

Marine Habitat Mapping Technology Workshop for Alaska

April 2–4, 2007
Anchorage, Alaska

Many marine species depend on the seafloor environment. Rather than mapping the distribution of the species themselves, benthic habitat mapping characterizes wide regions of the seafloor and combines this with much smaller visual and sampling surveys that match species with habitat characteristics. Because this approach is much more efficient than traditional methods, it can be applied over large areas relevant to ecosystems or species populations, contributing to rational management of ocean resources.

The workshop is intended to serve both the managers/researchers who need specific technical knowledge about marine habitat mapping, and the wider community that has a stake in the management of marine resources.

Workshop focus

- Technical and methodological review of marine habitat mapping as applied to Alaska
- Approaches to selecting appropriate and cost-effective tools
- Community education and forum for discussion

Check the Alaska Sea Grant web site at alaskaseagrant.org/conferences for ongoing information updates, or contact Jennifer Reynolds, (907) 474-5871, jreynolds@guru.uaf.edu.

To be added to the workshop mailing list, contact meeting coordinator Sherri Pristash, Alaska Sea Grant, fnsap@uaf.edu or (907) 474-6701.

Sponsored by the North Pacific Research Board.



alaskaseagrant.org

Workshop participants

- fishery and marine resource managers
- scientific community that conducts marine habitat mapping
- state government
- coastal communities
- commercial fishing organizations
- non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- companies that conduct marine mapping and imaging surveys

Workshop topics

- A discussion of what is a habitat, why is it mapped, and what is meant by habitat mapping.
- Multibeam mapping technologies, and how to select the most appropriate instrument.
- Visual survey technologies, and how to select the most appropriate method.
- Importance of appropriate data analysis methods, and discussion of examples.
- Alternatives to multibeam and visual surveys (newly developed and experimental methods).
- How to approach the mismatch between needs and cost/resource requirements. This includes the problem of scale, concepts of nested surveys, and extrapolation methods.
- Data requirements and methodologies for classifying benthic habitats.
- Mechanisms for dissemination and access to habitat information (databases or metadata).
- Alaska marine environments, range of seafloor characteristics and mapping approaches.
- Examples from other regions, especially at high latitude.

Workshop structure

April 2-3

Invited speakers present a **short course** on marine habitat mapping, with **technical overview** of current capabilities and methodologies.

Formal **poster session**; all workshop participants invited to present and participate.

April 4 (half-day)

Technical writing session by selected working groups, open to any others who wish to observe.

Summaries produced by these groups will be combined into an Executive Summary report of the workshop, for public distribution.

Steering Committee

Jennifer Reynolds, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Brian Allee, Alaska Sea Grant

Gary Greene, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories

David Witherell, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council

Jon Kurland, NOAA Fisheries

Doug Woodby, Alaska Department of Fish & Game