



Director's Achievement Awards for Outstanding Service for 2007

ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries • From the Office of the Director, John Hilsinger

The Director's Achievement Award for Outstanding Service is given to employees whose performance is clearly superior to that of others in similar positions or to employees who have made significant contributions to the division over the last year. Candidates for an award are nominated by staff through their respective Regional Supervisors or Section Chiefs. The Director's Achievement Award for Meritorious Service is the highest award given by the division to an employee who has shown excellence in his or her work during the preceding year or years. I am pleased to announce that the following individuals have been selected to receive the Director's Achievement Awards for 2007.



Teresa Stolpe,
Region I,
Fish and Wildlife
Technician IV,
Petersburg



Rich Gustafson,
Region II
Fishery Biologist I,
Homer



Kim Baldwin,
Region III
Accounting Clerk II,
Anchorage



Mark Stichert,
Region IV
Fishery Biologist III,
Kodiak/Chignik



Gail Smith, Headquarters
Research Analyst III,
Juneau



Jim Seeb and Lisa Seeb, Headquarters
Fishery Scientists,
Anchorage





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Teresa Stolpe, Region I Fish And Wildlife Technician IV, Petersburg

Teresa Stolpe has worked for the division in the Petersburg area office since 1997. She began her career with the department as an Administrative Clerk II, but spent most of her 10 years with the department as a Fish and Wildlife Technician with the Region I Shellfish Program.

While working as an Administrative Clerk II, she proved very effective at providing front desk and administrative support for several projects and often assisted shellfish staff with fishery registrations. This dovetailed nicely with her later transition to the shellfish program.

Teresa started with the shellfish program as a Fish and Wildlife Technician (FWT) III and later was promoted to an FWT IV. She has played a critical role interfacing with the shellfish fleet and general public and has done so in a polite, efficient manner. Her in-depth understanding of the region's shellfish management and research programs in addition to her technical knowledge of shellfish regulations, requirements for registration, submission of proper fish ticket and logbooks, and data entry have made her invaluable to the shellfish program and region.

Petersburg is well known to harbor a large crab and shrimp commercial fleet that remains actively tuned in to local shellfish fishery management issues. This requires a department contact with a great deal of knowledge, organization, and effective communication skills. Teresa has gone



beyond the call of duty to help the public understand commercial shellfish fishing regulations and management issues that can become quite complicated. She has become very adept at keeping her hand on the pulse of issues and concerns building in the fleet. She performed much of her work with a great degree of independence during a several year period while working remotely from her supervisor. Teresa's work can become very stressful at times, yet she has always been known to conduct her work courteously and with a positive attitude.

Beyond her contact with the public, Teresa's devotion to the department and enjoyment of her job is obvious. She routinely exceeds expectations for projects assigned to her. Her attention to detail, organizational ability, reliability, and complete competence have made her a key member of a team that the Shellfish Program could not easily do without. She has a good and growing knowledge of the "nuts and bolts" of shellfish fishery management and has also become an important resource for her insights regarding smooth operation of shellfish research stock assessment surveys, data collection, and data entry. Teresa stands out in her dedication to her project and the department with knowledge, work habits, and an attitude that deserve high recognition through this Director's Achievement Award for Outstanding Service for 2007.



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Rich Gustafson, Region II Fishery Biologist I, Homer

Rich Gustafson has worked for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for so long that it was difficult to pin down his actual start date, but it was somewhere in the mid-1970s. Rich is a New Mexico native, and has a B.S. degree from UAF in Fairbanks. In his early years with the department, Rich worked on Kodiak crab and Bristol Bay salmon. He came to the Homer office in 1982 and has worked on crab in Region II as well as a suite of other species including scallops and shrimp. Rich also assists in numerous capacities with every research survey conducted in Region II.

Rich has been one of the most dedicated and hardest working people in marine science since he first started with the department. He instituted research that is still ongoing today, and continues to assist in adding new projects to our research program as well as incorporating innovative technology into Region II surveys. Rich started the clam sampling program in Kachemak Bay, assisted in moving toward electronic gathering of data, and developed a camera system for the trawl headrope to obtain data on Tanner crab catchability. Rich also put forth the idea and assisted in procuring a grant to purchase net mensuration equipment to monitor trawl performance via acoustic sensors on our trawl nets, which provide real-time measurements of net opening (width), height off the bottom of head and foot ropes, and denote contact of the foot rope with the bottom.

Rich also spent time as an observer for the state. He conducted dockside sampling of crab in Seldovia and Homer during the big crab fishing years as well



as spent time as an observer on scallop vessels during the 1980s. Rich has been the sole observer on board scallop vessels fishing in Kamishak Bay in Lower Cook Inlet since 1993. Through all of his efforts, diligence, and hard work, Rich has gained the respect of fishermen because they know he truly cares about Alaska's fisheries resources.

Rich excels in running deck operations in the field and at organizing research trips. His extraordinary diligence in gear maintenance is unrivaled and his skills at repairing nets while at sea (and still on the trawl drum) never ceased to amaze anyone who witnessed him in action. Additionally, if anyone can measure

crab more accurately and faster than Rich, they'd have to prove it for it to be believed.

Richard Gustafson is a pleasure to work with. He is a critical component of the Region II shellfish/groundfish research program, and responsible for many of the program's innovations and advances over the years. The State of Alaska, its citizens, and its marine resources owe Rich an enormous debt of gratitude for all of his years of dedicated service. Any marine scientist who spends numerous days per year at sea knows the commitment it takes and the time it takes away from loved ones; hence Rich's wife and children also deserve our thanks for their tremendous support of Rich over these many years. Rich is highly respected by all of his colleagues throughout the department and is truly deserving of this Director's Achievement Award for Outstanding Service for 2007.



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Kim Baldwin, Region III Accounting Clerk II, Anchorage

Kim Baldwin is an Accounting Clerk II for the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) Region. Kim started working for the Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, AYK Region in September 1997 and is responsible for providing comprehensive accounting support to AYK programs located in Aniak, Anvik, Anchorage, Bethel, Eagle, Emmonak, Kotzebue, Nome, Saint Mary's, and Unalakleet.

Kim performs a multitude of administrative duties for AYK Region, providing accounting support to over 105 programs spread across the most of the state. She specifically is responsible for processing all AYK invoices, travel claims, AJEs, One-Card, and CTA statements. Additional duties include generating monthly ETS audit trail/ledger balance reports, assisting AYK staff with booking State Travel Office reservations, securing US/Canada JTC and Panel Support reservations and transportation, as well as for presenting information at the annual Regional Administrative Field Office workshop.

Since Kim started working for AYK Region, she has been a model employee. Her dedication and commitment for giving 110% at whatever task she's undertaking is outstanding and very much appreciated by all regional and divisional staff. In performance



of her assigned duties, Kim is frequently in contact with a wide variety of personnel, both within and outside the department. Her communication skills are outstanding. Many of the AYK programs that Kim supports are spread across a large area of the state, some in very remote locations. This can be especially challenging when trying to reach AYK project managers, vendors, or US/Canada Yukon Panel members that sometimes have limited lines of communication. Kim somehow is always able to locate her intended

subject to obtain or convey whatever information is required. As they say, you can run, but you can't hide - Kim will always track you down!

Kim is always cheery and helpful with whomever she's assisting. Her desire to accept new assignments and challenges with a smile and positive attitude is outstanding and very contagious. She never hesitates to offer assistance to anyone in need of a little extra help. Kim can always be counted on to produce an accurate and efficient work product and is an outstanding asset to AYK Region and the Division of Commercial Fisheries as a whole. It is for these reasons, and many more not mentioned, that Kim Baldwin is well deserving of the 2007 Director's Achievement Award for Outstanding Service.



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Mark Stichert, Region IV Fishery Biologist III, Kodiak/Chignik

Mark Stichert started working for the Division of Commercial Fisheries in 2006 while also finishing his MS degree in Fisheries from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. His Master's thesis research on the seasonal distribution, abundance, and habitat use of salmonids in Southeastern Alaska fit well with his position as the Chignik salmon and herring Assistant Area Management Biologist. Mark moved into the role of acting Chignik Area Management Biologist in January 2007, a responsibility that became permanent in July 2007. Unfortunately, the past two years sockeye salmon runs in Chignik have been less than stellar. For those that are unaware, the Chignik weir is the largest in the state, requiring a barge operated pile driver to annually set piling across the river to construct the weir and SCUBA divers to install and keep the weir "fish tight".

In his first winter with the department, Mark provided major edits, rewrote, or authored four



Chignik Annual Management Reports. He was the primary author of the season summary, authored Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals which were discussed at the January 2008 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting; he was lead author of the 2007 operation/management plan for the Chignik weir, test fish plan, scale sampling plan, and dive plan, while also reviewing some 16 peer documents for the region.

Mark has also worked with the Chignik stakeholders in preseason meetings, the Chignik Seiners Association with the cooperative smolt

project, and helped get the local Advisory Committee functioning again.

Mark has worked diligently with commercial, sport, and subsistence fishermen most of the time without a full time assistant due to recruitment and retention problems. It is a pleasure to recognize his service with this Director's Achievement Award for Outstanding Service for 2007.



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Gail Smith, Headquarters Research Analyst III, Juneau

Gail Smith has successfully bridged the worlds of groundfish management and information technology since she began her position as a Research Analyst in Headquarters over 10 years ago. Since then she has guided the Division through a dynamic time that included forging relationships with federal agencies, rapid evolution of information technologies (IT), an ever changing political climate in the industry, and even coaxing some seafood processors into the computer age.

The result is a long list of accomplishments, some of which are: multi-agency data sharing agreements; two complete iterations of the Fish Ticket System; a painstaking overhaul of historic data; a set of comprehensive documentation including codes, user guides, audit trails, and training materials; a regular data feed process; and maybe most importantly, an expert source for information and reporting. Aside from accomplishments, Gail adds a spark and professionalism that is needed for success. Someone must be an advocate for the systems and Gail has achieved that at all levels, from the programming staff, to fisheries managers and industry representatives.

Bringing all those groups together, addressing their concerns, finding consensus, and making a



decision is a hallmark of her accomplishments.

This brings us to today where the division has a complete groundfish and shellfish electronic reporting system, called eLandings, in full production. With multiple agencies involved, a commercial contractor, and a user base of competitive seafood businesses spread throughout Alaska, this type of project has a very high risk of failure. In spite of the obstacles, the eLandings project is a success and Gail's leadership is the primary reason why.

Over the years, Gail has made numerous presentations to staff, federal agencies, and industry representatives. Gail is a wonderful speaker and can explain complex subjects in a clear and engaging style. She is a great ambassador for the division and a staunch supporter of the division's programs—sometimes in the face of a less supportive audience. But Gail perseveres and is continually moving forward bringing even the most reluctant participants along—a difficult, sometime thankless, yet absolutely critical reason for our success. It is a great pleasure to recognize her outstanding service with the Director's Achievement Award for Outstanding Service for 2007.



Director's Achievement Award for Meritorious Service for 2007

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Jim Seeb and Lisa Seeb, Headquarters Fishery Scientists, Anchorage

Jim and Lisa Seeb came to work for the Department of Fish and Game Commercial Fisheries Division in 1990 from faculty positions at Southern Illinois University. This was not the first time that the Seebes had been involved with genetic studies in Alaska. Jim had previously studied the population structure of pink salmon in Prince William Sound and both had provided the analysis that settled a case involving illegal harvest of King Crab.



Jim was appointed as Principal Geneticist in 1990, the sole member of the genetics lab. His arrival coincided with the availability of Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee funding which he sought to use to expand research into the genetic population structure of both salmon and marine species. In 1991, Lisa Seeb was appointed to the position of Fishery Biologist IV and placed in charge of developing a genetic stock identification program for the department.

Prior to their arrival, the laboratory consisted of two people with the primary function of reviewing Fish and Egg Transport Permits and dabbling in genetic structure of salmon. Within the first three years, the lab had been christened the Gene Conservation Laboratory and employed 21 staff. Working tirelessly, the Seebes transformed the department's genetics program from a fringe player into an integral tool sought after to answer questions about stock structure and the distribution of stocks in commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries. In addition, they worked to educate staff, non-governmental organizations, and the public about the nature and application of genetic information and made

genetics an integral part of the department's program. Today, there are genetics-related projects in all regions of the state and the Gene Conservation Laboratory is one of the leading laboratories in the field due to their efforts.

Much of the work during the early years consisted of large projects to investigate the stock structure of pink salmon in Prince Wil-

liam Sound, sockeye salmon in Cook Inlet, chum salmon from Asia to Washington, Chinook salmon throughout Alaska, and various commercially important marine species in the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea. Building upon these early efforts, they oversaw the development of a program to use genetic stock identification to provide stock composition estimates for important fisheries throughout the state including the Yukon River, Bristol Bay, Area M, Upper Cook Inlet, and Southeast Alaska.

During their tenure with the department, genetic technologies went through major changes from allozymes to microsatellites to single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs). The Seebes were two of the first in the field to see the potential of SNPs and together they spearheaded the conversion of genetics programs internationally to these state-of-the-art markers. Jim and Lisa Seeb have exemplified the dedication and the vision to steer the program to the internationally acclaimed status it enjoys today. It is a great pleasure to award them the division's highest award—the Director's Achievement Award for Meritorious Service for 2007.