AHAB Monthly Meeting November 14, 2019

(Notes by Naomi Bargmann)

Attendees (by computer and phone): Rose Masui and Jasmine Maurer (KBNERR), Naomi Bargmann (Sitka Tribe of Alaska/SEATOR), Caroline Van Hemert and Sarah Schoen (USGS), Gay Sheffield (Alaska Sea Grant, Nome), Patryce McKinney (ADEC Lab), Melissa Good (Alaska Sea Grant, Unalaska), Danielle Dickson (NPRB), Dean Stockwell (UAF), Bruce Wright (Knik Tribal Council), Joe Mclaughlin (DHSS), Carol Brady (DEC), Dominic Hondelero and Kris Holderied (NOAA, Kasitsna Bay), Katie Gavenus (Alaska Coastal Studies, Homer), John Harley (UAS & Alaska Coastal Rainforest Center), Anne Garland (Applied Research in Environmental Sciences Nonprofit Inc.), Karen Pletnikoff (APIA), Kate Helfrich (DHSS, Epidemiology)

Updates by Region

Southeast

Naomi Bargmann provided an update on the Southeast region. After a sunny and nearly rainless summer, this has been a typical fall with many storms rolling through giving us lots of rain and wind which has effectively ended the severe drought conditions. PSP levels in blue mussels have settled down to below the regulatory limit (80 ug/100 g), except for a couple of communities on Prince of Wales (POW), Klawock and Craig, that are still hovering at or below the limit. Butter clams from various communities are still above the regulatory limit which is expected given the high levels seen in blue mussels this summer. No HAB species have been observed in Sitka plankton tows for the past month.

Kachemak Bay/Cook inlet

Rose Masui reported that monitoring has slowed down in Homer. However, they saw an increase in the number of *Alexandrium* cells at the end of October and have sent mussels to be tested for paralytic shellfish toxins (PSTs) to AK DEC in Anchorage. She reiterated that the HABs Communication Training is being held the last Friday of AMSS, on January 31, 2020. This workshop will be important in highlighting local human health. She attended the HAB Symposium in Orange Beach, AL the week of Nov. 4 and said it was a great opportunity to network with researchers and discuss AK HAB topics with Don Anderson and Kathi LeFebvre.

Kasitsna Bay Laboratory

Dominic Hondelero spoke about the collection of first year food web toxins that started a month ago. They were seeing *Alexandrium*, but don't expect high values of PSP in their samples. They have one more year of field work and will start food web sampling again in the spring. Kris Holderied talked about working on Aleutian satellite monitoring for HAB risk assessment. They are trying to gain an understanding of when and under what environmental conditions the risk of *Alexandrium* blooms is greatest.

DEC, State of Alaska

Carol Brady informed us that they just received approval to start using the High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) with photodiode array detection (DAD) method for domoic acid determination in shellfish.

NPRB, GOA
Danielle Dickson spoke about working with NOAA for short-term forecasting in Alaska. She is looking at what data gaps there are and is requesting ideas/suggestions. This can be in the form of gray literature, i.e. abstracts to conferences or other informal, non-peer reviewed documents. Gay Sheffield mentioned that the ocean sensor near Nome has not been working for some time and Danielle responded that was good information to know.

Bering Strait/Arctic Region
Gay Sheffield had no immediate events to report about in the region. She spoke about a collaborative effort by Sea Grant, Woods Hole, AHAB, AOOS, NOAA, and NSB to report on *Alexandrium* Algae, Saxitoxin, and Clams in 2018/2019 in the Bering Strait and Chukchi Sea. Gay also reported subsistence users are concerned due to media reports of high levels of PSP.

Unalaska
Melissa Good informed us that blue mussels were collected last month (October) in Unalaska and they are currently waiting for the results.

Updates from other Network members
Bruce Wright - Knik Tribe
Levels of PSP are decreasing in the samples (except butter clams) currently being analyzed from across western and southcentral Alaska, but there is a backlog since HPLC takes a while. In southeast Kodiak he found dead moon snails and pisaster sea stars on the beach. He has sent them in for testing.

Dean Stockwell
No updates to report from UAF.

Joe McLaughlin
No HAB news, but mentioned that there is a new bulletin just published by DHSS about the prevalence of *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (*Vp*) in Alaska since the initial outbreak in 2004 (http://epibulletins.dhss.alaska.gov/Document/Display?DocumentId=2035). *Vp* is a gram-negative bacterium found naturally in coastal waters and is an important cause of acute gastroenteritis worldwide. Prior to the outbreak in 2004, it was thought this couldn't happen in Alaska due to its cold waters, but with rising temperatures it has become more common. The outbreak of *Vp* in 2004 was linked to Alaska-grown oysters and since then measures have been put in place to monitor these sites. There have been no sizable outbreaks since 2004 owing to the implementation of DEC's Control Plan. What is particularly interesting is that they have seen a positive relationship between plankton abundance and *Vp* concentration.
Also, the AK Tribal Conference on Environmental Management (ATCEM) is in Anchorage next week. Mike Brubaker (ANTHC), Joe, Bruce, and Gay are presenting on HABS.

PCMHAB Federal Funding Opportunity
Due January 10, 2020.

HAB Risk Training

The workshop will be a joint event sponsored by KBNERR and NOAA's Office of Coastal Management (OCM) on the Friday of AMSS, January 31, 2020. The training is by invite only with priority given to AHAB Network participants.

Building HAB Risk Communication Skills Workshop

https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/building-risk-communication-skills.html
January 31, 2019 Anchorage, AK
NOAA Office for Coastal Management
Course Goal: AHAB members have a better understanding of how people respond to HAB related risks and will develop new communication skills and strategies for discussing hazards in their communities.
Course Objectives

- Recognize differing values and identify how and why people perceive and respond to HAB risks the way they do.
- Apply social science and risk communication principles when responding to difficult questions.
- Respond to difficult scenarios with more confidence.
- Develop a HAB risk communication strategy that incorporates social science and risk communication principles.
- Networking, and sharing risk communication challenges and strategies with other AHAB members

Statewide Summary of Summer 2019

As a specific ask from Molly McCammon (AOOS), AHAB would like to produce a summary of 2019 HAB events, particularly given the elevated levels seen in southeast and western Alaska. Rosie will be sending out survey templates so people can fill out brief summaries of their experiences in 2019. Kate Helfrich suggested that the CDC, One Health Harmful Algal Bloom System (OHHABS; https://www.cdc.gov/habs/ohhabs.html) could be used as a format to follow. This is a 4-6 page form covering Environmental, Human, and Animal cases.

As a reminder, if folks are interested in participating in the following please reach out to Rosie:

- Steering Committee
- Outreach on AHAB at statewide conferences
- Finish AHAB Action Plan
- Coordinating Arctic Community Sampling and Research
- Discussing Freshwater HABs

Our next monthly update call will be held **December 12 at 10am AKST.**