



Greetings,

The second quarter of year 6 for GWA has come to an end and time for a brief, informal summary of what our program has been working on.

Program Highlights – science, management, administration, and outreach

- The Program Management Team (PMT) held an informative 2nd quarter PI teleconference to review administrative needs and have a roundtable discussion about observations from this spring and summer’s ongoing field work. Observations are preliminary and should not be interpreted as results:
 - Spring observations note upper water column temperatures are closer to normal but still seeing some warmer temperatures at depth from recent year’s ocean warming events (The Blob & El Niño). Zooplankton and diatom indices are within normal range but copepod species composition is still dominated by southern warmer water species.
 - There have been no reports of large seabird die-offs in the Gulf of Alaska; however, colleagues monitoring the California current have seen some associated with low food availability.
 - There has been a lack of humpback whales throughout the northeastern GOA and 4 dead whales were reported in PWS. A great example of collaboration occurred in the field as reports of the dead whales came in. Several efforts were made to locate the whales and collect samples for NMFS Protected Resources and the Alaska Stranding Network. Thanks goes out to the PWSSC, USFWS, and the Nearshore group.
 - The Nearshore group completed their surveys and noted some changes in key species. There was a noticeable reduction in sea stars associated with sea star wasting disease. Timing of this event has coincided with anomalously warmer water temperatures in other regions of the NE Pacific.
 - Scott Pegau, HRM Lead, reports that this spring there was a near record low of miles of herring spawn; few adults, and lots of age 1 herring. Also, a [post-doc position](#) for the program has been advertised.
- All GWA final reports have gone through a review process and delivered to the EVOSTC staff with one exception which has been in the hands of a peer reviewer.
- The PMT and PIs have started on their FY18 work plans to the EVOSTC and will be working towards completing them during the early weeks of the 3rd quarter (August).
- Planning for the Annual PI meeting in Cordova this fall (week of Nov. 14th) has begun – tentative guest speakers will be:
 - Sam McClatchie (NOAA SW Fisheries Science Center) - overview of the California Cooperative Fisheries Investigations (CalCOLFI) long-term (68th year in 2017) monitoring program in the California Current.
 - Stephani Zador (NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center) – overview of using long-term indicators for the Ecosystems Considerations Annual Reports to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC) and additional contributions by GWA.
- The PMT and Outreach Coordinator, Stacey Buckelew, held an outreach kick-off meeting on July 26 in Anchorage and via teleconference. Outreach during this five-year cycle will be geared

towards delivering information and products that meet the needs of resource managers and members of spill-affected communities. An Outreach Steering Committee is currently being assembled that will guide the development of products to inform the public and managers about changes in the environment and the impact of these changes on injured resources and services.

Data Management

- The [Research Workspace](#) was launched in June and is fully functioning for the EVOSTC programs. The Research Workspace is a redesign of the Ocean Workspace with new features to improve data management and collaboration throughout all stages of scientific programs.
- We are pleased to announce that the Research Workspace DataONE Member Node is officially live! Through the member node, data can be archived from the Research Workspace in DataONE, and exposed for discoverability by broad scientific audiences through the DataONE network. The final data packages from the EVOS Gulf Watch Alaska and Herring Research & Monitoring projects have now been archived with DataONE and received unique digital object identifiers (DOI).
 - To search for EVOS GWA or HRM data visit [DataONE Search](#), search by keywords, such as herring, Gulf Watch Alaska, EVOS, or your last name or, under Member Node select “Research Workspace”.
 - Example of citation for a published dataset:
Johanna Vollenweider and Scott Pegau. 2017. Age at first spawn for herring in Prince William Sound, 2012-2015. Data set. Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council Herring Research and Program. Research Workspace. doi: 10.24431/rw1k115.
 - For a complete list of project DOIs, visit the Research Workspace>Data Management>EVOS Gulf Watch & Herring or click [here](#).

Deep Sea Research II Special Issue – There are now 10 papers available online and more to come:

1. [Wildlife population recovery, Esler et al.](#)
2. [Variation in abundance of mussels, Bodkin et al.](#)
3. [Movement of post-spawning herring, Bishop and Eiler](#)
4. [Use of UAV for intertidal monitoring, Iken and Konar](#)
5. [Interannual variability in lower trophic levels on the Alaskan Shelf, Batten et al.](#)
6. [Empirically based models - Pacific Herring recruitment in PWS, Sewell et al.](#)
7. [A Review of distribution and quantity of lingering oil - EVOS, Nixon and Michel](#)
8. [Regional variation of humpback whale predation on Pacific herring- GOA, Moran et al.](#)
9. [Conditions of persistent oil in PWS 26 years after the Exxon Valdez spill, Lindeberg et al.](#)
10. [Patterns of dist., abund., and change over time – subarctic marine birds, Cushing et al.](#)

In the News and Related Links online:

- [Intertidal Monitoring](#) - YouTube, Nearshore group (Ben Weitzman)
- [Alaska killer whales – BBC Alaska live video](#) (Dan Olsen collaboration)
- [Sea star populations in Kachemak Bay annihilated by wasting disease](#) – ADN.com
- [Emptied tide pools tell the story of Kachemak Bay’s disrupted ecosystem](#) – ADN.com

Important Dates (2017):

- Aug. 23 Deadline for FY18 Work Plans
- Aug. 30 NOAA Grant Semi-Annual Report

- Sept. 7 EVOSTC Science Panel Review
- Sept. 28 EVOSTC PAC meeting
- Nov. 14 EVOSTC meeting
- Nov. 15-17 GWA Annual PI meeting

GWA quarterly photos

Nearshore team conducting various aspects of their surveys: clam populations (upper left), nearshore seabird observations (upper right), intertidal community structure (lower left), and sea otter observations (lower right).

