



# ONCORHYNCHUS

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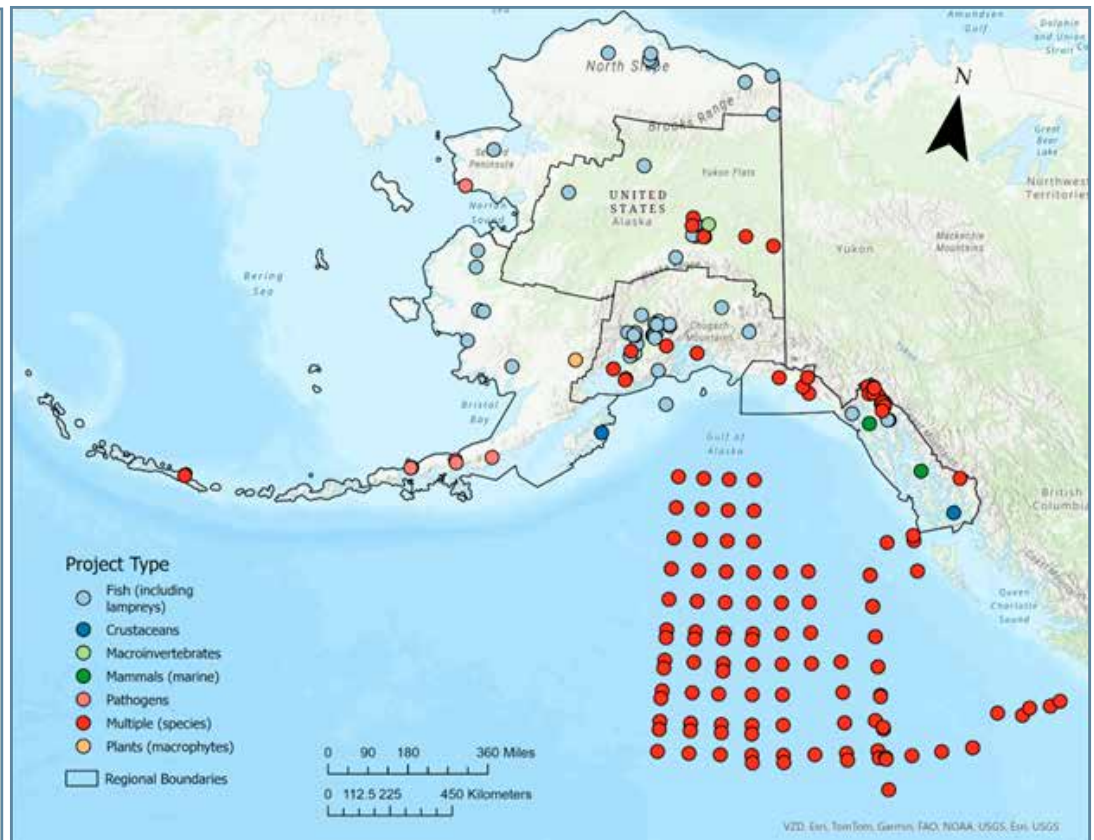
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Map of eDNA collection sites across Alaska. Graphic by Rachel Lekanoff, UAF.

## An aquatic biomonitoring revolution: involving government, tribal entities, stakeholders, and students in environmental DNA science

*Brandi Cron, Maggie Harings, Kristen Reece, Rachel Lekanoff, Maris Goodwin, Erik Schoen, J. Andrés López, Justin Leon, Andrew Magel, and Sean Larson*

Environmental DNA (eDNA) is DNA shed by organisms into their environment. It can be collected through an array of methods, such as water filtration, and examined using molecular biology techniques. Growing interest in eDNA science spurred the development of our eDNA-focused research teams led by the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), and Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission [KRITFC]). The team at UAF, composed of undergraduates, graduate students, postdocs, and faculty members, began

working in 2021 to test eDNA-based methods for estimating spawning salmon abundance. This relatively new approach to salmon enumeration spurred broader conversations about the challenges and potential of eDNA science that have evolved into monthly online meetings of researchers interested in eDNA applications for Alaska. At these meetings, we fine-tune and troubleshoot field sampling and laboratory methods as well as eDNA workshop development. Our eDNA research aims to make eDNA science more accessible in remote locations of Alaska. Uniquely, eDNA science opens up the potential for species detection in remote locations where data is currently unavailable for local communities.

*Continued on page 4*

## The President's Corner



AFS Alaska Chapter President Erik Schoen

Today, I have some sad news to report, and a request for your help with strengthening the AFS Alaska Chapter moving forward. First, former Chapter President Donnie Arthur has resigned from the Executive Committee (ExCom). I want to extend my deepest appreciation for Donnie's hard work and contributions to the Alaska Chapter over many years, including the three years he served on the ExCom, as Student Rep, Vice President, and President-Elect. We especially thank Donnie for his leadership in chairing the Chapter's 50th Annual Meeting in Seward this year. We will miss you, Donnie, and we wish you all the best in your next endeavors.

The Alaska Chapter's bylaws have clear instructions on how we are to fill a vacancy on the ExCom: *"In case of a vacated President position, the Past-President shall fill the role of President until the next regular election. In the following year, the Executive Committee shall solicit former Past-Presidents to take the role of Past-President. If there is no interest, the Past-President position*

*shall remain unfilled for one year and the Executive Committee shall decide on the distribution of duties."* Following these rules, the ExCom voted to make me the President until the next Annual Meeting at Ketchikan in March 2025. So, you are stuck with me for another five months.

Next, we need your help to strengthen our Chapter going forward. We had already begun planning a substantial re-evaluation of our Chapter Bylaws and Procedures Manual this year. Notably, the Chapter has traditionally placed most of the responsibility of annual meeting planning on the President-Elect, and we are considering changes to spread the load more broadly to reduce burnout and provide more continuity from year to year. We plan to bring a set of proposed revisions to the Chapter Bylaws for a vote by the Chapter membership at the Ketchikan meeting. In parallel, we will consider changes to the Procedures Manual, which provides more detailed guidance to the Chapter leadership and can be changed by a simple vote of the ExCom. If you would like to provide input on this process, please look through the Bylaws and Procedures Manual and send any suggested changes to me or any Chapter officer. You can find both documents on the Chapter website: [afs-alaska.org](https://afs-alaska.org). For full consideration, please send your suggestions by November 6 so we can review them before our annual ExCom retreat, scheduled for November 9. With your input, we look forward to setting up the Alaska Chapter for an even brighter future.

All the best,  
Erik Schoen

## Meacham Family AFS Student Travel Fund

The [Meacham Family AFS Student Travel Fund](#) is an endowment of the AFS Alaska Chapter established to prioritize the growth and professional development of student Chapter members by supporting student travel and networking opportunities. This fund allows donors to contribute to student development with confidence that their donations will do exactly what they intended.

The fund was established in 2023 with a pledge of \$30,000 by Charles H. Meacham and Charles P. Meacham, retired fisheries scientists who dedicated most of their decorated careers to Alaska fisheries. With your help, their gift will grow into a reliable source of funding to support students and strengthen the future of our profession.

Building on this founding donation, the Chapter is seeking an initial goal of \$85,000 in base principle, which will be held in perpetuity. After reaching this initial goal, student travel endowment awards will be disbursed annually, using up to 2% of the market value of the fund. After the fund principal reaches an ultimate goal of \$125,000, the amount available for awards will rise to 4%, providing a stable and permanent source of support for student travel. The fund's guiding principles state that awards will be made to graduate and undergraduate students intending a career in a fisheries-related field, with priority given to students attending Alaska campuses or conducting Alaska-specific research. ?

## Summer Graduating Class

**Congratulations to the many graduate students and undergraduates who completed their degrees this summer!**

**Kevin McNeel** (M.S. Fisheries, Advisor: Gordon Kruse) – Improving Species Identification, Age, and Life History Information for Shortraker Rockfish (*Sebastes borealis*) in Prince William Sound, Alaska, using Sagittal Otolith Analyses.

**Aaron Lambert** (M.S. Fisheries, Advisor: Curry Cunningham) – Development of a Bayesian Framework for Canadian-Origin Yukon River Chinook Salmon Inseason Abundance Projection.

**Jasmine Nyce** (M.S. Fisheries, Advisor: Andrew Seitz) – Unlocking over a Decade of Insights: Large Bull Shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*) Movement Behaviors in the Western North Atlantic Ocean.

**Marina Alcantar** (Ph.D. Marine Biology, Advisor: Amanda Kelley) – Ocean Change Impacts on Three Marine Species Vital to Alaska’s Recreational, Subsistence, and Commercial Fisheries.

**James Crimp** (M.S. Marine Biology, Advisor: Schery Umanzor) – Effect of Macroalgae on Growth Rate and Nutrition of the Pinto Abalone, *Haliotis Kamtschatkana*.

**Mackenzie Hughes** (M.S. Marine Biology, Advisor: Brenda Konar) – Direct and Cascading Effects of Sea Star Wasting on Rocky Intertidal Communities.

**Emily Reynolds** (M.S. Marine Biology, Advisor: Brenda Konar) – Sea Otter Interactions with Mariculture Oyster Farms.

**Dana Bloch** (M.S. Marine Biology, Advisor: Tyler Hennon) – A Systematic Characterization of Southeast Alaska’s Oceanography.

**Addie Norgaard** (M.S. Marine Biology, Advisors: Seth Danielson and Claudine Hauri) – Seasonal Marine Inorganic Carbon Dynamics on the Northern Gulf of Alaska Continental Shelf.

**Stephanie O’Daly** (Ph.D. Marine Biology, Advisor: Gwenn Hennon) – Transformations and Deep Intrusions of Particles and Plankton in the Global Oceans: Which Particles Sink Deeper and Why.

**Derek Petty** (Master of Marine Policy, Advisor: Keith Criddle)

**Ivy Schultz** (Master of Marine Policy, Advisor: Keith Criddle)

**Skye Marie Williamsz** (Master of Marine Policy, Advisor: Keith Criddle)

**Hannah Miller** (B.S. Fisheries and Marine Sciences)

**Lillian Nelson** (B.S. Fisheries and Marine Sciences)

## Fisheries Conformity Assessor Program

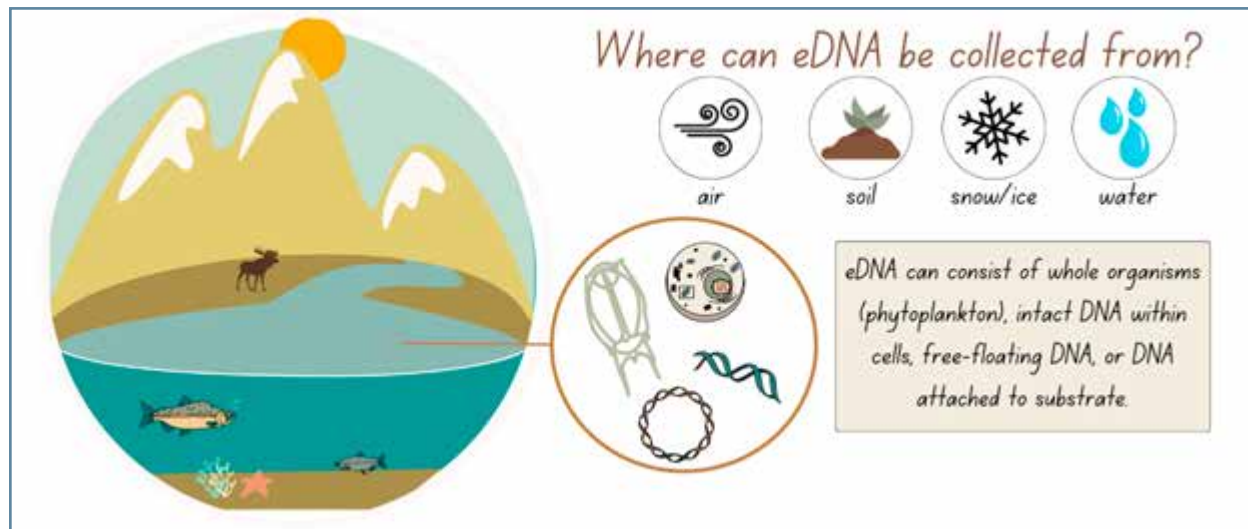
The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a global nonprofit organization with ambitions to end overfishing across the world’s oceans. The MSC operates a third-party certification and verification system for sustainable fishing known as the MSC Fisheries Standard. All certified fisheries must be assessed according to the MSC Fisheries Standard, that is based on the UN FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing. The third-party certification and verification system, means that the MSC does not certify fisheries and does not influence the outcome of the certification process. Certifications are undertaken by experts from independent Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), which are accredited by Assurance Services International. In order to expand the current pool of assessors to meet ever increasing demand, the MSC has formulated the

Fisheries Conformity Assessor Program.

The Fisheries Conformity Assessor Fundamentals course is open to M.S. and Ph.D. students, and candidates who hold a university degree in fisheries, marine conservation biology, natural resources, environmental management, or other relevant fields such as economics, mathematics, or statistics. This course provides opportunities for early-career postgraduate level professionals by offering the practical knowledge and skills to take the first steps into the assessor space. The course is of modular design and is comprised of two in-person practical workshops (including a scoring activity with an assessor), nine MSC Training Platform online learning modules, followed by a final test component. For further information, email [fisheries@msc.org](mailto:fisheries@msc.org).



## Aquatic Biomonitoring Revolution, continued



Potential sources and organisms that can be detected using environmental DNA. Graphic by Maris Goodwin, UAF.

In recent years, subsistence Chinook and Chum salmon harvests have been restricted or shut down entirely in many areas of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim due to drastic stock declines. Simultaneously, changes in Alaska climate are resulting in frequent highwater events, creating challenging conditions for monitoring spawning salmon migrations. During some years, salmon counting sites cannot operate at all because water levels are too high for biologists to install counting infrastructure.

At UAF, Andrés López, Erik Schoen, and Maggie Harings have partnered with ADF&G, USFWS, and TCC to test an eDNA-based technique that might be used to complement established methods for counting Chinook and Chum salmon. This work is being conducted at five long-term salmon escapement sites in the Yukon River Basin that play host to either weirs (East Fork Andreafsky, Gisasa, and Henshaw rivers) or counting tower and sonar (Salcha and Chena rivers). In parallel, Brandi Kamermans (UAF), Justin Leon (KRITFC), Andrew Magel (KRITFC), Bobette Dickerson (ADF&G), and Sean Larson (ADF&G) are conducting similar research at three weirs (George, Takotna, and Kwethluk rivers) along the Kuskokwim River. If found effective, eDNA-based assessments may provide a more efficient and cost-effective technique for monitoring remote aquatic environments in Alaska.

Guided by Jessica Glass and Andrés López, our UAF research team began hosting monthly

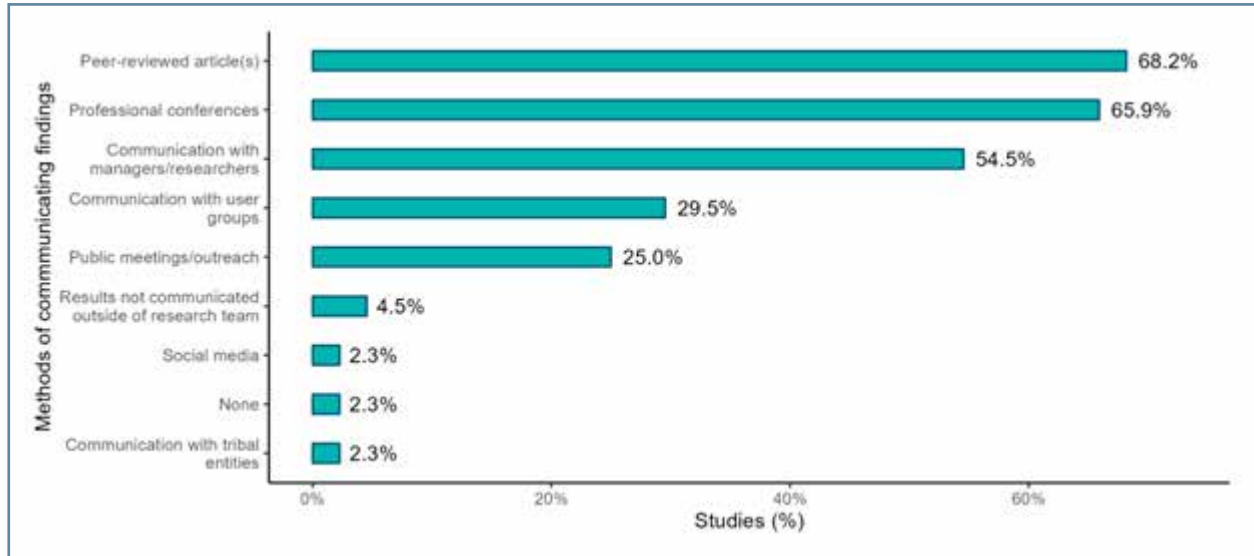
eDNA Alaska/Washington (AK/WA) working group meetings in 2022. The meetings are used to discuss current research, fieldwork and laboratory troubleshooting, data interpretation and reporting, and barriers to entering eDNA science. Participants also discuss knowledge gaps in eDNA science that are common among new and experienced eDNA practitioners alike.

After several productive AK/WA eDNA working group meetings, Brandi Kamermans, Rachel Lekanoff, and Maggie Harings discussed diving deeper into ways in which eDNA science might be made more accessible. To accomplish this, however, they noted that a literature review of all eDNA research in Alaska would be necessary. Through this exercise, they found that relatively few eDNA projects had publicly available publications accompanying them, making it challenging to ascertain where eDNA research was occurring throughout the state. To close this information gap, they developed an Alaska-specific survey to assess the status of eDNA research in Alaska.

Survey results indicated that researchers in Alaska are very effective at communicating results from eDNA research with one another, and that findings are most commonly shared through peer-reviewed articles and at professional conferences. However, eDNA results are rarely communicated outside of the research team or to tribal entities. Improving transparency about eDNA results and how results can be soundly

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**Aquatic Biomonitoring Revolution, continued**



Nine methods that survey participants reported using for communicating their eDNA findings in Alaska. Percentages do not equal 100% because some survey participants chose more than one type of communication method. *Graphic by Graphic from Harings et al. (2024).*

interpreted could lead to: (a) fewer knowledge gaps about eDNA; (b) increased confidence in eDNA science; (c) collaborative advancements in eDNA methodology; and (d) an advanced understanding of eDNA ecology. These issues have hindered the uptake of eDNA in environmental monitoring programs and, in some cases, have created misperceptions or doubts in the natural resource management community ([Stein et al. 2024](#)). To work toward equitable comprehension of eDNA science, our UAF research team hosted two field-based workshops in the Kuskokwim River region.

Tribal entities in Alaska are interested in the use of genetics for natural resource management. However, few communities have laboratory capacity and personnel trained in this technical and rapidly evolving field, and most genetic samples collected in rural Alaska are currently sent to out-of-state contract labs for analysis. In 2024, Brandi Kamermans and Kristen Reece received funding from UAF’s Center ICE Entrepreneurship Fellowship to develop teachable, field-based, eDNA workshops for communities in Alaska under a program called Sovereign Autonomy for Long-term Monitoring of Non-human genes (SALMONg). The SALMONg program is devoted to building and providing educational materials to communities interested in eDNA science, with the

vision of SALMONg being to build local capacity to support cost-effective monitoring of important species.

The first SALMONg eDNA workshop was hosted during the 2024 Science and Culture Camp in Bethel, Alaska, a week-long camp hosted by UAF and the Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) intended to introduce local tribal youth to cultural practices, tribal governance, and fisheries and wildlife sciences. Following the ONC camp, Brandi, Kristen, and Erik Schoen traveled to the George River Internship (GRI) to work with high school students on-site along the Kuskokwim River. Brandi Kamermans, Kristen Reece, and Maris Goodwin planned the field-based eDNA curriculum with GRI directors, Dan Gillikin and Erich Kuball. As part of both the ONC and GRI curriculum, we provided notebooks that eDNA scientist and illustrator Maris Goodwin designed. The graphics incorporate Alaska-based imagery for students to engage with the SALMONg curriculum, which helps workshop participants think about the use of DNA, eDNA, and PCR for salmon detection.

Key players in the development of eDNA protocols for SALMONg workshops are Kristen Reece and her daughters, Avery and Lily Reece, who are also involved in the development of field-

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## Aquatic Biomonitoring Revolution, continued



Images include (left) 2024 UAF-ONC Science and Culture Camp participants using handheld equipment; (middle) Kristen Reece displaying the use of a pipette; (right) GRI participants collecting an eDNA sample. Photos from Brandi Cron.

based eDNA methods. Lily is currently working with the AFS Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program to design her own eDNA project in Fairbanks, Alaska, while gaining field experience under the mentorship of M.S. student Dakota Keller. In addition, Kristen Reece’s involvement with SALMONg was included in her recognition as the 2024 Lorraine Loomis Scholarship recipient from the Pacific Salmon Commission.

Under SALMONg, Kamermans and Reece also led sessions at the Climate Change and My Community Workshop – Water and Fish, hosted by Arctic Earth SIGNs. Working with community members and educators from different parts of Alaska, Brandi and Kristen used field-based genetic tools with a focus on supporting the participants in pipetting skills and learning how eDNA is connected to each community. Given the importance of time and space for questions and discussions during the workshop, there were valuable conversations with educators about their interpretation of the curriculum and how eDNA can be explained in various ways; one attendee expressed that Reece “teaches like an ancestor.” The sentiment brings to light the reason Kristen Reece and Brandi Kamermans started SALMONg as a

process for participants to be, and feel, empowered by the curriculum, able to see themselves as citizen scientists while conducting eDNA experiments.

As researchers in Alaska, we are working to test the use of eDNA techniques to detect and quantify salmon in the Yukon and Kuskokwim watersheds. We have learned that, collectively, we want to communicate eDNA science to communities in Alaska. Therefore, we sought engagement with communities in the Kuskokwim River watershed with our participation in two outreach events that took place in July 2024, the UAF-ONC Culture and Science Camp and GRI field-based eDNA camp. We also taught high school teachers from across Alaska about eDNA during a workshop hosted by the Arctic Earth SIGNs. At our three teaching events, we learned from high school teachers, community members, and students about the needs and concerns of communities throughout Alaska. Our long-term vision is to build confidence in researchers and citizen scientists in remote regions of Alaska so that they can soundly apply eDNA science in their own research. Please visit [salmongeneducation.com](http://salmongeneducation.com) for more information about SALMONg workshops and our eDNA education and outreach events. 🗨️

### Fish of the Week!

Join us every Monday for our Fish of the Week podcast! We get to know all the fish — how they live in Alaska, what habitats they use, what they eat, and where they go and why. Everything you need to know to appreciate and conserve these fish and be a successful angler.

[We've got lots of fish stories.](#)





## Dr. Courtney Carothers awarded the AFS Emmeline Moore Prize

Professor Courtney Carothers of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Fisheries Department received the prestigious Emmeline Moore Prize at the 2024 American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting in Honolulu. The Emmeline Moore Prize recognizes efforts by an individual Society member who has demonstrated exemplary service to the cause of equal opportunity for higher education access in fisheries and/or professional development in any fisheries science or management discipline. The award is named for Emmeline Moore, the first female AFS President who served from 1927 to 1928.

Dr. Carothers has worked tirelessly to elevate the role of Alaska Native People and their Indigenous Knowledge into fisheries policy. Trained as an environmental anthropologist, Courtney admits to not knowing the depth of exclusion and marginalization of Alaska Native People until living in Old Harbor, Kodiak Island, as a Ph.D. student from the University of Washington. Dr. Carothers internalized the lessons learned in Kodiak over a decade ago and has dedicated her career to unraveling fisheries inequities in Alaska and beyond.

Courtney currently serves as Principal Investigator of an NSF/NRT graduate program award called Tamamta (a Yup'ik and Sugpiaq word meaning 'all of us'), centered on elevating 14,000+ years of Indigenous stewardship and bridging Indigenous and Western sciences to transform graduate education and research in fisheries and marine sciences. Dr. Carothers also organizes and



*Dr. Courtney Carothers receives the Emmeline Moore Prize from AFS President Cecil Jennings. Photo from AFS.*

moderates events that elevate underrepresented voices and facilitate dialogues to help acknowledge and find solutions to create more equitable management systems. One example, Courtney led a Racial Equity in Fisheries dialogue session at the recent AFS Alaska Chapter Meeting. Additionally, as the volunteer chair of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee in the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences at University of Alaska Fairbanks, Dr. Carothers demonstrates her genuineness to not only “talk the talk but walk the walk,” working in the interest of Alaska Native People and Alaska’s fishery resources to transform a frustration of the on-going oppression to a passion for action. 🐟

## AYK-SSI Chum Salmon Action Plan and RFP Released

The Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative (AYK SSI) has released a new research and monitoring blueprint focused on declined Western Alaska chum salmon populations entitled: “Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Chum Salmon Research and Monitoring Action Plan: Evidence of Decline of Chum Salmon Populations and Recommendations for Future Research and Monitoring.”

The full report is available at <http://www.aykssi.org>. Developed by AYK SSI’s Scientific Technical Committee, the centerpiece of the Action Plan is a set of six strategic research and monitoring

priorities aimed at advancing our understanding of the causes for the decline and, in turn, to promote rebuilding and sustainable management of AYK chum salmon stocks.

Along with the Action Plan is the AYK-SSI 2025 Invitation to Submit Research Proposals. Up to \$2M is available for funding of research projects to address declined Chinook and chum salmon populations. The invitation is available at <https://www.aykssi.org/rfp/>. Projects will be selected for funding in spring 2025, with contracting completed by May 1, 2025, in time for the field season. Proposals are due by December 17, 2024. 🐟

## AFS Alaska Chapter receives the 2024 Outstanding Large Chapter Awards

*Erik Schoen, AFS Alaska Chapter President*

I'm excited to share that the AFS Alaska Chapter received the 2024 Outstanding Large Chapter Awards from both the Western Division of AFS and the AFS parent society. These awards recognize outstanding professionalism, active resource protection and enhancement programs, and a strong commitment to the mission of the Society. The Alaska Chapter previously received the AFS Outstanding Large Chapter Award in 1993 and 1999, and most recently received the Western Division Outstanding Large Chapter Award in 2004. This year's award was based on our activities during 2023.

Our nomination highlighted the contributions of our phenomenal students, Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee, professional development activities, Indigenous inclusion efforts led by UAF's Tamamta team and many others, and the generous donors who have recently established new funds to benefit students with support from the Financial Assets Oversight Committee. We also included some recent *Oncorhynchus* newsletters in our package highlighting many of your contributions and activities. Big thanks and congratulations to everyone who has served in a leadership role, volunteered, attended a meeting, or otherwise contributed to the Chapter over the last several years. Both awards were presented at the



*Members of the AFS Alaska Chapter accept the AFS Outstanding Large Chapter Award from AFS President Cecil Jennings (center back) at the AFS Annual Meeting in Honolulu on September 18. Back row (L-R): Whitney Crittenden, Maris Goodwin, Harmony Wayner, Will Samuel. Front row (L-R): Erik Schoen, Kristen Reece, Sonia Ibarra, Lauren Yancy.*

AFS Annual Meeting in Honolulu in September. Thanks to everyone who attended the WDAFS and AFS business meetings and came up front to help represent the Alaska Chapter in accepting these awards. It is a privilege to be a part of this team. 🙏



*Members of the AFS Alaska Chapter receiving the AFS Western Division award as Outstanding Large Chapter from WDAFS President Eric Fetherman; the group included a large number of high school students from Ketchikan who attended with Keenan Sanderson. Photo by Dan Brauch.*



## Student Subunit Happenings

*Amber Perk, Student Subunit Representative*

The Student Subunit made an appearance at the annual Arctic Research Open House hosted by the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Kids and adults stopped by to try their hand at “fishing,” the indoor variety of the sport! After “reeling up” some big whoppers, visitors got to learn about local Alaskan fishes and earn some prizes for correct identification. Visitors also got to check out some cool specimens borrowed from the UAF Ichthyology class, including a Deep-Sea Hatchetfish and a very cute lumpsucker.

### New Student Subunit Officers

Thank you to last year’s officers and all the hard work they put into bringing students together! We have newly elected Student Subunit Officers for the new academic year. With a few new faces and a few returning, let’s introduce the group!

**Linnaea Doerner** (President; Fairbanks) is a fourth-year undergraduate student. Her most recent research project is investigating the presence of microplastics in different tissue types (blubber, muscle, and liver) of subsistence harvested bearded seals and determining if the microplastic concentration (#MP/g tissue) differs between seals harvested in the early 2000s and seals harvested in recent years. She plans to go to law school after undergrad to get her law degree and master in marine affairs to work in the fisheries law realm.

**Sam Comeau** (Vice President; Juneau) is a second-year M.S. student. His research focuses on building species distribution models for snow crab in the Bering Sea, primarily to understand how climate change threatens the species. His favorite fish is the Atlantic Salmon and his favorite activity outside of school is definitely fishing!

**Erica Ebert** (Secretary; Fairbanks) is a second year M.S. student researching the Fourhorn Sculpin from the nearshore Beaufort Sea, specifically, using stable isotope analysis to determine diet composition and spatial use. She is excited to continue to be a part of the student subunit and connect with fellow fish enthusiasts to create an environment that helps us grow both professionally and personally. When she’s not talking about fish, she’s frolicking around with her doggo eating ice cream.

**Lauren Yancy** (Treasurer, Fairbanks) is a first



*AFS Alaska Chapter Student Representative Amber Perk and her dog, Denali. Photo from Amber Perk.*

year M.S. student studying the effects of heavy metal seeps on Dolly Varden and the stream benthos in the Wulik River drainage in northwest Alaska. Lauren earned her B.S. in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences from Texas A&M University and participated in undergraduate research and the local AFS subunit during her time as an undergraduate. She has been involved with the Student and Early Career Professionals Subsection of the AFS Education Section for three years, currently serving as webmaster and communications chair. Lauren has a strong appreciation for the “underdogs” in fisheries (e.g., non-game species) and hopes to dive further into stream ecology during her time as a graduate student. Lauren enjoys all that Alaska has to offer for outdoor recreation in wild and scenic places.

**Elena Eberhardt** (Juneau Liaison; Juneau) is a second year M.S. student studying climate change impacts on juvenile Sockeye Salmon and Threespine Stickleback with the Cunningham Lab. Elena earned her B.S. in Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Science from Oregon State University before returning to her home state of Alaska to continue her career journey. In her free time, Elena enjoys skiing, hiking, knitting, and hanging out with her cat Sabre.

**Mary Commins** (DEIC Liaison; Juneau) is an M.S. student studying the effects of hatchery supplementation on Sockeye Salmon in Auke Lake. She began working with the AFS Alaska Chapter DEIC last year and looks forward to connecting more students with the committee as the student liaison. Before going back to school, she worked as a fisheries technician for the National Park Service in both Olympic and Lake Clark national parks. In her free time, Mary enjoys hiking, playing stringed instruments, fly fishing, and cooking. Her favorite fish is the Beardslee Trout!

Contact information for Student Subunit Officers can be found on the AFS Alaska Chapter website.

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## Student Subunit Happenings, continued

### Plans for the New Year

Another academic year is just starting. The Student Subunit is gearing up to host some exciting activities! Before we know it, our calendars will be overloaded again, so here's a quick glimpse of what's in store for this coming school year.

Both the Fairbanks and Juneau campuses will be organizing a hatchery field trip near the beginning of the school year for students to reunite after summer vacation and jump right into the world of Alaskan fisheries. The Ruth Burnett Sport Fish Hatchery, located in Fairbanks, is operated by ADF&G and meets the stocking needs for the Fairbanks region with Arctic Char, Rainbow Trout, Chinook Salmon, and Coho Salmon. The Macaulay Salmon Hatchery, located in Juneau, is operated by Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc. and is permitted for Chum, Coho, and Chinook salmon, as well as Rainbow Trout. Join the Student Subunit to see fish production in action!

Following this initial field trip, the Subunit will be organizing monthly meetings with guest speakers geared toward professional development and continuing education. Topics can include policy, data management, thesis development, and more. We are also open to ideas from Subunit members. If you have suggestions, reach out to your Subunit officers!

The next AFS Alaska Chapter Annual Meeting will be held March 17–20, 2025, in Ketchikan. In preparation, student volunteer activities will likely begin by the end of the fall semester. If you plan to attend and/or present your research, keep an eye out for opportunities to have your travel expenses covered by the Alaska Chapter! Volunteer tasks range from collecting donations for the Silent Auction to helping coordinate meeting events like Trivia. Student volunteers make this conference possible! We're looking forward to another great year leading up to the Annual Meeting.

The AFS Student Symposium is typically held as an opportunity for students to practice their presentations before the AFS Annual Meeting in March or for other conferences with larger audiences. The hybrid format allows for in-person gatherings in both Fairbanks and Juneau, plus access for virtual guests to join in for the talks. This event has been a great success in years past, with students,

professors, agency professionals, and many others coming together to support student research. In 2024, Anna Medina (Fairbanks) and Cameron Jardell (Juneau) led the planning committee in organizing this event, teaching Linnaea Doerner (Fairbanks) and Sierra Greene (Juneau) the ropes. Now, it is time for Linnaea and Sierra to pass their expertise on to the next pair of volunteers. We are looking for one person from Fairbanks and one person from Juneau to join the Student Symposium Planning Committee. Preference is given to graduate students. Volunteers MUST be available for two years. Please email Linnaea ([ljdoerner@alaska.edu](mailto:ljdoerner@alaska.edu)) or Sierra ([sgreene11@alaska.edu](mailto:sgreene11@alaska.edu)) with any questions or to discuss the position further.

### Molly Ahlgren Scholarship

Are you an undergraduate student in your sophomore, junior, or senior year? Are you studying fisheries, aquatic or biological science in the University of Alaska System or at Alaska Pacific University? Are you already or interested in becoming a member of the American Fisheries Society? Would you like to visit Ketchikan, Alaska, to attend the 2025 Alaska Chapter Annual Meeting? The Molly Ahlgren Scholarship could be for you! Please read the following and consider applying.

The Molly Ahlgren Scholarship was established by the family of Dr. Molly Ahlgren and the Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society in 2004 to honor her life and dedication as an Associate Professor of environmental science at Sheldon Jackson College. To read more about her life and contributions to fisheries, see the Winter 2005 *Oncorhynchus* Newsletter.

There is \$6,000 available from the Molly Ahlgren Scholarship Fund to be awarded either as one, two, or three scholarships, which will be determined by the qualifications of the applicants. The maximum Scholarship amount would be \$6,000 with the minimum amount being \$2,000. The Scholarship will be provided for the 2025 Spring semester to undergraduate students in their sophomore, junior, or senior year of studies pursuing a baccalaureate degree involving the disciplines of fisheries, aquatic, or biological science. The Scholarship selection will be made in the Fall of 2024 and funds will be made

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## The Motor Would Not Start

*A writing by Lisa Stuby*

The project began as an idea on a minus 40-degree day in the Alaskan Interior.

In order to plan for and later accomplish my mission, I first needed to get permission and the all-important funding.

I worked up my plan, which to me was quite grand.

After a few tweaks and magical tricks and repetitions by the all-important biometricians, my plan was approved.

So, I started planning out the summer, which at times could feel like a real bummer.

I had to consider the budget plan, how many technicians to hire, sampling equipment, how many tents we would need, and which boat I would use after all this wasn't a cruise.

So after months of planning and expectation the BIG day came with much anticipation.

We arrived at our field site with much jubilation, geeze this is starting to feel like a paid vacation!

As we loaded the boat into the water and packed all of our gear, we sighed happily as THIS was the accumulation of all of our hard work for an entire YEAR.

But then our joy went to shock that cut straight to my heart, because the motor would not start.

Oh did we try and try, I tell no lie, and whenever we thought, "Oh this will do the trick," all we would hear was that sickening CLICK.

Our jubilation turned into complete frustration and our desire to hurry up and get upriver turned into worry as the motor would not deliver.

Our luck did turn after working on the motor for a few hours when we heard off in the distance, "Hey you guys can borrow ours!"

We wanted to get our motor going ourselves but soon let go all of our vanity, because the loner had a canopy!

So upriver we went to our sampling spot, glad for the canopy because the weather that day was quite the opposite of hot.

Sampling went well to our avail and we learned the lesson to NEVER forget that equipment can fail.

### Community Change Grants Program

The Environmental Protection Agency, through the Climate and Environmental Justice Community Change Grants program, has announced \$2 billion in Inflation Reduction Act funding to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice changes. Entities eligible for funding include: (1) a partnership between two community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs); (2) a partnership between a CBO and (a) a Federally-recognized Tribe, (b) a local government; or (c) an institution of higher education. Technical assistance will be available to assist eligible applicants apply for and use grant funding. The application deadline is November 21, 2024. <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program>

### Student Subunit Happenings, continued

available for the Spring 2025 semester. Applicants will be evaluated on their work and/or educational experiences and interest in the disciplines involving fisheries, aquatic, or biological science, interest in professional advancement, and reason(s) for financial need. The Scholarship recipient(s) will be introduced at the Alaska Chapter Annual Meeting to be held in Ketchikan during March 17–20, 2025. All travel and meeting registration expenses will be paid for by the Alaska Chapter. The Scholarship recipient(s) will be required to write a brief statement about their experience at the Alaska Chapter meeting that will be published in the Alaska Chapter's newsletter, *Oncorhynchus*, and will become a member of the American Fisheries Society.

For more information regarding the Scholarship and the application process, contact Ray Hander: (907) 456-0402 / [ray\\_hander@fws.gov](mailto:ray_hander@fws.gov).



## Environmental Concerns Corner

Sue Mauger and Joel Markis

A reservation of water is a water right that protects specific flow or lake level use, such as for the protection of fish and wildlife habitat, migration, and propagation. It sets aside the water necessary for these activities and prevents later water users from appropriating water that may affect the instream or lake activity. – Alaska’s Water Law, Alaska Statute: AS 46.15.145

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is asking the public for input before it undertakes the task of revising the reservation of water regulations. Specifically, the Department is interested in ideas that will provide an efficient, consistent, and cost-effective water reservation process to encourage the development of state water for its highest and best use consistent with the public interest. Learn more: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/water/regrevision/>

As fisheries professionals, your input can help the Department refine methods and ensure adequate flows are retained for fish and wildlife. The deadline for submitting comments has been extended to October 29, 2024.

Please consider joining our new environmental concerns listserv. Send an email to [ecc@afs-alaska.org](mailto:ecc@afs-alaska.org) with “Join ECC Listserv” in the subject line. We will get you signed up. This listserv will be a space for learning and discussion and hopefully improve our capacity for commenting as a Chapter on projects or permits where our fisheries expertise will be valuable. 🗨️

## Meetings and Events

### Alaska Marine Science Symposium



January 27–31, 2025. The 2025 Alaska Marine Science Symposium will be held in Anchorage, AK. More information is at <https://www.alaskamarinescience.org/>.

### American Fisheries Society Alaska Chapter Annual Meeting

March 17–20, 2025. The 51st annual meeting will be held in Ketchikan, AK. More information will be posted at <https://afs-alaska.org/>. 🗨️



### AFS Code of Conduct

The Ethics and Professional Conduct Committee (EPCC) of the American Fisheries Society has developed a code of conduct for our meetings and AFS-sponsored functions, whether virtual or in person. This brief document is available at <https://fisheries.org/about/governance/afs-meetings-code-of-conduct/>. Please read through this document to ensure that we are collectively working to build awareness of this policy to ensure that all AFS-related gatherings are a respectful and inclusive experience for everyone. If you have questions, reach out directly to the EPCC Chair Brian Missildine for support at [brian.missildine@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:brian.missildine@dfw.wa.gov).

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### ONCORHYNCHUS

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Deadline for materials for the next issue of *Oncorhynchus* is November 30.

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Feel free to contact the Executive Committee members.