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## Fish News

May 20, 2013

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### Managing Our Fisheries Conference Draws Alaskans to Washington, D.C.

*By Ernie Weiss, AEB Natural Resources Director*

The Managing Our Nations Fisheries 3 conference was held May 6 – 9, 2013 in Washington DC. This was the third installment of this conference. It was last held in 2005. This year, the theme of the conference was Advancing Sustainability. The three broad topics discussed were: 1) Improving Fishery Management Essentials, 2) Advancing



Keith Colburn of the Discovery Channel show, “The Deadliest Catch,” was one of the featured speakers.

Ecosystem-Based Decision Making, and 3) Providing for Fishing Community Stability.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council had a large contingent at the MONF3 conference. Fourteen of 21 Advisory Panel members were present, and all but one of the NP Council members showed up for the conference. The NPFMC is arguably the most respected, and yet has the leanest staff

of all the fishery management councils. An informal headcount revealed at least 60 Alaskans attended, out of a conference total of 600 participants.

The sessions were well organized. Each topic within a session included presentations, a moderated panel and audience participation. All of the [findings](#) were presented to the conference on the last day, followed by reactions from a final panel. The final results & recommendations from the conference will be released later this year, however there were a few themes recurring throughout the conference sessions:

- Sustainable fisheries and sustainable communities go hand in hand.
- Flexibility is a key component to successful fisheries management.
- Stewardship has to be a local community and fishermen issue.
- Climate change will impact all fishery management decisions moving forward.

A major impetus for the timing of the conference is the upcoming reauthorization of the [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#) (MSA), which is set to expire September 30<sup>th</sup> of this year. MSA is the primary law governing fishery management in federal waters. Featured conference speakers Senator Mark Begich and Congressman Doc Hastings both have held hearings on MSA reauthorization this past March. Senator Begich chairs the Senate Oceans Subcommittee, and Congressman Hastings chairs the House Natural Resources committee. The next MSA hearing will be the [House Fisheries Subcommittee](#) at 6:30 a.m. Alaska time on Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>.

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## **AEB Fishermen's Meeting to be Held in Sand Point on May 22nd**

AEB Fisheries Consultant Sam Cotten and AEB Natural Resources Director Ernie Weiss will lead a fishermen's informational meeting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, May 22nd at the Sand Point AEB office. The scheduled meeting is dependent on volcanic eruptions/ash permitting flights.

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