

## HIGHLIGHTS

**AOOS 2014 Film Contest Showcase** – Each week, a new short film from AOOS' 2014 contest is being highlighted on the AOOS homepage. Check out this week's film called *Entanglement of Steller Sea Lions in Marine Debris: Identifying Causes and Finding Solutions*, which was produced by ADF&G and partners. The deadline for the 2015 AOOS Film Contest is Sept 15. [More on the Film Contest.](#)

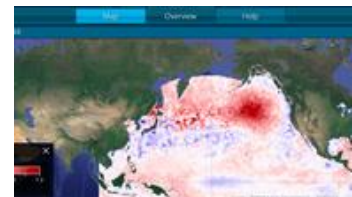


*Left to right: Samantha Helton and Brandon Elsner-Senator Wicker's Office, Captain Kip Louttit-Director of the Marine Exchange of Southern California, Dr. Michael Macrander-Director of Shell's Arctic Program, Molly McCammon-Director of AOOS, VADM Manson Brown-Asst. Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction and Deputy Administrator for NOAA.*

**WA DC briefing to Senate** –Molly McCammon joined other IOOS regions July 9 in participating in a briefing on the Integrated Coastal Ocean Observing System, sponsored by the Senate Ocean Caucus and Senator Wicker, lead sponsor of the ICOOS Act Reauthorization. Molly moderated the briefing, which was attended by more than 80 Congressional staffers and agency and NGO representatives and included Shell lead scientist Michael Macrander describing Shell's research investment in the Alaska Arctic. Molly also updated Alaska's congressional staff on the AOOS and IOOS programs, and briefed Beth Kerttula, director of the National Ocean Council.

**Yukon Delta Chinook Timing Outlook & Forecast** – The [outlook for 2015](#) was released on June 1 through a partnership between AOOS, NOAA Fisheries, and the Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game. This year's outlook was right on target with the first significant pulse of fish on the delta arriving on June 17 (two days later than forecasted) and the half-way point being reached June 26 (three days later than forecasted).

**The Blob Blog** – AOOS is developing a Blog on the Pacific sea surface temperature anomalies and their impacts on Alaska. These anomalies, observed since the fall of 2013, have been linked to unusually dry and warm weather patterns over the entire Pacific Northwest regions, including Alaska. Nick Bond, a Seattle-based meteorologist working on large-scale weather and climate patterns over the Pacific Ocean, aptly named the persistent feature observed as far north as the Gulf of Alaska "The Blob." The purpose of the blog is to provide information about this interesting oceanic phenomenon and the Blob's realized and potential effects on Alaska. A team of Blob experts is invited to post observations and findings, as they emerge, related to this on the blog. The goal is to provide an ongoing avenue for those working in the region to share their observations. The Blog will be officially launched by August 7 and linked from the AOOS homepage.



## **ADMINISTRATION**

**Proposal approved** – A proposal submitted by Agnew Beck Consulting to provide communication tools and training for Coastal Resilience and Adaptation in Alaska (in response to an RFP from the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s Landscape Conservation Cooperatives) was recently funded. AOOS and Axiom will have a small role in this proposal.

**Proposal submitted** – AOOS recently submitted a proposal to engage stakeholders and develop new planning tools in preparation for increased shipping and marine transportation in the Arctic and through the Bering Strait. The proposal was in response to a NOAA Coastal Resilience funding opportunity. AOOS also supported a proposal submitted by the Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources to improve flood forecasting and community planning capabilities for western and northern Alaska.

**AOOS Year 5 Proposal** – The descoped proposal for the FY 15 AOOS budget was finally approved by the NOAA grants office following their request for some additional information. Next step is amending all the subawards for this year’s work.

**2016-2021 AOOS proposal** – The proposal for our next 5-year NOAA grant is due August 31 and is in progress.

**AOOS/ERMA quarterly meeting** – On July 27, AOOS met with staff from NOAA’s Arctic ERMA (Environmental Response Management Application) to discuss recently ingested data and upcoming plans. AOOS and ERMA meet regularly to foster collaboration and avoid duplicating effort while developing interactive data tools.

## **MEETINGS/CONFERENCES/TRAVEL**

**Ice Diminished Arctic Conference** – AOOS Operations Director, Carol Janzen, represented AOOS at the 6<sup>th</sup> Symposium on the Impacts of an Ice-diminishing Arctic on Naval and Maritime Operations ([link](#)) July 14-16 in Washington DC. This meeting brought critical groups working on U.S. Arctic activities, including military, homeland security, and environmental and industry representatives, and science. Several AOOS Board members also attended. Carol presented a [poster](#) and delivered information on the AOOS Arctic Portal.

**A-OK Hub** – Through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, UAF has received \$2million from fines coming from a Beaufort Sea pollution event in 2012. The money is being devoted to developing a project called A-OK: Alaska Arctic Observatory and Knowledge Hub, to support community observations and information sharing in a changing cryosphere (sea ice, lake and river ice, snow cover, and permafrost). The first planning meeting, convened by Hajo Eicken and attended by Molly and AOOS intern Sijo Smith, was held July 23 and attended by other researchers doing community based monitoring and by representatives of the North Slope Borough Wildlife Department and Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission.

**Fairbanks meetings** – Molly and Sijo met with several AOOS partners in Fairbanks on July 24: Rick Thoman (National Weather Service climate services), Sarah Trainor and Tina Buxbaum (ACCAP), Hajo Eicken and Uma Bhatt (CIFAR), and the SFOS Institute of Marine Science research team.

**Beluga Ecosystems Portal** – On July 21, Darcy, Rob Bochenek and Stacey Buckalew from the AOOS data team hosted an advisory group meeting for a new Cook Inlet Beluga Ecosystem Portal. The project is being funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation with goal of integrating and visualizing Cook Inlet beluga sighting data with other biological, physical and socio-economic data in the region. The portal will be completed by the end of the year.

**Kachemak Bay Habitat Blueprint** – Molly and Darcy joined the first meeting of the NOAA Kachemak Bay Habitat Blueprint implementation team on July 27. Kachemak Bay was one of three locations in the U.S. chosen to receive NOAA funding for restoration projects, long-term monitoring and research activities, habitat mapping, salmon habitat studies, and training and education programs in the area. [Learn more.](#)

### **GOING FORWARD – Some Key Upcoming 2015 Activities**

Aug 4-5	IOOS Assoc EXCOM, Chicago (Molly)
Aug 6	MARES PI mtg, Boston (Molly)
Aug 13	AOOS Staff retreat (all)
Aug 14	Arctic Council Host Committee first mtg, Anchorage (Molly)
Aug 21	OTN, Kate Moran, Victoria (Molly & Carol)
Aug 23-25	Arctic Forum, Fairbanks (Molly)
Aug 24	OA Kiosk ribbon cutting, Homer (Sijo)
Aug 30	Media briefing for reporters covering GLACIER, Anchorage
Aug 31	GLACIER, Anchorage (Molly)
Sept 10	ACCER, Anchorage (Molly)
Sept 11	CIRCAC, Seldovia (Molly)
Sept 14-17	IOOS Assoc fall meeting, St. Petersburg FL (Molly & Carol)
Sept 23	AK Marine Policy Forum
Sept 30-Oct1	USGS data meeting, Anchorage
Oct 5-6	NWAB Science Advisory Board, Kotzebue (Molly)
Oct 19-22	MTS, WA DC (Carol)
Nov 5-8	Sitka Whalefest
Nov 8-12	Coastal Estuarine Conference, Portland OR
Nov 17-19	Arctic Open Science meeting, Seattle
Nov TBD	Gulf Watch AK PI meeting
Nov TBD	Pacific Anomalies Workshop II (The Blob), Seattle

This has been a busy summer. Holly is now back from a month's travels to Costa Rica and Puerto Rico. Darcy goes on family leave in mid-September. Sijo returns to Stanford in late September. Molly and Carol are in full swing preparing for lots of meetings and conferences in the fall and winter. We hope you have all enjoyed this fabulous summer and are looking forward to what the Blob and El Nino bring us this winter!

**Molly McCammon, Darcy Dugan, Holly Kent, Carol Janzen, Sijo Smith and Rob Bochenek**



**Special Note: the 2015 Film Contest is Underway** – For the second year, AOOS is welcoming films under 10 minutes relating to Alaska's oceans or coasts. Submission deadline is Sept 15, and the grand prize is \$1,000. [Learn more.](#)