



# ONCORHYNCHUS

Newsletter of the Alaska Chapter, American Fisheries Society  
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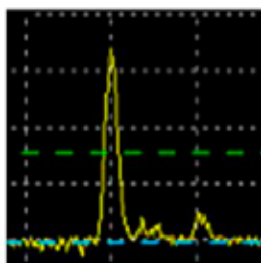
Biologists prepare a DIDSON sonar for deployment in the Kenai River.

## Counting Fish in Rivers with Sonar is Getting Easier and More Accurate

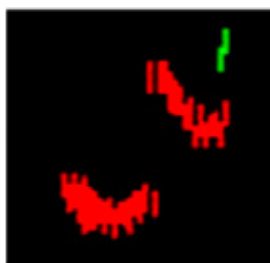
Debbie Burwen

For over 30 years, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has used sonar technology to provide inseason fish passage information critical to the management of Alaska's salmon fisheries. Fishery managers often find information provided by sonar particularly useful because these systems can operate 24-7 and produce escapement estimates in near real time (24-hour passage estimates can often be provided by early the following day). Sonar assessment of fish populations originated in the marine environment, but ADF&G has pioneered the development of technology and techniques for using sonar to count fish in rivers. ADF&G continues to play a leading role in testing and implementing state-of-the-art sonar systems to provide new and improved tools for fisheries research and management (see <http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/region2/sonar/sonar.cfm>).

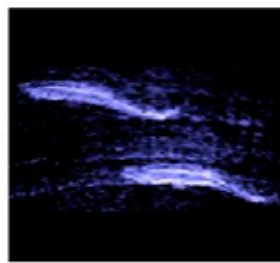
### Evolution of Acoustic Fish Counters in Alaskan Rivers



Bendix Single-beam Sonar (1960+)



Split-beam Sonar (1990+)



DIDSON Imaging Sonar (2002+)

Evolution of acoustic fish counters in Alaskan Rivers from 1960 through 2003: Bendix single-beam (left), split-beam (center), and DIDSON (right).

ADF&G has transitioned through several technologies during its long history of counting fish with sonar. The first riverine sonar counter was developed in cooperation with the Bendix Corporation in the 1960s. A simple display of an echo on an oscilloscope is the only output from these first sonars that are still in use at a few sites on Alaskan Rivers. In the 1990s, split-beam sonar systems that produce echograms with fish traces were installed on a number

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### Counting Fish in Rivers, continued

of Alaskan rivers. Split-beam systems provide more information on spatial position, direction-of-travel, and fish size, but they are also more technically complex to implement and operate. These systems are still used on several larger rivers in Alaska, like the Yukon, that require their long-range capabilities. In 2002, a new sonar technology called Dual frequency IDentification SONar (DIDSON) was first tested in the Kenai, Copper, and Nushagak Rivers,

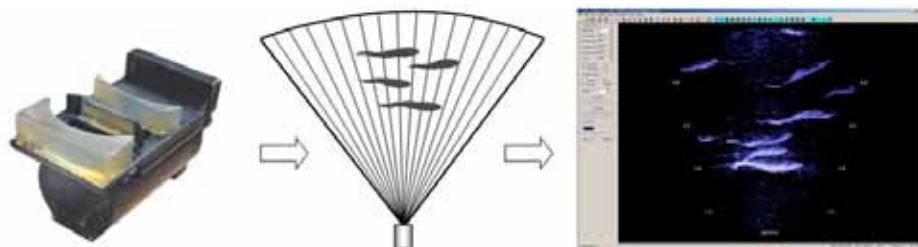
and has become the system of choice for most riverine sonar projects.

DIDSON is a high-definition imaging sonar originally developed at the University of Washington Applied Physics Laboratory for military applications such as diver detection and underwater mine identification, but ADF&G has adapted this technology to counting fish in rivers. Whereas most sonar technologies (e.g., single-, dual-, and split-beam sonars) use one beam to insonify a region in

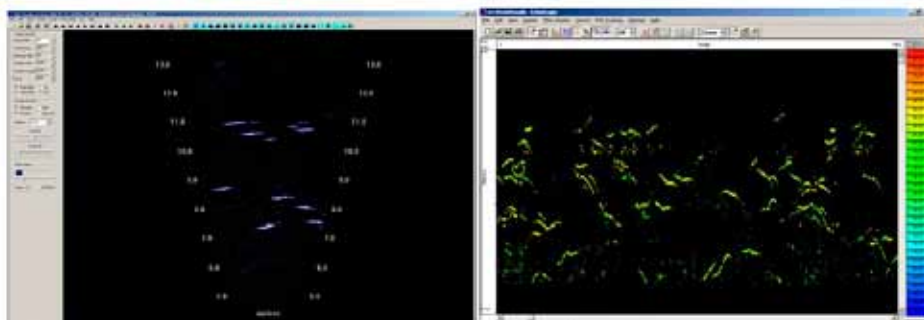
the water column, imaging sonars like the DIDSON use a fan of multiple beams. DIDSON is unique among imaging sonars because it is the first imaging sonar to incorporate a sophisticated lensing system that greatly improves image quality over other systems. At closer ranges, DIDSON provides images approaching the quality achieved with conventional optics, with the added advantage that images can be obtained in dark or turbid water. DIDSON represents a novel approach to sonar assessment of fish populations that is more analogous to using visual rather than acoustic techniques because counts are derived from video-like images of fish rather than discrete echo returns.

Since 2002, ADF&G has tested the DIDSON system at a number of established sonar sites, often conducting side-by-side comparisons with other technologies. These comparative studies have shown that DIDSON often provides significant improvements over other sonar systems in its ability to detect, track, and determine the direction of travel of migrating fish. DIDSON's wide swath of 48 or 96 individual beams allows individual fish to be resolved at higher densities than is possible with other sonar systems. The DIDSON system is also easier to install, aim and operate than

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*DIDSON's lensing system (left) using an array of up to 96 individual beams (center) produces near video-quality images of Chinook salmon in the University of Washington Hatchery (right).*



*Visually tracking fish images swimming through the 300 field of view of the DIDSON display (left) is easier and more intuitive than interpreting a traditional echogram (right) produced by split- and single-beam sonars. At higher densities such as these (>5000 fish/ hour), data shown on the echogram become difficult to interpret.*



*Experiments with tethered fish of known size and species (left) are being conducted to determine whether size information derived from DIDSON images of fish (right) is accurate enough to be used for species classification.*

## The President's Corner

*Hamachan Hamazaki*

AFS members, it is my privilege to serve you as president of the AFS Alaska Chapter, a premier organization of fishery professionals; the theme of our annual conference this year was "Expanding Perspectives of Fisheries." This will also be the main theme for the Alaska Chapter during my presidency.



*Hamachan Hamazaki, AFS Alaska Chapter President-Elect.*

Circumstances surrounding Alaska's fisheries have rapidly changed, even during my 8 years of involvement. The rise and fall of global, domestic, and local economies, confirmed awareness of global warming, renewed interest in mining and pipelines, and the political climate, are just a few recent changes. Simultaneously, the fisheries profession is also changing. There is an expanded importance of genetics, sonar technologies, computers and web technologies, as well as a changing of the guard, as an older "year class" of fishery professionals retires while a new one is recruiting. Attending the annual Chapter meetings, I notice an increasing number of colleagues who never touch a fish in their fishery profession, who are more interested in preserving the fish population for its sake and in maintenance of the ecosystem, and whose research focuses are about the negative impacts of fisheries on fish populations. Their participation also expands the perspectives of fisheries in our profession. For instance, let us take the meaning and implication of "sustainable fisheries." It may mean "maintaining harvest numbers at a maximum," "keeping fishery harvest low enough to maintain the maximum viability of fish populations," "no mining where fisheries occur," or "co-existence of mining and fisheries."

As the president of the Alaska Chapter, I am very excited about diversity and dynamism in our profession. I would like to hear from you about your interests and knowledge in fisheries, and I encourage all of you to join and share. For the past several months, you have received many e-mails about the AFS Alaska Chapter Conference from me through our listserv, [akchap@lists.fisheries.org](mailto:akchap@lists.fisheries.org); I will continue to keep you informed about issues involving AFS

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## Counting Fish in Rivers, continued

other systems, resulting in fewer operator errors. Collectively these improvements result in a higher level of accuracy and greater confidence in sonar estimates of fish abundance by the public, managers, and researchers. For these reasons, ADF&G has selected the DIDSON as the preferred system for replacing many of its aging sonar systems. DIDSON systems have already been deployed at 16 riverine sites throughout Alaska.

DIDSON has also been successfully used in rivers and streams previously considered inappropriate for sonar assessment due to their acoustically unfavorable physical attributes and/or complex fish behavior. For example, since 2003, ADF&G has used a DIDSON system in the Anchor River on the Kenai Peninsula to count upstream migrating Chinook salmon. This river was previously considered unsuitable for conventional sonar assessment techniques because its shallow depth, turbulence, and rocky, uneven bottom made it difficult to distinguish fish echoes from acoustical noise. Such physical conditions, combined with milling fish behavior, were previously insurmountable obstacles to using sonars in rivers.

ADF&G continues to test the limits of the DIDSON system while exploring potential new applications. A study was initiated in 2008 to determine whether a new high-resolution lens system can produce images of sufficient quality for classifying fish to species based on size measurements taken from the images. Specifically, this study will assess the potential for distinguishing larger Chinook salmon from the smaller and more numerous sockeye salmon in the Kenai River. Initial results look promising based on manual measurements from DIDSON images of tethered fish of known size and species. Another challenging aspect of this study explores the feasibility of developing software to automate the process of counting and sizing fish from DIDSON images.

Many other agencies throughout the world are watching and learning from ADF&G's progress in using the DIDSON system to assess fish populations. Because this relatively new technology is advancing rapidly with respect to development of both hardware and software capabilities, ADF&G offered a three-day DIDSON-based workshop during the 2008 Alaska Chapter Meeting to benefit those using or considering

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through this new communication medium. I would also like you to inform us; any Chapter member can send e-mail to all other members through [akchap@lists.fisheries.org](mailto:akchap@lists.fisheries.org). I would like to see more communication and information sharing through the listserv. This could include announcements of classes, seminars, position openings, conferences, your new publication, requests for information about fishery techniques and analyses, etc. By sharing, we learn about each other, and expand and advance our profession.

In closing, I would like to welcome aboard three new EXCOM members; they are Vice President Audra Brase, Assistant Treasurer Cindy Tribuzio and Student Subunit Representative Shelley Woods! Treasurer Lee Ann Gardner will serve a third year to train Cindy Tribuzio, who will take over the complex reins of Alaska Chapter finances in fall of 2009. See the fall 2008 *Oncorhynchus* for biographies of Audra and Cindy and this issue for an introductory note from Shelley. ☺

## New AFS Publication

### Enclosing the Fisheries: People, Places, and Power



This timely book examines effects of restricted access management in fisheries on people and their communities. Economic logic that guides the limitation and privatization of access rights seeks to address overcapitalization and inefficiencies that result from open access fisheries.

Yet, the contested social impacts of restricted access, market-based resource management programs are increasingly documented in academic literature and continue to be a focus of social resistance and mobilization among those who have been displaced, or rationalized out of fishing in this process. The outcomes of ownership consolidation, loss of jobs and income, decreased labor mobility, prohibitive entry costs, loss of fishing rights from small communities and other distributional inequities can be understood broadly as the sociocultural effects of fisheries access restrictions this volume addresses.

Drawing on rich ethnographic research in coastal communities in Alaska, British Columbia, Iceland, and New Zealand, this diverse collection of papers demonstrates the wide reach of privatization discourses and policies as experienced by people and communities dependent on fishing for livelihood, and identity.

To order this or other AFS publications, please visit <http://www.afsbooks.org/>. ☺

### Counting Fish in Rivers, continued

using a DIDSON sonar system. The workshop attracted 70 attendees from throughout the United States as well as from the international fisheries community including Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Austria,



*Bill Hanot, one of the DIDSON developers, assists with tests of a new high-resolution lens on the Kenai River.*

Australia, Finland, and the UK. Along with training on DIDSON-based hardware and software, the workshop included presentations by participants on varied DIDSON applications from around the world. Other notable presentations demonstrated the potential use of DIDSON for observing the behavior of Humpback whales feeding on herring in Southeast Alaska and for monitoring Beluga whales in Cook Inlet.

In a 2004 publication celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Acoustical Society of America, Peter Spindel called Acoustical Oceanography, “a field so new that we are living through its formative years.” This is an even truer statement for the offshoot field of Fisheries Acoustics. The workshop provided an excellent opportunity to facilitate further advances in this field through sharing knowledge and experiences and by discussing the potential for common development needs. ☺

## ONCORHYNCHUS

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Editor  
Gretchen Bishop  
ADF&G/CF  
P.O. Box 110024  
Douglas 99811-0024  
465-4269 wk, Fax: 465-4944  
[Gretchen.Bishop@alaska.gov](mailto:Gretchen.Bishop@alaska.gov)

Production  
Connie Taylor  
Fathom Graphics  
P.O. Box 200448  
Anchorage 99520-0448  
Phone/Fax 272-3305  
[Connie@FathomGraphics.com](mailto:Connie@FathomGraphics.com)

*Deadline for materials for the spring issue of Oncorhynchus is March 10.*

## Alaska Chapter 35th Annual Conference Awards

Cheryl Dion

The Awards Committee is responsible for selecting winners of the Meritorious Service Award, Alaska Chapter Service Award, Almost Darwin Award, as well as for the Best Student Paper and Best Student Poster presented at the Annual Chapter Meeting.

The Awards Committee selected Lee Ann Gardner for the 2008 Alaska Chapter Service Award. No nominations were received for the Meritorious Service Award or the Almost Darwin Award. The Best Student Paper Award went to Kristen Dunlap for her talk on “Blasting Bridges and Culverts in Fish Streams: Water Overpressure and Vibration Analysis,” and the Best Student Poster Award went to Lisa South for “A GIS/Remote Sensing-Based Approach to Identify Potential Spawning Habitat for Fall-run Chum Salmon in the Mainstem Tanana River, Alaska.”

Congratulations award recipients for a job well done!



*The 2008 Alaska Chapter Executive Committee, from left to right, Jamal Moss, Dona Eidam, Karla Bush, Hamachan Hamazaki, Lee Ann Gardner, Bert Lewis, and Lisa Stuby.*



*AFS Alaska Chapter President Bert Lewis hams it up with auctioneer Mr. Whitekeys at the 2008 banquet.*

After 5 years as the chair of the Awards Committee, I am stepping down. I appreciate all those who have volunteered to help with the awards and judging. Thank you! Theresa Tanner has graciously volunteered to take over chair duties. For nominations or questions regarding awards, Theresa can be contacted at [theresa\\_tanner@fws.gov](mailto:theresa_tanner@fws.gov) or 271-1799. 🐾



*Lee Ann Gardner, winner of the 2008 Chapter Service Award, is congratulated by Past President Scott Maclean at the banquet.*

## Jack Helle Retires

Dr. John Helle of NOAA's Alaska Fisheries Science Center's Auke Bay Laboratories in Juneau is retiring after 49 years of service focused on measuring marine ecosystem productivity. "Forty-nine is my lucky number," said Helle, who goes by 'Jack'. "I live in the 49th state, this year is my 49th wedding anniversary, my first paper route in junior high school — in Fargo North Dakota — was number 49, and the year I turned 49 was a great one, so I'm going to retire with 49 years." In retirement, he said he plans to publish papers explaining the results of decades of research, but he will take time in winter to slip off to "warm, sunny beaches and warm, sunny deserts." For very nearly a half century, Jack has made invaluable contributions to our understanding of fishery biology in the Northeast Pacific Ocean," said Doug DeMaster, director of the Alaska Fisheries Science Center. "He represents what a biologist can accomplish in a lifetime." Starting in the 1960s, Helle was a leading innovator of fisheries research in the North Pacific. His zeal for building long time series of observations on chum salmon resulted in 35 years of continuous data collection at Fish Creek near Hyder, Alaska, the Chilkat and Klehini Rivers in Alaska, and the Quilcene River in Washington. Helle's career-long observations helped set the stage for the emerging ecosystem approach to fisheries management. Observations by Helle and his colleagues underpin current scientific understanding of how ocean physics can drive the production of all species in the Pacific salmon-bearing ecosystems of the North Pacific. His published works cover a wide range of fisheries topics—from single species life histories, to the biology and oceanography of the Gulf of Alaska, to an examination of the effects of climate change on the Bering Sea. Helle has fostered international collaborations among U.S., Canadian, Japanese, Korean, and Russian scientists and interdisciplinary collaborations among climatologists, oceanographers, and molecular biologists. He began his career working in fisheries in the summers of 1958 and 1959 in Prince William Sound for the federal Bureau of Commercial Fisheries. In 1960, he accepted a permanent position in the Bureau's new laboratory at Auke Bay in Juneau. His early work at Olsen Bay, Prince



*NOAA Fisheries biologist Jack Helle retired this fall after a productive 49 years at the Auke Bay Fisheries Laboratory.*

William Sound helped lay the foundations for the current management of salmon fisheries there. His studies from that era on chum salmon and the intertidal spawning of pink salmon are considered classics. Helle's 30-year time series for Olsen Bay salmon proved invaluable in assessing the impacts of the 1964 Alaska earthquake on salmon production and later served as a key baseline of historical intertidal habitat data for the Natural Resources Damage Assessment following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. In the 1970s, Helle's research broadened to include the effects of climate variability on production of salmon. In the 1980's his Stock Identification Team pioneered the use of a combination of scale characteristics, parasites, and genetic information to separate U.S., Canadian, and Russian stocks of salmon. The allocation of these mixed stock fisheries was the catalyst for success in the negotiations that led to the U.S.-Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty in 1986. Following ratification of the treaty, Jack participated in a number of its technical committees, which were the scientific impetus for the complex process used to set international fishing regulations. Jack's publications on long time series of age and size of chum salmon documented the dramatic decline in body size during the 1980s and early 1990s that coincided with increasing population abundance. Asian studies showed similar declines in body size of chum salmon. Based on these studies, the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission called

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**Jack Helle Retires, continued**

for research on carrying capacity in the North Pacific Ocean. As program manager of the Alaska Fisheries Science Center's Ocean Carrying Capacity Program at Auke Bay Laboratory, Helle recognized the necessity of collecting oceanographic (physical, chemical and biological) and fish abundance data at the same time in order to make inferences about the impacts of the environment on target species of fish in the Gulf of Alaska. That program was later redirected to the Bering Sea to address international treaty obligations. In 2001, Helle led the Ocean Carrying Capacity program in a partnership with Russia and Japan for the Bering Aleutian Salmon International Survey (BASIS) under the North

Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission. He was elected to chair the BASIS group and led what started as an effort to answer questions about stock-specific distribution of salmon and developed into an international ecosystem study of the entire Bering Sea. The BASIS data set is widely hailed by ecologists and environmental scientists as an invaluable reference for understanding climate change. The annual BASIS survey now covers one of the largest and most logistically difficult to monitor ecosystems in the world. NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. ☺

**New Student Sub-unit Representative**

Greetings fellow fish-lovers! My name is Shelley Woods and I am currently a Senior Fisheries undergraduate at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF). I am originally from Dillingham and have been involved in many different realms of fisheries. I started out commercial set-netting in Bristol Bay at a young age, and found the field of fisheries science one summer as a technician. My future goals are to attend graduate school and then shove off into the professional world. I am currently the secretary/treasurer for the UAF campus group of the AFS Student Subunit (more info at <http://www.uafafs.blogspot.com>). It has been a lot of fun getting involved with AFS and learning about how all the levels interact with each other, with students, and with professionals. I am honored to be the 2009 Alaska Chapter Student Subunit Representative, and I look forward to working with people from across the state. ☺



*Shelley Woods, AFS Alaska Chapter Student Subunit Representative with a nice sockeye on Lake Aleknagik, near Dillingham.*

**Introducing the UAF Museum Fish Collection**

A new curator has joined the Fish Collection at Museum of the North (University of Alaska Fairbanks). Andrés López shares appointments at the Museum and the Fisheries Division of the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences. The mission of the collection is to serve as a reference repository of specimens and associated biological data to document the diversity of fish species in the fresh and marine waters of Alaska. To meet this mission, the collection's primary roles are to support research, education and outreach. Information on current holdings in the collection may be found online at <http://www.arctos.database.museum/home.cfm>. Requests for specimen loans or information on archiving materials at the collection may be directed to Andrés López ([ffjal2@uaf.edu](mailto:ffjal2@uaf.edu)). Under the supervision of the new curator, the Fish Collection will move to a new space to provide better preservation conditions for existing holdings as well as room for future growth. ☺

## Meetings and Events

### 2009 Alaska Marine Science Symposium

January 19–22: The 2009 Alaska Marine Sciences Symposium will be held at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage. See <http://www.alaskamarinescience.org/> for more information.



### ASLO Aquatic Sciences Meeting

January 25–30, 2009: The 2009 Aquatic Sciences meeting of the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, will be held internationally in 2009, in Nice, France. For more information see: <http://www.aslo.org/nice2009/>.



### State of the Salmon 2009

February 2–5, 2009: This meeting will be held at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel, in Vancouver B.C., Canada. See <http://www.stateofthesalmon.org/conference2009/index.html>.

### Aquaculture America 2009

February 15–18, 2009. This meeting will be held in Seattle, Washington. See [www.was.org/WasMeetings/meetings/Default.aspx?code=AA2009](http://www.was.org/WasMeetings/meetings/Default.aspx?code=AA2009).



### Biology and Management of Exploited Crab Populations under Climate Change

March 10–13, 2009: This meeting, which is the 25<sup>th</sup> in the University of Alaska, Sea Grant Wakefield Fisheries Symposium series, will be held in Anchorage. For more information, please visit the website at: <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/conferences/2009/wakefield-crab/index.html>.



### Improving the Ecological Status of Fish Communities in Inland Waters

March 30–April 3, 2009: This International Symposium and Workshop will be held in Hull, UK. Interested parties should register for the event via the HIFI website at [www.hull.ac.uk/hifi/EFI/](http://www.hull.ac.uk/hifi/EFI/) or email [hifi@hull.ac.uk](mailto:hifi@hull.ac.uk).



### 11th Annual Salmon Ocean Ecology Meeting

April 7–8, 2009: The 11th Annual Salmon Ocean Ecology Meeting will be held in Juneau, Alaska. The goal of this meeting is to foster communication and collaboration among researchers working on the ecology of Pacific salmon. For more information please visit: [http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/ABL/MSI/msi\\_soem.htm](http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/ABL/MSI/msi_soem.htm).



### AWRA Spring Specialty Conference

May 4–6, 2009: This conference, to be held in Anchorage, is themed: "Managing Water Resources and Development in a Changing Climate," for more information visit the website at: <http://www.awra.org/meetings/Anchorage2009/index.html>.



### GEOHAB 2009

May 5–7, 2009 The 8<sup>th</sup> GeoHab meeting will be held in Trondheim, Norway. See <http://geohab.org/trondheim.html>.

Continued on next page

## Meetings and Events

### International Marine Conservation Congress



May 20–24, 2009: The Marine Section of the Society for Conservation Biology will be hosting its first stand-alone meeting, the International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC), at George Mason University near Washington D.C. For more information on this meeting, visit: [www.conbio.org/IMCC](http://www.conbio.org/IMCC).

### NABS 2009

May 17–22, 2009: The 2009 meeting of the North American Benthological Society will be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan. For more information visit: <http://www.benthos.org/index.cfm>.



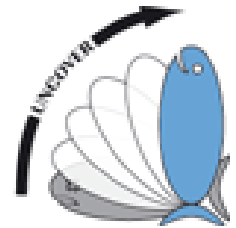
### World Aquaculture 2009

May 25–29, 2009: The abstract deadline for this meeting is November 1. It will be held at the World Trade Center in Veracruz Mexico. See <https://www.was.org/WASMeetings/meetings/Default.aspx?code=WA2009>.



### ICES/PICES/UNCOVER Symposium 2009

November 3–6, 2009: This symposium on “Rebuilding Depleted Fish Stocks - Biology, Ecology, Social Science and Management Strategies,” will be held in Warnemünde/Rostock, Germany. The abstract deadline is March 1, 2009. For further information, please see <http://www.uncover.eu/index.php?id=180>.



## Parent Society 2009 Award Nominations

The first call for 2009 nominations for 8 different awards is currently online at the AFS parent society webpage at <http://www.fisheries.org/afs/index.html#awards>.

The Award of Excellence is presented to an AFS member for original and outstanding contributions to fisheries and aquatic biology, the deadline is April 17, 2009. The Carl R. Sullivan Fishery Conservation Award is presented to an individual or organization for outstanding contributions to the conservation of fishery resources; nominations are due on April 16. The Distinguished Service Award recognizes outstanding contributions of time and energy for special projects, and nominations should be submitted by January 31. The Excellence in Public Outreach Award is presented to an AFS member who goes the extra mile in sharing the value of fisheries science/research with the general public. The nomination deadline is May 5. Honorary Membership is presented to individuals who have achieved outstanding professional accomplishments or have given outstanding service to the Society. There is a national Meritorious Service Award, with a deadline of May 1, which is presented to an individual for loyalty, dedication, and meritorious service to the Society throughout the years. The President’s Fishery Conservation Award is presented either to an AFS individual or

unit, or a non-AFS individual or entity for singular accomplishments or long-term contributions that advance aquatic resource conservation at a regional or local level. The nomination deadline is May 15. Finally, the William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award is presented to an entity for accomplishment or activity that advances aquatic resource conservation that is significant at a national or international level. The deadline is May 15.

Nominations are also being accepted for three awards administered by sections of AFS. The Education Section is soliciting nominations for the Excellence in Fisheries Education Award, which recognizes excellence in organized teaching and advising in some aspect of fisheries education, the deadline is May 15, and for the John E. Skinner Memorial Fund Award, which provides travel awards for deserving graduate students to attend the AFS annual meeting and has an application deadline of May 8. The Equal Opportunities Section is soliciting nominations for the J. Frances Allen Scholarship Award for a female fisheries doctoral student; designed to encourage women to become fisheries professionals, applications for this award should be received by March 6.

**Please consider nominating a well-deserving colleague for one of these awards.**

## 2008 Annual Wally Noerenberg Award Committee Report

*Ted Otis, Committee Chair*

The Wally Noerenberg Award (WNA) for Fishery Excellence is the highest award of the Alaska Chapter. It is bestowed to honor an individual's life-long career achievements in fishery excellence. The award was created in 1981, and in 1982 was awarded posthumously to its namesake, Wally Noerenberg. Since then, there have been thirteen recipients: Armin Koerning, Robert Armstrong, Clem Tillion, Steven Pennoyer, Jim Branson, Jim Reynolds, Ole Mathisen, Ken Roberson, John Clark, A.J. Paul, Alex Wertheimer, Lance Trasky, and Bill Wilson. Contributions may include, but are not limited to: fisheries research; technology development; species and habitat management; innovations in harvesting, processing or marketing; academics or fisheries education; and involvement in national and international affairs affecting Alaska fisheries.

For the second straight year, the committee did not receive any nominations prior to the historical July 31 deadline, so the Wally Noerenberg Award was not bestowed in 2008. The WNA committee is comprised of three Chapter past presidents and a committee chair that cannot be a past president. Committee members serve a staggered three-year term such that only one position becomes vacant and is refilled each year. Historically, the immediate past president was automatically seated on the WNA committee following each year's annual Chapter meeting. In 2006-2007, the WNA

Committee Procedures Manual was modified so that new committee members are randomly selected from a list of past-presidents still active in the Alaska Chapter. Bill Hauser was randomly selected to join Tim Joyce and Carol Kerkvliet on the committee in 2007. Due in part to the lack of nominees for the award this past year, one of the committee seats remained vacant prior to the 2008 meeting. Immediately following the 2008 Chapter meeting in Anchorage, Jim Reynolds was randomly selected to fill that seat. Hence, the 2008 WNA committee consisted of Bill Hauser, Tim Joyce, and a vacant seat, which was later filled by Jim Reynolds.

In an effort to encourage more nominees for Chapter awards, including the WNA, the chair persons of the Chapter award committees are considering moving the award nomination deadline. The current deadline falls amidst the busy field season, which likely contributes to the paucity of nominations in some years. In 2008-2009, award committee chair persons plan to begin a dialogue with the Executive Committee to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of moving the deadline to December, well outside of the field season. The annual meeting would be used to encourage more nominations for awards to be presented at the following years' meeting. The award committee chairpersons welcome input from Chapter members on this or any other issues relating to Chapter awards. ☺

### 2009 Alaska Chapter Officers

**President**

Toshihide "Hamachan" Hamazaki, ADF&G/CF, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage 99518-1599; 267-2158 wk, Fax: 267-2442, [Hamachan.Hamazaki@alaska.gov](mailto:Hamachan.Hamazaki@alaska.gov)

**President-Elect**

Lisa Stuby, ADF&G/SF, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks 99701-1599; 459-7202 wk, Fax: 456-2259, [Lisa.Stuby@alaska.gov](mailto:Lisa.Stuby@alaska.gov)

**Vice President**

Audra Brase, ADF&G/SF, 1300 College Road, Fairbanks 99701-1599; 459-7244 wk, Fax: 459-7347, [Audra.Brase@alaska.gov](mailto:Audra.Brase@alaska.gov)

**Treasurer**

Lee Ann Gardner, RWJ Consulting, P.O. Box 672302, Chugiak 99567-2302; 688-1400 wk, Fax: 688-1400, [rwjconsulting@ak.net](mailto:rwjconsulting@ak.net)

**Assistant Treasurer**

Cindy Tribuzio, NOAA Fisheries, Auke Bay Laboratories, Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute, 17109 Pt. Lena Loop Road, Juneau 99801; 789-6007 wk, Fax: 789-6094, [Cindy.Tribuzio@noaa.gov](mailto:Cindy.Tribuzio@noaa.gov)

**Secretary**

Karla Bush, ADF&G/CF, P.O. Box 110024, Juneau 99811-0024, 465-4259 wk, Fax: 465-4944, [Karla.Bush@alaska.gov](mailto:Karla.Bush@alaska.gov)

**Past President**

Bert Lewis, ADF&G/CF, P.O. Box 669, Cordova 99574-0669, 424-3212 wk, Fax: 424-3235, [Bert.Lewis@alaska.gov](mailto:Bert.Lewis@alaska.gov)

**Student Subunit Representative**

Shelley Woods, UAF, P.O. Box 753626, Fairbanks 99775; 699-7435 wk, [shelleywoods@gmail.com](mailto:shelleywoods@gmail.com)

**Feel free to contact the Executive Committee members**