

# Letter from the Principal Investigator

May 2019

Hello everyone,

Summer is finally here, and has brought with it a lot of new and exciting developments to the Fire and Ice project.

First of all, we made our first faculty hire! Dr. Gwenn Hennon will start in fall 2019 as an Assistant Professor of Oceanography at UAF, and will assist the Coastal Margins team in phytoplankton research. She comes to us from a postdoctoral position at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University, and holds a bachelor's in Chemistry from MIT and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Oceanography from the University of Washington. She's the first of five tenure-track hires we'll be making over the course of the project and we're delighted to have her.

More hires are also in the works: up here at UAF, the Boreal Fires team is in the process of hiring a remote sensing faculty member, not to mention a remote sensing postdoc and Ph.D student. We're also preparing to advertise for a UAA Earth Surface Processes faculty, who will assist both our research teams with modeling efforts. Our Diversity, Education and Workforce Development component has hired Megan McGinty as a postdoc to work on out-of-school programs and educational research, and also hired Courtney Breest as a new Outreach Coordinator. Some of you may remember Courtney from our last research project, and it's been great having her back on the team. She'll help arrange and manage activities and programs in Anchorage and the Kenai and in Juneau as well.

And this doesn't include the many student hires we've made as we ramp up our first field season. Coastal Margins researchers conducted their first fieldwork in early April, undertaking many hours of sampling around both Juneau and Kachemak Bay. Recent greenup here in the Interior is a sure sign that Boreal Fires scientists are ready to begin their own fieldwork, and Martin Stuefer is getting his plane ready for hyperspectral data gathering in the Interior and Southeast. We've also started strong on our outreach events, including a Science Pub here in Fairbanks, and two workshops on how to incorporate Indigenous Knowledges into research and teaching.

The first year of a five-year research project can sometimes be a bit slow, but right now it certainly doesn't feel like it. Thanks to everyone out there doing the work to make this initial summer of Fire and Ice a successful one.

Regards,

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