

Environmental Studies Program: Ongoing Study

Field	Study Information
Title	Alaska Marine Science Symposium (AK-20-02)
Administered by	Alaska Regional Office
BOEM Contact(s)	Sean Burrell (sean.burrell@boem.gov)
Procurement Type(s)	Purchase Order
Conducting Organization(s)	North Pacific Research Board; Alaska SeaLife Center
Total BOEM Cost	\$47,500
Performance Period	FY 2020–2025
Final Report Due	N/A
Date Revised	February 23, 2023
Problem	There is a need to bring together marine scientists conducting research in Alaska to discuss their current research interests and provide an update on current scientific awareness of the ever-changing Alaska ecosystem.
Intervention	Help fund the annual Alaska Marine Science Symposium by co-sponsoring the event.
Comparison	Without adequate funding the event cannot occur.
Outcome	A successful venue where marine scientists from government and non-government agencies, within Alaska and around the nation, share research and highlight future research needs. Many of the highlighted studies are from BOEM funded projects.
Context	Alaska Marine Environment and OCS

BOEM Information Need(s): This annual Symposium provides technical analysts and Principal Investigators for BOEM studies in Alaska a unique forum to share their research findings on the Alaska marine environment and to network with other scientists from around Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and the nation. Because it is impossible for any single agency or group to conduct all of the needed research within the Alaska Office, this forum provides marine scientists with the opportunity to gather information on other areas of similar research and foster important future collaborative efforts.

Background: The Alaska Marine Science Symposium (AMSS) is the largest and most comprehensive annual marine science conference within the State of Alaska (<http://www.alaskamarinescience.org/>). The AMSS is unique since it brings together government and non-government sponsored marine scientists within the State of Alaska, from around the nation, and from other nations in a forum to discuss their common interests in the dynamic and ever-changing Alaska marine ecosystem. The Symposium is organized into three large marine ecosystems of Alaska which includes the Arctic (U.S. Beaufort and Chukchi Seas), the Bering Sea, and the Gulf of Alaska. The presentations, poster sessions, and workshops showcase the ocean research within these areas. Daily sessions are focused on the main components of the marine ecosystem including climate and oceanography, lower trophic level productivity, fish and fish habitat, seabirds, marine mammals, and human dimensions.

More than 800 people attended the most recent Symposium, and many organizations pitched in to make it a success. The BOEM project investigators attended the Symposium and provided important information on the Arctic and the Bering Sea from information collected under the Environmental Studies Program. The BOEM staff and sponsored scientists connected with other scientists that were conducting concurrent research in the Arctic, Bering Sea, Cook Inlet and Gulf of Alaska regions.

In the recently completed Symposium in 2019, there were separate workshops on a recently completed BOEM funded study, Characterization of the Circulation on the Continental Shelf Areas of the Northeastern Chukchi and Western Beaufort Seas, numerous updates of ongoing and nearly completed studies funded jointly through the Coastal Marine Institute at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, discussions on marine mammals, fish, and bird distribution, and workshops on community involvement. In addition, there were other workshops on Arctic Research Planning and on communicating ocean science. The Symposium also encourages presentations on the Alaska marine environment from graduate students from local universities and from universities within the lower 48. The Symposium presents awards to the best student poster and oral presentation at the meeting.

Objectives:

- Produce a successful Alaska Marine Science Symposium, which provides a forum for marine scientists and local communities to present their information on the changing marine environment in Alaska.
- Provide a venue for presenting BOEM Alaska Office environmental studies research for the Arctic, Bering Sea, Cook Inlet, and Gulf of Alaska
- Provide a forum for Alaska Office scientists and Principal Investigators to come together with other researchers that are conducting similar scientific studies within the Alaska OCS or adjoining areas of the Alaska marine ecosystem.

Methods: As a member of the AMSS organizing committee with other scientists and officials from Federal and State agencies, assist in producing a forum for BOEM staff and marine and coastal scientists, and local communities to present their findings on the changing marine environment in Alaska. Provide monetary support for scientists from within the State of Alaska and from around the nation to present their findings at the meeting. Provide abstracts and workshop discussions from the Symposium to the general public for distribution.

Specific Research Question(s): What current research is being conducted in the Alaska Marine environment and what are future research goals?

Current Status: Symposium convened each year in January.

Publications Completed: None

Affiliated WWW Sites:

<http://www.boem.gov/akstudies/>

<https://www.alaskamarinescience.org/>