chuitna coal mine



Temperature monitoring sites and their contributing watersheds are color-coded by their highest exceedance value in 2009. Figure from Cook Inletkeeper.

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Protecting Fish Habitat, continued

would set a dangerous precedent as the first large project in state history to completely mine through over 25 miles of wild Alaska salmon habitat. In response, Inletkeeper and a team of scientific experts are working with local fisherman and property owners to reserve water in the salmon streams to be mined, in an effort to force the question: will we trade our renewable salmon resources for the finite production of coal?

Throughout its work, Inletkeeper relies on a strong foundation of science to pursue an ambitious mission to protect the long-term productivity of aquatic habitats. Yet, increasingly, science that identifies the importance of healthy and productive ecosystems is often suppressed by political forces which embrace a more invasive, resource consumption ideology. Natural resource employees in our state and federal agencies are routinely constrained in their efforts to study and report important issues. The Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is uniquely positioned, through its Environmental Concerns Committee and its Advocacy Policy, to give aquatic scientists a strong voice in the fight to protect fish habitat. At a time when we're facing the greatest threats to aquatic systems, Inletkeeper will continue to ask the tough questions, and support the scientists and others who do the same, in our pursuit to hand down a livable planet to future generations. More information on Cook Inletkeeper may be found at <http://inletkeeper.org/>.

Bob Shavelson is the Executive Director at Cook Inletkeeper, a nonprofit organization focused on protecting clean water and healthy salmon habitat throughout the Cook Inlet watershed. He previously worked with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the Oregon Ocean and Coastal Law Center, the Oregon Senate Majority Office, and in the U.S. Senate as a NOAA Sea Grant Fellow. Bob holds a B.A. in biology and chemistry from Boston University and a J.D. from the University of Oregon School of Law, with certificates in Environmental Law and Ocean & Coastal Law. Bob lives in Homer, Alaska, with his wife and two young girls, and has worked on pollution, democracy, and habitat protection issues since 1995.



Inletkeeper works with local Tribes, property owners and fisherman to protect salmon habitat and water quality. This press event announced selection of the Chuitna River as one of America's Most Endangered Rivers, 2007. Photo from Cook Inletkeeper.

Student Subunit Happenings

Emily Whitney

It's that time of year again - the annual Student Symposium will be held on April 4, 2014. Students from the Fairbanks and Juneau campuses will participate as well as students at remote sites connected via video. The symposium provides students a great opportunity to present their research through talks or short videos. Best presentation awards will be given courtesy of the Alaska AFS Chapter.

On the Fairbanks campus, the student group continues to develop their subunit project that will examine the population dynamics of blackfish in the Fairbanks area. They are currently in the permitting stage and anticipate that sampling will begin later this spring. In the meantime, they plan to enjoy the Fairbanks weather by going ice-fishing as a club.



During a brown bag lunch event, graduate student Dan Olsen shared pictures and stories from his time as a kayak guide in Antarctica. Photo by Dan Olsen.

In Juneau, students continue to work with local schools doing outreach and presentations to support science education. In February, two students, Elizabeth Figus and Melissa Prechtel, gave a presentation on U.S. and Arctic fisheries management to a high school class. Additionally, students plan to participate in a middle school classroom's study of intertidal ecology.

On campus, students are sharing their travel and research adventures through a brown bag lunch series that allows you to take a vacation during lunch. Presentations have included pictures and stories from kayak guiding in Antarctica and hiking in Argentina.

Students in Anchorage are staying busy preparing for several upcoming presentations this spring. 🐧

Students at Alaska Marine Science Symposium

Congratulations to the student winners of nine awards at the Alaska Marine Science Symposium. Three of those high-achieving students have an Alaska Sea Grant connection. Thomas Farrugia, whose graduate work is funded in part by Alaska Sea Grant, was awarded first place in the Ph.D. category for his oral presentation, "Nutritional and containment analysis of skates in the Gulf of Alaska: Shaping future skate demand."

Michael Courtney won first place at the M.S. level for his presentation, "Dispersal patterns and summer oceanic distribution of adult Dolly Varden from the Wulik River, Alaska, evaluated using satellite telemetry."

Dana Wright won second place for her M.S. student poster, "The importance of basal food web delta 15N values in trophic ecology studies: Kodiak humpback whale case study." Wright's award was sponsored by the North Pacific Research Board. All three students are in the UAF school of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences. 🐧

2014 Annual Meeting of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

Please join us in planning and celebrating the 41st annual meeting of the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, to be held October 20-24, 2014 in Juneau, Alaska! The theme of this meeting is “Bridging disciplines to solve today’s challenges in resource management.” The theme embodies the collaboration that will occur at this meeting between freshwater and marine fisheries biologists, hydrologists, and habitat specialists. In addition, this theme considers the partnerships between resource managers and subsistence and community users. This meeting will be co-hosted by the Alaska Chapter of the American Water Resources Association (AWRA) and the Southeast Alaska Fish Habitat Partnership (SEAKFHP). A call for abstracts for contributed papers will go out this summer. The program committee for the 2014 meeting is soliciting ideas for continuing education courses. Please send thoughts to Jennifer Stahl (jennifer.stahl@alaska.gov).

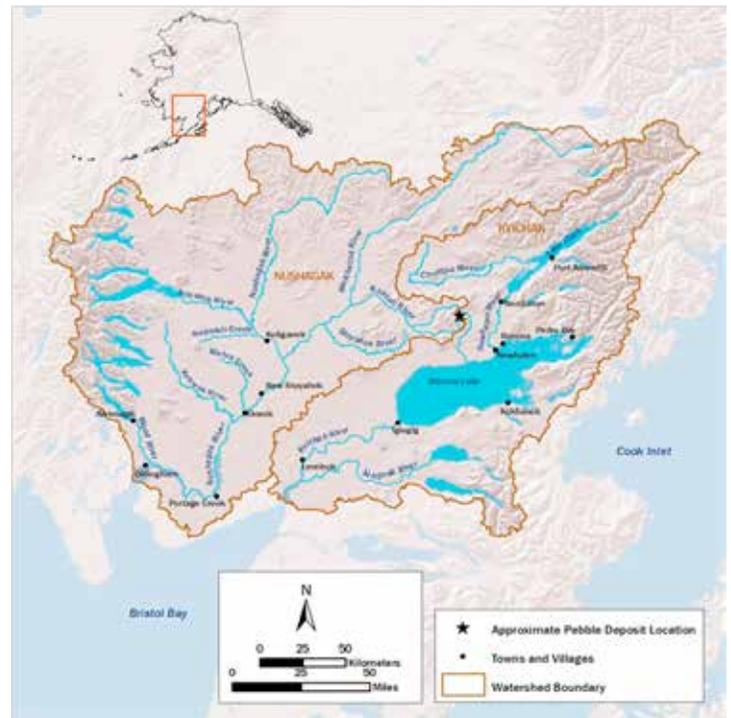
Bristol Bay Mining Update

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was petitioned by multiple groups to address mining activity in the Bristol Bay watershed using its authority under the Clean Water Act (CWA). The EPA completed their Final Assessment regarding the potential impacts of large-scale mining development on Bristol Bay fisheries and wildlife, and on Alaska Native cultures of the region. Given that the actual spatial extent of a proposed mine depends on formal permit applications that have yet to be submitted, the EPA conducted their review based on a range of potential mining sizes and operating conditions.

However, the potential for large-scale mine development in the region is greatest for copper deposits and, to a lesser extent, for intrusion-related gold deposits. Because these deposits are low-grade (i.e., containing relatively small amounts of metals relative to the amount of ore), mining will be economically viable only if conducted over large areas and will necessarily produce large amounts of waste material.

Effects on fish resulting from habitat loss or modification would occur directly in the area of mine activity and indirectly downstream due to habitat destruction. Additional impacts would occur in the event of failure of containment facilities. Under the provisions of Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act, the EPA is initiating a process to identify appropriate options to protect the world’s largest sockeye salmon fishery in Bristol Bay.

More information on the current status of this process is available at www2.epa.gov/bristolbay.



Approximate location of the Pebble Deposit relative to drainages for the Kvichak and Nushagak Rivers at the head of Bristol Bay. Figure from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; <http://www2.epa.gov/bristolbay>.

Alaska Marine Job Board

Looking for employment in marine-related fields in Alaska? The new Alaska marine job board connects people to Alaska jobs, fellowships, and internships in fisheries, seafood, and maritime industries.

Dave Partee, Alaska Sea Grant web/database developer, created the job board to continue a career service that was on the UAF School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences website. Go to <https://twitter.com/AKMarineJobs>.

2013 Molly Ahlgren Scholarship Award

The Molly Ahlgren Scholarship Award was created in honor of the late Professor Molly Ahlgren as a means of providing financial support to an undergraduate student entering their senior year of a baccalaureate degree in fisheries or aquatic science at an Alaska university (<http://www.afs-alaska.org/awards-scholarships>). At the 2013 AFS Alaska Chapter meeting, the Molly Ahlgren Scholarship Committee (MASC) presented scholarships of \$4,500 each to two students. One recipient, “Chayo” Rosario Fuentes, provided a statement in the Winter 2014 *Oncorhynchus* newsletter. A statement from the second recipient, Melissa Rhodes-Reese, is provided below.



Melissa Rhodes-Reese, co-recipient of the 2013 Molly Ahlgren Scholarship, communes with her study specimens. Photo from Melissa Rhodes-Reese.

Melissa Rhodes-Reese, Fisheries Biology Undergraduate, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Juneau

When I learned I was a recipient of the Molly Ahlgren scholarship, it was one of the happiest moments I think I have ever experienced. It was the first scholarship I have ever received, and I have to say there is no feeling quite like it. The financial security it provided allowed me to attend school with the focus that is imperative for success. This, coupled with being able to attend the meeting in Fairbanks, fueled my motivation to complete my undergraduate degree and pursue graduate school. While at the meeting, I was able to spend valuable time with fisheries experts and discuss my future as a developing fisheries scientist. I would like to thank the Ahlgren family for this honor and opportunity, as well as the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. 🐟

International Pacific Halibut Commission Merit Scholarship

The International Pacific Halibut Commission funds several Merit Scholarships to support university, technical college, and other post-secondary education. The scholarship fund has been established to assist the further education of Canadian and U.S. students connected to the halibut fishery and its industry. Generally, a single new scholarship valued at \$2,000 (US) per year is awarded. The scholarships are renewable annually for the normal four-year period of undergraduate education, subject to maintenance of satisfactory academic performance. A committee of industry and Commission representatives reviews applications and determines recipients

based on academic qualifications, career goals, and relationship to the halibut industry.

The scholarships for 2014 will be available for educational entrance or continuation in fall 2014. Additional questions can be directed to either Tamara Briggie (206) 634-1838 (ext. 7660) or Bruce Leaman (ext. 7672). Applications are available through the Commission offices or on the Commission’s website at <http://www.iphc.int/opportunities/scholarship.html>. 🐟

**AFS memberships
may be renewed online**

<http://fisheries.org>

2014 Alaska Ocean Leadership Awards

The Alaska SeaLife Center (ASLC) has announced the 2014 Alaska Ocean Leadership Awards. Given annually to individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the awareness and sustainability of the state's marine resources, these awards were presented at the Alaska Marine Gala in Anchorage on February 15, 2014.

The prestigious Walter J. and Ermalee Hickel Lifetime Achievement Award, established to recognize an individual making exceptional contributions to the management of Alaska's coastal and ocean resources over at least 20 years, was posthumously given to Stan Stephens, who passed away on September 21, 2013. Stan started offering wildlife and glacier charters into Prince William Sound from Valdez in 1971. When the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground in 1989, Stan's vessel was the first to arrive. Events over the following weeks changed the course of his life as Stan thereafter worked to bring citizens, regulatory agencies, and the oil industry together. He was a founding member of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, and he became known as the "Keeper of the Sound" although his work was felt across the state and beyond.

The Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center (PCCRC) received the Stewardship & Sustainability Award, established to recognize an industry leader that demonstrates the highest commitment to sustainability of ocean resources. The PCCRC at the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences of the University of Alaska Fairbanks focuses on North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea research and education, with emphasis on the commercial fisheries of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. Funding for the PCCRC is provided by members of the Pollock Conservation Cooperative, part of the At-sea Processors Association.

Sport Fish Restoration Awards

The Fisheries Administration Section of the American Fisheries Society is seeking nominations to recognize outstanding fisheries projects completed with Sport Fish Restoration (Wallop-Breaux) funds in 2013. Awards are given in three categories: Sport Fishery Development and Management, Research and Surveys, and Aquatic Education. Nominations must be submitted through June 15, 2014. For more information contact Mike Stone (mdsfish@gmail.com).



Sockeye salmon in the Wood River, a tributary of the Nushagak River. Photo taken by Thomas Quinn, University of Washington; <http://www2.epa.gov/bristolbay>.

Alaska Tsunami Bowl Held in Seward

The National Ocean Sciences Bowl is a competition to recognize and reward excellence among students interested in ocean studies. The bowl also aims to encourage high school students, their teachers and parents to increase their knowledge of the oceans and to broaden awareness of the critical value of ocean research. The Alaska competition, the Tsunami Bowl, includes a quiz bowl, a research paper, and an oral presentation.

The 2014 Alaska competition was held in Seward during February 28–March 2, 2014. The Juneau-Douglas Caballers won first place among 18 teams and will go to Seattle in early May to compete with 24 other teams in the national bowl. Second place went to the Juneau-Douglas Third Whale and third place to the Kodiak Elusive Jellyfish. The Kodiak team had the top research project, "Jellyfish Apocalypse: Problems, Causes, and Opportunities." More information is available at <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/nosb>.

ONCORHYNCHUS

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Deadline for materials for the summer issue of *Oncorhynchus* is June 10.

Nominations sought for the Oscar E. Sette Award

The Oscar Sette Award Committee of the AFS Marine Fisheries Section seeks nominations for the 2014 Oscar E. Sette Award. The Award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated sustained excellence in marine fishery biology through research, teaching, administration, or a combination of the three. Specific criteria for the award may be viewed at this link to the Section's webpage: http://sfrc.ufl.edu/mfs/index_files/Sette_Award.htm. Nominations must be submitted no later than May 31, 2014. 🗨️

Pollock Oil Research Yields New Diet Supplement Product

American Marine Ingredients has released a new diet supplement product, 54°North Omega-3 with Vitamin D3. The oil in the capsules is derived from Alaska pollock livers, through a process created by Marine Advisory Program seafood specialist Alex Oliveira. Funded by a grant from the Pollock Conservation Cooperative Research Center (PCCRC), Oliveira worked out a molecular distillation process to purify pollock oil for nutraceutical use. Molecular distillation, also called short path distillation, differs substantially from traditional processing used to purify fish oil in that it does not require use of chemicals and generates virtually no processing waste.

In the recent past, American Seafoods mainly used pollock oil for biofuel in boilers onboard their vessels. But the boilers did not consume all the oil. With the potential availability of excess pollock oil, the industry looked in to producing oil for human consumption.

“The major leap is to have Alaska pollock oil break into the nutraceutical market, which is still expanding yearly, and the shift in application for pollock oils,” said Oliveira. Pollock is the highest volume fishery in Alaska, and using pollock livers to produce a high purity nutraceutical makes environmental sense and increases the value of the fishery.

A few years ago Oliveira's presentations on the pollock oil project at international conferences piqued the interest of the fish oil industry. The New Zealand government sent Dr. Matthew Miller to the Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center to work with Oliveira on the purification of New Zealand hoki oil. The process was successful for hoki, and also for Pacific cod liver oils through a project funded by Alaskan Leader Fisheries and Aleutian Spray Fisheries.

Richard Draves, American Seafoods vice president of product development, reports that 54°North Omega-3 is selling well. Oliveira's project was also the focus of a keynote presentation at a recent Pacific Fisheries Technologists Conference in Monterey, California.

American Seafoods is looking for more ways to add value via pollock co-products. One example is skins and their potential use in dog treats, a research project Oliveira just received funds for from PCCRC. The pet treat market is growing fast as pet owners become more aware of pet nutrition and look for healthier product alternatives. Fish protein and fish oils are desirable ingredients, looking beyond corn and soybean meal or beef and pork byproducts. 🗨️

Meetings and Events

Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society Western Division

April 7–12, 2014: This meeting will be held in Mazatlán, Mexico with the theme “Rethinking Fisheries Sustainability: The Future of Fisheries Science.” For more information, please visit <http://www.wdafs.org>.



Kodiak Area Marine Science Symposium

April 22–25, 2014: This meeting, to be held in Kodiak, AK, will focus on research to understand how Kodiak's marine environment and resources function, change, and affect people's lives. For more information, see <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/conferences/2014/kamss/>.



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Meetings and Events

Fisheries Bycatch: Global Issues and Creative Solutions

May 13–16, 2014: This 29th Lowell Wakefield Fisheries Symposium in Anchorage. More information is at <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/conferences/2014/wakefield-bycatch/index.php>.



International Congress on the Biology of Fish

August 3–7, 2014: This meeting will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland. For more information, visit <http://icbf2014.sls.hw.ac.uk/>.



144th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society Symposium

August 17–21, 2014: This meeting will be held in Québec, Canada with the theme "From Fisheries Research to Management: Think and Act Locally and Globally." For information, see <http://afs2014.org/>.



Annual Conference of the Alaska Chapter of American Statistical Association

August 18–20, 2014: This conference to be held at the Chena Hot Springs Resort near Fairbanks, will feature a two-day workshop on mixed-effect models (Dr. Ben Bolker, professor of Math and Statistics at McMaster University). For more information, visit <http://community.amstat.org/AlaskaChapter/Meetings/2014/AnnualMeeting2014>.



2nd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress

September 21–25, 2014: This meeting will be held in Merida, Mexico with the theme "Options and Opportunities for Small-Scale Fisheries." For more information, see <http://toobigtoignore.net/>.



41st Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society Alaska Chapter

October 20–24, 2014: This meeting will be held in Juneau, AK with the theme "Bridging Disciplines to Solve Today's Challenges in Resource Management." The meeting chair and program contact is Jennifer Stahl (jennifer.stahl@alaska.gov).



2014 Alaska Chapter Officers

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