

## **AHAB monthly call – November 2020**

**Attendees:** Thomas Farrugia (AOOS), Rosie Masui (KBNERR), Naomi Bargmann (Sitka Tribe), Katie Gavenus (CACs), Darcy Dugan (AOOS), Jill Prewitt (AOOS), Patryce McKinney (ADEC - EHL), Kris Holderied (NOAA - KBL), Bridget Ferris (NOAA AFSC), Carol Brady (ADEC), Jasmine Maurer (KBNERR), Molly McCammon (AOOS), Anne Garland (ARIES), Julie Matweyou (Alaska Sea Grant - Kodiak), Gay Sheffield (Alaska Sea Grant – Nome), Don Anderson (WHOI), Rachel Lee and Emma Pate (Norton Sound Health), Eric Wyatt (Blue Star Oysters), Marc Suddleson (NOAA), Christine Basset (NOAA NWS), Chandra Poe (Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska), Jacqueline Ramsay (Alutiiq Pride), Jeff Hetrick (Alutiiq Pride), Chelsea Kovalcsik (Chugach regional resources commission)

### **ROUND ROBIN UPDATES**

#### **Thomas Farrugia – AOOS (new AHAB coordinator)**

Introduced himself to the group, and discussed the role of the AHAB network and of the coordinator position. The goal is to continue the momentum in the network and develop it into a resource so that each member can do the things that are important to their communities, everybody has the support that they need from the network, and all members are working towards a common goal of understanding HABs in our waters. Thomas' next steps include completing listening sessions with every network member, collate all the results from sampling efforts so far and put together some easy to interpret graphs and maps, finalize the AHAB action plan, and revitalize the steering committee and working groups.

Q: is it your role to take results from people's research projects and collate those responses and put them on the AHAB or AOOS website?

A: yes, as soon as data can be made available, it should be made available, and the AHAB website would be a good place to have all the data presented in one place.

#### **Molly McCammon – AOOS**

US Senate released budget for NOAA. Included \$1M for HABs projects for NOAA. It's both in the house version and senate version so no matter what budget gets passed it will get funded. Senate also included \$1M for HABs test bed to be developed in the Gulf of Mexico. Not sure if that will stay but lots of congressional interest in HABs and doing the HABs Observing Network

#### **Gay Sheffield – Alaska Sea Grant, Nome**

The biggest news in this area are recent large storms. Winds out of south, not terribly strong but sustained. Enough to create mixing, we've had severe erosion issues in the region. Big one followed by smaller one they're just coming out of. May have another one in a couple of days. Lots of open water. The Chukchi is odd right now as far as ice. What's different this year is that the Chukotkan coast which normally has ice forming currently has no ice. They're probably being hit by southerlies too. Some ice just east of Baldwin Peninsula but not west. Sums up: series of storms, water temperature uniformly much warmer.

The R/V Sikuliaq is just past Diomede. Anticipate being in Seward on Nov 19. They should have interesting data, hope they were able to sample in the Strait.

#### **Don Anderson – WHOI**

Looking at *Alexandrium* and *Pseudo-nitzschia* from Bering Strait north, but also further south. Working closely with Kathi Lefebvre on food web transfer of toxins. Even though COVID cancelled many cruises, have been able to get water samples from other cruises. The usual method uses ribosomal RNA probes so we can definitively identify and count cells that are from *Alexandrium catenella*. But since the samples were collected by other people and don't have the capacity to do the molecular probe work, Don has to count them in old fashion way using samples preserved in Lugol's iodine. That means there will be other round cells difficult to differentiate from *Alexandrium*. So there will need to be an asterisk that there may be an overcount, but it is our only opportunity this year to get a population map of *Alexandrium* from Nome to Beaufort Sea during the summer time frame.

They are also getting sediment samples from those cruises as well as R/V Sikuliaq (Bob Pickart is lead scientist on it). They've got a big transect as far east as they could so there should be a good cyst map for 2020 to go along with 2018 and 2019. This cruise is so late in the year they haven't seen any *Alexandrium* cells. A student on the cruise saw *Pseudo-nitzschia* throughout the entire cruise (there are continuous measurements underway) as well as samples taken the right way for genetic analysis that allows them to map out what species are up there. SO they have counts of *Alexandrium*, sediment samples, and *Pseudo-nitzschia* samples. So they WILL have more info but no details just yet other than that *Pseudo-nitzschia* is in the water.

#### **Rachael Lee – Norton sound health corporation**

With all the storms, many people in the region have been clamming since the clams get washed up on the shore. Not sure how common it is but with the storms they are taking that opportunity. They are moving forward with environmental health lab, starting to play around with phytoplankton sampling for next summer.

Coordinating with Chris Whitehead to do a regional training with their staff. They will also be inviting regional environmental IGAP workers. Probably December but still up in the air.

#### **Chandra Poe – Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska**

Got everything in place from NOAA and sent a batch of samples to the environmental health lab and expect results back in the next 10 days or so. Can share once they're available. Hoping to do phytoplankton tows this winter also but haven't progressed very far with that.

#### **Anne Garland – ARIES**

Not picking up much in the lagoon or nearshore. Anxiously awaits Don's data so can pass on that data to the folks up here.

#### **Grace Ellwanger – Enviro technician at KANA**

The new boots on the ground for the HABs project. Very excited to hear from everybody, but no information yet.

**Julie Matweyou – Alaska Sea Grant, Kodiak**

No sampling right now, but will be doing cyst work in December. KANA continues to do the monitoring on the road system here. Interesting conversation around the Avacha Bay Russian incident. Dean and Gay and Bruce were involved more directly but also discussed in Kodiak. Thinking through what happened over there and lessons to be learned. We need nets in the water and ability to respond. Collect and preserve samples to document bizarre and devastating impacts in our environment.

**Matthew van Daele – Sun’aq tribe**

New biologist with Sun’aq tribe. Background is with Kodiak bear biology. Interest in increased monitoring and impacts HABs might have on marine mammals and others as it travels through ecosystem.

Julie Matweyou: the Sun’aq tribe has been the marine mammal responding network in Kodiak, so lots of overlap there.

**Jasmine Maurer – Kachemak Bay**

Slowed down with sampling. Busy with data entry and getting annual reports ready. Rosie spoke about HABs at the Rotary Health Fair last Tuesday– new audience. Good questions came up.

**Rosie Masui – Kachemak Bay**

Working with NOAA Live webinar team to help develop and deliver webinars. Targeted at middle school age. Will do a whole section on HABs and will be recorded in a few months. Happy to share with folks.

**Kris Holderied – Kasitsna Bay Lab**

Senate mark has language specific to freshwater HABS and funding that would go to track freshwater HABS. There was also a comment on regional watershed integrated assessments and action strategies, but no funding attached to it. Initiatives from the Great Lakes are encouraged to be implemented in other regions. This could fit in with the action/implementation plan for Alaska, but don’t know a whole lot about it at this point. KBay Lab and KBNERR had a visit from Murkowski staff. They were interested in transfer of toxins through marine food web – both fish and marine mammals. Told them about Don’s and Kathi’s projects.

**Jacqueline Ramsey - Alutiiq Pride**

APSH has carbonate chemistry monitoring program at the hatchery. They also have the technology to monitor for discrete samples (Burke-o-Lator) so they analyze samples on ocean acidification from surrounding communities. They are expanding into HABs monitoring as well.

**Patryce McKinney – State environmental health lab**

Not a whole lot extra going on. They have Chandra’s samples, will try to have those finished by 23<sup>rd</sup>. Also completing a validation study for expanded species for HPLC study.

They process samples monthly but can do it more frequently if there is a big batch or someone needs them rapidly. The schedule is aligned to one week after the lowest tide of the month. The PCOX schedule is on [the website](#).

**Carol Brady – Food safety and sanitation program**

National Shellfish Sanitation Program recently released the 2019 revision and is available online.

**Caroline van Hemert – USGS**

Matt Smith has been running samples from seabirds. Ongoing collaboration with ASLC to do a captive study looking at saxitoxin in common murre; pilot going on to figure out some of the methods.

Hopefully next year can do more sampling without covid restrictions.

**Matt Smith - USGS**

Just about caught up with 2020 super die-offs. Should have results tomorrow. Doesn't look like it was a big year for algal toxins in seabirds but that's preliminary.

**Kevin Heller – Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, dept of enviro health and engineering**

Listen in on meetings to keep tabs on HABs since they work for Alaska Native people

**Naomi Bargmann – SEATOR, environmental research lab**

Pretty uninteresting lately. Up to 8 inches of rain the last 2 weekends. Partner in Craig: posted dramatic photos in a Local Environmental Observation (LEO) report – had over 50 landslides on POW in Oct/beginning of Nov. Hoonah had hot blue mussels in Sept. the last ones they ran at end of October were over limit but just by a little (120's). Ketchikan went just above the limit in October but since went down. Starting to settle in for the winter. Sitka is at high COVID level. Naomi, Will Peterson, and our tech are the only ones in the office. Things slowed in the lab but not completely at halt.

**Bridget Ferris – NOAA AFSC**

Thanks AHAB for putting together HABs section for GOA Ecosystem Status report for the NPFMC. Currently being reviewed, then will become public document. There are separate regional reports for Gulf, Aleutians, Bering. HABs will get a slide during the presentation for the Gulf and Aleutian Islands. Maybe Bering also. Those presentations are next Tuesday (for the joint groundfish plan team but open to the public), and final one that's highest impact is in December for the NPFMC meeting.

**Marc Suddleson – NOAA Silver Spring. NCCOS competitive research**

Welcomes Thomas! Marc works with ECOHAB, MERHAB, event response. All these programs provide support and have been very active.

**The next meeting will be December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 9:30am AK time.**