

MAP Connects Alaska's People and Communities with Research



MAP aquaculture specialist Ray Ralonde teaches Sand Point residents how to sample for paralytic shellfish poison.



Leigh Takuk from Elim measures stream width and flow in a water quality sampling program. She was trained by Nome MAP agent Heidi Herter.



Ketchikan MAP agent Gary Freitag does a necropsy on a beached seal for Ketchikan High School marine biology students. The seal was most likely the victim of a boat strike.

Issue

Research in Alaska's coastal areas is carried out by scientists from all over the world. However, local community residents often don't know what is being studied or found in their backyards. As change happens in our environment, coastal residents want to understand and participate in the science that impacts their lives.

Response

MAP agents provide a link between researchers and community members and help community members conduct their own science through coastal monitoring programs.

MAP's Forum of Alaska Marine Issues (FOAMI), held at the Museum of the Aleutians in Unalaska, over the last five years has featured 65 scientists who gave public presentations on their Aleutian or Bering Sea research. Audiences at the talks totaled 2,500 attendees.

As part of International Polar Year science outreach, MAP sponsored a speaker series in Nome and electronically delivered it to outlying villages. The total audience was 1,377 attendees.

In Prince William Sound, MAP worked with the Alaska Ocean Observing System during the two-week Sound Predictions 2009 field experiment, which included a "meet the scientists" event in Valdez and a gathering in Cordova where children demonstrated remotely operated vehicles that they designed and built.

MAP works with national, state, and local coastal monitoring programs to sample for invasive species, domoic acid, water temperature related to shellfish diseases including paralytic shellfish poison, and stranded marine mammals and seabirds.

Outcomes/Impacts

- * To date, no European green crabs have been sighted in Alaska waters.
- * A new domoic acid sampling kit is being tested and may be available soon.
- * Researchers have the opportunity to exchange traditional knowledge and research findings with 4,000 local residents on issues ranging from storm frequency (Savoonga) to ocean acidification (Cordova) to reducing rat populations (Unalaska).

Partners

Prince William Sound Science Center, Museum of the Aleutians, NOAA Office of Protected Resources, Smithsonian Research Institute, UAF School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, UAF Geophysical Institute, Alaska Ocean Observing System, International Polar Year.