



From the Office of the Director, Jeff Regnart  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Commercial Fisheries

# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

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. 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. I am pleased to announce that the following individuals have been selected to receive the Director's Achievement Awards for 2013.

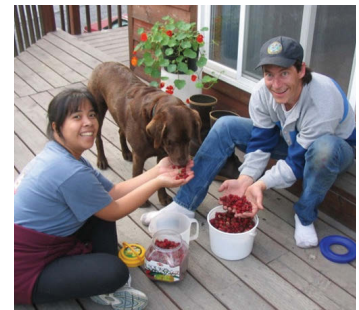
Judy Berger  
Fishery Biologist III • Headquarters • Anchorage



Mike Vaughn  
Fishery Biologist II • Region I • Sitka



Jim and Melanie O'Rourke  
Fish and Wildlife Technician III • Region II • Cordova



Bruce McIntosh  
Fishery Biologist III • Region III • Fairbanks



Robin Gardner  
Administrative Officer II • Region IV • Kodiak



Andy Barclay  
Fishery Biologist III • Headquarters • Anchorage





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# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

Mike Vaughn  
Fishery Biologist II • Region I • Sitka

Michael Vaughn has worked for the Division of Commercial Fisheries since 1992. He started his career with the department as a seasonal fisheries technician, where he worked at the Redoubt Falls weir outside Sitka; he eventually transitioned to a position as the Sitka port sampling coordinator, where he spent long hours at the processing plant sampling salmon, training technicians, and interacting with fishermen. The Sitka Groundfish Project hired Mike in the mid-1990s, where he kept busy port sampling before moving into a fishery biologist role.

Since 2005, Mike has been in his current position, a Fishery Biologist II for the Southeast Groundfish Project, based in Sitka. Mike plays a vital role as the primary contact with the commercial groundfish fleet, and is busy year round working with fishermen and department staff to compile fishery landings and manage rockfish, lingcod, and Pacific cod fisheries in Southeast Alaska. This requires an in-depth understanding of fishermen's behavior, accurate harvest projections, and diligent catch accounting. For example, in a typical year, Mike will successfully manage as many as 17 lingcod fisheries, some of which take place in remote locations and last less than 48 hours. Mike is highly respected by the commercial fleet, and as a result, they make the extra effort to provide detailed information to Michael about their fishing plans, which is extremely valuable when making inseason management decisions.

Mike is known regionwide for his pleasant demeanor, while remaining committed to reaching fishery sam-



pling goals. Mike has also stayed true to his early roots as a port sampler in his current position—coordinating the commercial groundfish port sampling in Sitka, Juneau, Petersburg, Ketchikan, Craig, and Yakutat, is no easy feat! Although the demands of port sampling have changed over the years, Mike has an exceptional understanding of sampling goals, fisheries, and processing

plants. Mike remains an active port sampler himself, never failing to show up at the docks with a grin and scale in hand, a part of his job that he enjoys and takes pride in.

Like many ADF&G employees, Mike is responsible for many different roles in his job. He is equally at ease fielding questions from fishermen, collecting data on a commercial fishing vessel, or living and working at a remote salmon weir. Due to Mike's longevity with the department and constant interaction with the commercial fleet, Mike has become the "go to" regulation specialist for the Groundfish Project. He demonstrates a tremendous knowledge of our local fisheries and is able to communicate detailed information about regulations effectively to the public. Meanwhile, at sea, you will find Mike working tirelessly (but still smiling), helping ADF&G and vessel crew alike to accomplish their tasks.

Over the years, Mike has demonstrated an incredible commitment to managing fisheries sustainably, and has gained the recognition and respect of his peers, thus earning the 2013 Director's Award for Outstanding Service.



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# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

Jim and Melanie O'Rourke  
Fish and Wildlife Technician III • Region II • Cordova

You can always tell when spring is in the air and salmon are on their way when Jim and Melanie O'Rourke show up each year in Cordova. Jim and Mel both started working for ADF&G 23 years ago as Fish and Wildlife technicians. Since 1990, this dynamic duo has anchored a team of over 15 Cordova technicians who work on many different projects in Prince William Sound for the Division of Commercial Fisheries. Each year they help new employees figure out how everything works in Cordova and provide training—even when they don't work on the same projects. Jim and Mel also both have a reputation for attention to detail that made them a perfect addition to the Gene Conservation Laboratory in Anchorage where they picked up more seasonal work. While working in the lab, they produced a total of 629 extracted plates of DNA, which equals a total of 59,755 fish! They were both responsible for quality control DNA extractions, which are reserved for those individuals with the highest quality extractions and most experience consistently within the lab. Individually, Jim and Mel each stand out in their respective niches within the ADF&G technician world.

Melanie has worked with salmon tagging programs in one form or another for most of her career with the department. Mel started back in the day of coded wire tag recovery projects, where she collected uncoded salmon heads off the slime line, followed by bagging, tagging, and shipping to points unknown. Salmon marking projects gradually shifted to otolith thermal marks and Melanie evolved with the programs. Now her tools of the trade are knives, forceps, and otolith trays. Melanie's smooth people skills and friendly smile put her on a first-name basis with processing industry folks, from the fork lift operator and slime line workers to plant managers. Establishing and maintaining these friendly relationships has created a welcome atmosphere for department staff working at processing plants. As Melanie's experience grew she took on training of techs all over the area, meeting with technicians based in Valdez, Seward, and even Whittier. Melanie has remained a true anchor of



the Cordova team as she has seen a long list of staff and projects come and go.

For over two decades, Jim's presence in the Cordova office has given a consistency to data collections that may not be replicated anywhere else in the state. Jim's primary job has been with the age, sex and length salmon and herring monitoring projects. As part of that, Jim has been responsible for boat safety and gun training for countless technicians. He cheerfully troubleshoots jet outboards, state vehicles, trailers, and wet lab equipment, sharing his wealth of knowledge with all the new arrivals. The age, sex and length team is not only responsible for sampling all the harvests that come through the processing plants in Cordova, they also collect samples from spawning populations scattered across Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta. More than a few times, Jim's team has been weathered in at remote camps with bears lurking in the brush and a dwindling food supply. Throughout all those challenging times Jim remains upbeat—probably because he is building another of his famously entertaining stories to share upon their return. Back at the lab, there are over 20 years of salmon and herring scales archived—that is a testament to the age, sex and length team's efforts! These efforts provide data that are used to build brood tables, produce salmon and herring forecasts, and document life history patterns of local salmon populations. A recent review of Copper River Chinook salmon length data that Jim collected adds to the department's understanding of statewide fish age and size trends.

Together Jim and Mel have made a significant contribution to the department's efforts in Cordova and Anchorage. During this time, they also got married and started a family—now their two youngsters (Teagan and Carissa) are part of a well-loved Cordova and ADF&G community. Jim and Mel also know the best secret nagoonberry picking spots in the whole state.

Jim and Melanie are very deserving recipients of the 2013 Director's Award for Outstanding Service.





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# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

**Bruce McIntosh**  
Fishery Biologist III • Region III • Fairbanks

Bruce McIntosh began working for the Department of Fish and Game as a Fish and Wildlife Technician II nearly 30 years ago; since then, he has worked throughout most of the state and for three different divisions. In 1984, he started his career counting Chinook salmon using sonar on the Kenai River and worked out of the Soldotna office for three seasons. In 1985, he supplemented the Kenai sonar position with work at the Hidden Falls Hatchery in Sitka, which at that time was operated by the State of Alaska.

In 1986, Bruce began working out of the Kodiak office on the salmon weir projects. During the period of 1986 through 1992, he worked in most all of the Kodiak weir camps before taking a position as a catch sampler at the Moser Bay test fishery. After taking a year off to finish his Master's thesis, Bruce worked two years for Division of Habitat in Fairbanks. In 2001, he worked on the Holitna River tagging project on the Kuskokwim River for Division of Sport Fish.

After a nearly 16-year hiatus from sonar, Bruce returned to the Division of Commercial Fisheries in 2002 as the project leader for the Pilot Station sonar project. This project is one of the most important and challenging in the region and provides critical estimates of Chinook, chum, and coho salmon passage in the lower Yukon River. In 2005, he was promoted to AYK Regional



Sonar Biologist, overseeing projects on the Aniak, Anvik, Sheenjek, and Yukon rivers. These sonar projects provide data that are crucial to management of commercial and subsistence salmon fisheries in the region and—in the case of the border sonar project located near Eagle—fundamental to the Yukon River Salmon Treaty with Canada. His coworkers and employees know they can count on Bruce to provide important data and report critiques, making useful suggestions for improvement.

In recent years, Bruce has overseen initiation of new sonar projects near the villages of Eagle and Manley, aided with the transition to DIDSON sonar at all existing projects, and supervised the transition from analog to digital data collection at Pilot Station. His knowledge and attention to detail has been fundamental to

the success of these efforts. Bruce has also made it a point to help his staff develop professionally by gaining experience presenting at meetings and through directed training.

As he prepares for his thirty-first field season, Bruce's coworkers and staff look forward to the insight and direction he provides. Bruce has been an asset to the department and the division is proud to present Bruce McIntosh with the 2013 Director's Award for Outstanding Service.



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# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

Robin Gardner  
Administrative Officer II • Region IV • Kodiak

Robin is the Westward Region Administrative Officer II. She oversees all administrative functions for the region, including preparing annual budget requests and allocations; project management evaluations; and monitoring and administration of grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and lease agreements. Robin also supervises personnel and payroll functions for the region's positions; serves as the facility manager for regional facilities in Kodiak, Cold Bay, Sand Point, Chignik, Port Moller, and Dutch Harbor; and supervises most accounts payable and accounts receivable functions for the region. This combination of duties makes Robin a critical asset to all area and regional staff.

Robin began her work with the department as an Accounting Technician I for the Division of Commercial Fisheries in 2004 and progressed to Administrative Manager II in 2006. Her job was reclassified to Administrative Officer I in 2007, and with the additional responsibilities of managing the region's new office building in Kodiak in 2013, she was recently promoted to Administrative Officer II.

Robin is well liked and respected by all regional staff; she consistently offers assistance to her team and to other regional staff to help them with their job responsibilities. In particular, Robin does an excellent job of explaining budgetary procedures to department staff and ensures that procedures are followed. She never hesitates to train new staff and help them to complete preaudits and various other budget requirements, always saving staff time, effort, and frustration.

Westward Region staff moved into the new regional ADF&G building in 2013. Robin was tasked with oversee-



ing months (it was really years) of extensive planning and coordination among all ADF&G staff, as well as architects, engineers, and Department of Transportation staff, to make this move happen. These efforts resulted in an almost seamless transition to the new facility. Taking advantage of the three-day holiday weekend, the actual move began on Friday, February 15 and was accomplished in the midst of active management of the Tanner crab and Pacific cod fisheries. Phones, faxes, radios, copiers, and printers were operational; utilities were on and functional; the public at large was informed and educated about the change; materials were unpacked and available for use; and every staff member had the tools they needed to do their jobs as soon as the doors to the new facility were opened for the very first

time on Tuesday, February 19.

Robin works effectively and patiently with headquarters staff and regional leadership to accommodate and coordinate the various demands placed on her. For anything "administrative," Robin always knows who to contact and is an extremely effective liaison between the region and headquarters. Robin's advice and assistance to the Regional Supervisor for all budgeting, personnel concerns, and numerous other often complex administrative needs of the region are essential and appreciated. It is a pleasure to work with Robin and she is truly an asset to the region, division, and department. Her dedication to the department, her enthusiasm and work ethic, her collective contributions over the years, and her overall outstanding performance warrant her recognition and award of the 2013 Director's Award for Outstanding Service.





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# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

Andy Barclay

Fishery Biologist III • Headquarters • Anchorage



As the lead biologist for genetic projects in politically sensitive Cook Inlet, Andy Barclay did an outstanding job during 2013 spearheading new projects and guiding existing projects. New projects included the Susitna-Watana Hydroelectric Genetic Project, Coho Salmon Baseline, Coho Salmon Genetic Stock Identification (GSI), and Sockeye Salmon Retrospective projects. The first two of these included field work unprecedented within the Gene Conservation Laboratory, requiring hiring and oversight of seven full-time positions, and recruitment and coordination of scores of department volunteers. Andy wrote operational plans; secured air transportation, housing, and food; organized safety training and logistics; and tracked progress—all while maintaining

morale for folks working long hours. At the same time, Andy helped design the Sockeye Salmon Retrospective study, collected and analyzed coho salmon data from never-before-used genetic markers, and wrote an Interim Study Report through a convoluted external process.

While playing an integral role in all these new projects, Andy managed to complete existing projects, including inseason GSI of Chinook salmon in Eastside setnet catches and postseason GSI of sockeye salmon in Upper Cook Inlet fishery catches.

Andy performed all this work with the keen attention to detail, timely analysis and reporting, and a friendly and professional demeanor deserving of the 2013 Director's Award for Outstanding Service.



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# 2013 Director's Achievement Award for **MERITORIOUS SERVICE**

Judy Berger

Fishery Biologist III • Headquarters • Anchorage



As the Statewide Genetics Field Coordinator and Archive Curator for the Gene Conservation Laboratory for the past eight years, Judy Berger has been the main contact between the laboratory and samplers collecting tissues from finfish, shellfish, and invertebrates that are important for commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries. In this pivotal position, she works patiently and professionally with people inside and outside the department and quietly orchestrates sampling logistics, meticulously supervising the transfer of tissue samples into and out of the laboratory and maintaining the tissue archive. The size and complexity of her job has grown exponentially and she now tracks the collection of more than 150,000

samples per year and maintains the archive of tissue and/or DNA from more than a million individuals from across three decades.

Judy began working with the department in 1982 as a technician at the Big Lake Hatchery. In the early 1990s, she started at the genetics lab and quickly became indispensable. Her attention to detail, knowledge of the fisheries, flexibility, and rapport with samplers and colleagues sets a standard for how committed employment in a state agency can effectively serve public interests has earned her the 2013 Director's Achievement Award for Meritorious Service.