

Letter from the Principal Investigator

October 2017

Greetings to everyone,

The snowflakes outside my window and the growing darkness are firm reminders that the summer of 2017 is over. But even as the quiet of winter descends outside, our offices and those of our UA colleagues are abuzz with activity thanks to support from the national NSF EPSCoR program.

First, a 3-year, \$2.1 million NSF EPSCoR award will fund the Teaching Through Technologies (T3) Alliance, a nationwide effort to excite low-income and first-generation-to-college high school students about STEM fields through the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS), 3-D printers, and programmable mini-computers. It's being run by UAF researcher John Monahan and is a successor to the EPSCoR-funded "Modern Blanket Toss" program, which used UAS as a learning tool at five rural Alaska high schools. In addition, UAF researcher Georgina Gibson was recently awarded a 2-year, \$222,000 NSF EPSCoR Track-4 fellowship, which will fund her to collaborate with Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico to improve modeling of dissolved organic matter from Arctic rivers.

Also significantly, we at Alaska NSF EPSCoR have received a \$1 million supplemental award from the national NSF EPSCoR program, which will enable us to sustain some of our Alaska ACE research and outreach activities until we can begin our "Fire and Ice" project - which, if funded, would start next fall. The supplemental funding will help to maintain the Alaska EPSCoR office, to sustain critical partnerships both within and outside of the University of Alaska, and to grow our economic development efforts. It will also support further stakeholder outreach by our test cases, as well as work by a cohort of UA students, who will generate user-friendly products from ACE project data and make the products publicly available through our data portal.

And speaking of research products, here's one we're extremely proud of: "The Future of Pacific Salmon in the Face of Environmental Change," the cover story in the October issue of the Fisheries journal. The article summarizes Southcentral Test Case research into the impacts of climate and landscape change on Southcentral salmon populations and in turn on fishing communities. The piece was led by EPSCoR postdoc Erik Schoen with input from 15 researchers from across the project. It's a great example of the contributions Alaska NSF EPSCoR is making to scientific knowledge and I encourage you to give it a read - because while the fish have stopped running for 2017, scientific discovery is a year-round endeavor.

Cheers,



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NSF ESTABLISHED PROGRAM TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH