

NOAA WEST WATCH
May 2018
SUMMARY

ATTENDEES*

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| 1. Polly Hicks | 17. Megan Harper |
| 2. Dan McEvoy | 18. Michael Anderson |
| 3. Annie | 19. Mike |
| 4. Alex Harper | 20. Nancy Solver |
| 5. Amy Sprenger | 21. NWFSC Montlake |
| 6. Andrea Bair | 22. Patrick Rutten |
| 7. Ben Larson | 23. Peter Fickenscher |
| 8. Clarissa Anderson | 24. Rachel Wood |
| 9. Courtney Greiner | 25. Roxanne Robertson |
| 10. Emily Mazur | 26. Simone Alin |
| 11. James Behrens | 27. Tanya Haddad |
| 12. Jan Newton | 28. Timi Vann |
| 13. Jennifer Steger | 29. Tina Fahy |
| 14. Kim Stark | 30. Toby Garfield |
| 15. Larry Gilbertson | |
| 16. Linda Rhodes | |

*There were an addition 8 unidentified attendees

SUMMARY

Polly Hicks (NOAA West) welcomed everyone to the webinar. She gave an overview of the agenda for NOAA's West Watch and reminded participants that this webinar is designed to bring together NOAA staff and NOAA partners from across the western region to share information about regional environmental observations and impacts on human systems. Dan McEvoy (WRCC) delivered an update on regional climate conditions. Drought intensified in the four corners region and the SW drought has gotten very severe. This year has been the tale of 2 water years; cold and wet in the NW and dry in the south and eastern portion of the region. Temperatures are exacerbating drought from precipitation. High significant wildfire potential outlooks above normal June – Aug of this year throughout the region even despite wet conditions in MT. Looking forward, forecasts are for slightly drier potential in PNW and above normal temp across US, especially in SW which could exacerbate the drought.

Representatives of the three IOOS programs on the west coast provided nearshore oceanographic updates from NANOOS (Jan Newton), CeNCOOS (Alex Harper), and SCCOOS (Clarissa Anderson).

NANOOS: Warmer than average water in pacific, except right off our coast. Currently seeing a strong warming off coasts of OR and WA, especially with the seasonal forecasts. There were three strong wave height episodes since 2018 due to strong regional wind forcing hitting out coasts. River Flow – High runoff in pulses in April, which influences salinity in Salish Sea. An analysis from 2011 – 2018 found

salinities strongly correlated with just river flow (90%). Exploring how salinity patterns affects driving patterns and HABs/Hypoxia.

CeNCOOS: As with NANOOS, THE CeNCOOS network has seen some atmospheric forcing. Experienced cooler than normal conditions in north early in season, but constantly high temps in southern part of region. Cool sea surface temp in SF and Monterey Bay - watching for onset of spring upwelling season. The area has experienced significant kelp die off in past years from many oceanographic stressors with little success in reforesting kelp due to purple urchins.

SCCOOS: New instrument for phytoplankton that brings in high resolution imagery that allows for the inclusion of biodiversity and high frequency sampling. Results from sampling show a nutrient signal from the deposition of ash during the large fires in CA last year. The full effects from the ash input are still being understood. There were stronger red tide/bioluminescent events in May that lasted a week and a half and are fading. More than one dinoflagellate was found during these events including one that had never been seen in CA before as it is found in Mediterranean. Sept of 2013 was the last time that we had a big bloom of these species. In LA County, pelicans fell from sky emaciated and disoriented. They were not related to the bioluminescent event, but were suffering from hypothermia and starvation. The cause is unclear.

The webinar ended with Polly Hicks reporting on impacts from weather, climate and oceanographic anomalies that were reported in the media since the March NOAA West Watch.