



Alaska Sea Grant Regional Highlights
Research, Education, and Extension for Coastal Alaska
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The Alaska Sea Grant College Program conducts research, education, and extension activities statewide that help Alaskans understand, conserve, and sustainably use Alaska's diverse marine and coastal resources.

Sea Grant's marine extension service, the Marine Advisory Program (MAP) has university faculty located in 10 coastal communities to provide information, technical assistance, and workforce development opportunities in the areas of seafood harvesting, processing, and marketing; shellfish aquaculture; tourism development; business management; marine safety; marine mammal and fisheries research; and public policy participation.

Recent activities of Alaska Sea Grant and the Marine Advisory Program

Enhancing Coastal Economic Opportunities

In Bethel, MAP initiated a catcher-seller program that allows salmon fishermen without a processor license to harvest and market their catch. As a result, the fishermen fished longer and received more money for their catch.

On Prince of Wales Island, MAP is helping Alaska's shellfish farming industry diversify its products through technical training and assistance to the Naukati Shellfish Nursery.

In Chenega, MAP provided residents with technical assistance aimed at increasing local fishing skills and helping them qualify for halibut quotas through the community quota program.

In Kachemak Bay, Alaska Sea Grant has funded research by the Molluscan Broodstock Program to develop seed for larger oysters for the Alaska shellfish industry.

Training Alaska's Workforce

In Southeast Alaska, MAP agents prepare future fisheries biologists in classes taught as part of the University of Alaska Southeast fisheries technology certificate and associate degree programs.

In Cordova, Homer, Valdez, Anchorage, King Cove, Dillingham, and King Salmon, MAP taught business management workshops and hosted sessions on financial management for fishing operations.

In Homer, MAP is providing technical assistance to the Kachemak Shellfish Growers Cooperative as they plan a new oyster holding facility.

From across the state, aspiring leaders in the seafood processing industry have attended MAP's biennial Alaska Seafood Processing Leadership Institute (ASPLI) for a series of professional development workshops.

MAP-sponsored Alaska Young Fishermen's Summits brought 140 new fishermen and 50 established fishermen, from 35 communities, together with experts in financing, marketing, safety, and policy for lectures, panels, and networking.

Building Community Capacity

Through sponsorship of a statewide Community Quota Entity (CQE) summit, Alaska Sea Grant is helping coastal communities gain access to Alaska groundfish quota shares.

In Petersburg, MAP provided technical assistance as the community planned and built a community-owned cold storage and freezing facility.

Marine Advisory faculty at rural University of Alaska campuses recruit students and sponsor internships to increase the number of rural Alaskans and Alaska Natives pursuing careers in fisheries and marine science.

Conducting Community-Based Research

Scientific studies funded by Alaska Sea Grant and NOAA, based in Seward and Kodiak, are improving our understanding of how to raise large numbers of wild king crab, with the goal of rebuilding crab stocks around Kodiak and the Pribilof Islands to benefit commercial and subsistence fisheries.

In Kodiak, MAP runs the Gulf of Alaska Apex Predator-Prey study, which characterizes the marine ecosystem around Kodiak Island, contributing to management decisions that impact commercial fishermen who may interact with marine mammals.

On Prince of Wales Island, Alaska Sea Grant leads the littleneck clam aquaculture feasibility project, which plans a demonstration project for 2009. MAP agents also are conducting research on the potential for geoduck clam aquaculture on intertidal beaches.

In the Pribilof Islands, an Alaska Sea Grant study of killer whale predation and visitation patterns, near St. Paul Island fur seal rookeries, confirmed that passive acoustics are an effective tool to monitor killer whales.

In the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska, Alaska Sea Grant researchers developed a new fisheries stock assessment model that helps explain why pollock stocks declined. The model suggests that arrowtooth flounder consume more young pollock than previously thought.

Inspiring Science Education

In Unalaska, MAP coached the local high school team that competed in the annual Alaska Region National Ocean Sciences Bowl competition, and taught invertebrate anatomy, organized a local environmental education and monitoring program, and participated in the Alaska Statewide High School Science Symposium.

In Cordova, Unalaska, and Nome, MAP cosponsored community science lectures to connect researchers with local audiences. More than 1,000 adults and high school students attend these lecture series each year.

Alaska Sea Grant created the new Web-based Alaska Seas and Rivers curriculum. This unique Alaska-based, K-8 marine and freshwater science curriculum addresses state science standards.

Encouraging Marine Stewardship

Across coastal Alaska, MAP is working with harbormasters, boaters, and fishermen to reduce the number of invasive rats in Alaska's ports. Alaska Sea Grant authored and published the only manual on controlling rats along coastal waterfronts.

In the Aleutians, MAP launched a program to broaden understanding of our changing climate, and gather local perspective on how climate may impact their resources. MAP also enlisted coastal communities to collect long-term temperature recordings and oceanographic measurements.

Across the state, MAP workshops on voluntary standards for responsible marine wildlife viewing are helping Alaskans and others better enjoy the state's abundant wildlife.

The Alaska Sea Grant College Program is a partnership between NOAA and the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

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