



4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: Nov 1, 2018 - Jan 31, 2019

Greetings!

The Gulf Watch Alaska (GWA) program progressed through the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of monitoring year 7 with a few hiccups due to the federal government shutdown. The GWA management team and affected Principal Investigators (PIs) are playing catch-up. The biggest impact to the program affected the timing of submission of our annual reports; to accommodate for the time lost, we received a one-month extension on the deadline. We appreciate the EVOSTC staff for understanding the situation. Here is a brief summary of our program's fourth quarter activities and accomplishments:

### **Science Update:**

- PIs spent much of this quarter cleaning up their datasets from the previous quarter's field efforts and focusing on synthesis manuscripts.
- During the annual PI meeting, PIs were given a briefing on the [COASST Die-off Alert program](#) (Coastal Observation And Seabird Survey Team), received protocol training, and are now qualified to collect data/samples while conducting fieldwork in the future.

### **Program Management Team:**

- The GWA management team and HRM Program Lead successfully held our annual PI meetings in Anchorage, November 14-16. This year's meetings focused on science synthesis efforts and promoted some great discussions among PIs.
- GWA's regularly scheduled quarterly meeting during the 2019 Alaska Marine Science Symposium (AMSS) in January was cancelled due to the federal government shutdown, but the GWA management team responded by convening a smaller group of Environmental Drivers PIs to discuss manuscripts and by holding a quarterly teleconference with PIs in February.
- In preparation for the EVOS 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Program Leads from GWA (Mandy Lindeberg) and HRM (Scott Pegau) participated in the 2019 Alaska Forum for the Environment EVOS Day subcommittee plan team and were interviewed for the Council's documentary.
- The GWA Program Lead helped coordinate EVOS anniversary contributions at the 2019 AMSS which included a keynote presentation - *Opening our Eyes to Ecosystem Change: The Scientific Legacy of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill* and a special workshop - *The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill: A Legacy of Ecosystem Research* with oil spill researchers from around the world.

### **Data Management:**

- The Data Management Team (DMT) continued work with GWA researchers to perform annual updates and curation of remaining data from the 2017 season and incoming data from the 2018 season.
- The DMT released version 2.9 of its data catalog system, including easier and more interactive access to instructional documents, as well as an improved catalog and in-map search interfaces. More details about version 2.9 (and all other catalog versions) are available online at <https://axiomdatascience.com/portal-updates/>.

### **Outreach:**

- Despite the federal government shutdown, GWA was well represented at the 2019 AMSS with PIs contributing 4 oral presentations and 10 posters.
- GWA's Science Coordinator attended the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES) annual meeting and gave a talk titled "Ecosystem Variability and Connectivity in the Gulf of

Alaska following another major ecosystem perturbation”.

- [Gulf Watch Alaska’s public website](#) continues to provide information and resources on the program, individual projects, and outreach. Have a look around!

**Relevant Media:**

- [30 years later, researchers are still learning from the Exxon Valdez oil spill](#) - KTUU article
- [“Listening to the Sound: The work of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council”](#). This short film includes historic footage of the spill, new interviews and information on the scientific and habitat work funded by the Trustee Council since the spill.

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

- **March 24, 2019** - 30th Anniversary of the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill
- **April 1, 2019** - FY18 Annual Reports due (delayed due to federal government shutdown)

**Gulf Watch Alaska quarterly photo (Winter):**



*Environmental Drivers Component: Plankton tow in PWS. Ice does present its challenges. (R. Hopcroft)*