Position Description: The USARC would expect a fellow to develop a minimum of three lines of effort while working at the USARC: 1) Investigation into Regional Seas Agreements and their potential to be a useful instrument during the US Chairmanship of the Arctic Council; 2) Marine protection/Marine Protected Areas and their potential in US Arctic/Alaskan waters (also to include other approaches, as applicable); and 3) a detailed retrospective of marine co-management in Alaska culminating in current status of this effort along with ideas for future strategies towards more effective approaches for all parties involved.

Our office has 1 FTE stationed in our Anchorage office. It is important to note that any fellow accepted by the USARC would be expected to assist with non-marine activities from time to time, on an as-needed basis.

1) **Regional Seas Agreements (RSAs):**

The USARC is interested in developing the idea of a potential RSA related to research in the Arctic maritime region. An Arctic RSA could serve to coordinate and advance efforts to study the Arctic Ocean and serve as a vehicle for managing and coordinating the increasing human activity in the region. We would expect the fellow to become well-versed in precedent-setting RSAs, such as Convention for the Protection of the marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR) and the Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment (Jeddah Convention), and provide the strongest example of linkages that could be established between such similar agreements and an Arctic Council effort focused on the Arctic. We would expect the fellow to understand what would be necessary for an RSA to be successfully negotiated through the Arctic Council or outside this organization (with a link back in via legally binding agreement). Detailing of potential approaches would need to be covered, along with the potential benefits conferred upon the research community. An understanding of governance of the region related to its unique boundaries and geography would also be an important.

2) **Marine Protection**

With the acceleration of maritime activity and resource development in the Arctic region, there is an increased risk of marine casualties and oil/fuel spills. To protect the both the Arctic marine environment and those who depend upon it for subsistence from the hazards of oil and other substances, a comprehensive plan of protection from a variety of potential harms is necessary. Part of this plan may involve Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) or another MPA-like effort. Historically opposed by a number of local entities, MPAs have been largely misunderstood on a variety of levels. We would expect the fellow to research MPAs, and other similar efforts, around the globe in order to fully understand how they have been implemented in the past. With this knowledge, a matrix of stakeholders and their views could then be constructed with the aim of
better understanding concerns and determining which of the many potential approaches to marine protection might be the best fit for the Alaskan Arctic.

3) Alaskan Marine Co-Management

Alaska Natives have a long history of self-regulation, based on the need to ensure a sustainable take of marine mammals for food and handicrafts. Co-management promotes full and equal participation by Alaska Natives in decisions affecting the subsistence management of marine mammals as a tool for conserving marine mammal populations in Alaska. The best available scientific information, and traditional and local and traditional knowledge (LTK) are used for decisions regarding Alaska marine mammal co-management. Under Section 119 agreements, marine mammal stocks should not be permitted to diminish beyond the point at which they cease to fulfill their role in their ecosystem or to levels that won’t allow for sustainable subsistence harvest. Agreements may involve: (1) developing marine mammal co-management structures and processes with Federal and State agencies, (2) monitoring the harvest of marine mammals for subsistence use, (3) participating in marine mammal research, and (4) collecting and analyzing data on marine mammal populations. We would expect a fellow to become familiar with the concept of co-management, learn about its benefits and also its historical challenges, in order to assess its current status and potential improvements to future agreements activities.