

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives In Alaska

Advancing Science - Understanding Change

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Cross-Boundary Collaboration from the Beginning: Northwestern Interior Forest Landscape Conservation Cooperative

The Northwestern Interior Forest Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC), one of the most recently-initiated LCCs in Alaska, continues to grow as a truly international collaboration. Given that the LCC's geographic boundary spans well into both Alaska and Canada (47.5% in Canada, the remainder in Alaska), cross-border cooperation is imperative to the success of the LCC's conservation efforts.

LCC staff and partners are connecting with stakeholder organizations and individuals on both sides of the border. "We want to be as inclusive as possible, so we have been constantly reaching out to new partners," says Amanda Robertson, Science Coordinator for the LCC. Each Interim Steering Committee (ISC) meeting has been bigger than the last, with strong representation emerging from Canadian federal and provincial organizations and NGOs.

The most recent ISC meeting was held in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. A bi-nationally chaired Steering Committee will continue to govern the LCC in the future, with a commitment to hold at least one meeting per year in Canada.

Other exciting developments include an on-going information needs assessment the announcement of John DeLapp as LCC Coordinator. John has been serving as Interim Coordinator since December and has been instrumental in the early initiation stages of the LCC.

Efforts are underway to complete an information needs assessment. "There is a benefit to starting slowly and identifying needs," says John DeLapp. "We will be able to identify our priority science and information needs

and support research projects more strategically in the future."

Representatives of partner organizations are working to identify landscape-scale stressors or concerns and information needs within the LCC. The results of the needs assessment will help prioritize the LCC's future conservation efforts, including research project funding to inform future management decisions.



Governance and Science Planning in the Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands Landscape Conservation Cooperative

The Aleutian and Bering Sea Islands Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) now has a solid governance base to guide conservation efforts within the region. The Interim Steering Committee finalized and adopted a charter in early March of 2012. Adoption of the charter marks an important step in the development of the LCC, which was initiated in the fall of 2011. With a charter in place and an Interim Steering Committee currently consisting of four Federal Agencies and one Alaska Native Tribe, LCC staff and partners will continue to focus on advancing the LCC mission and goals.

Looking ahead, priorities for the LCC include permanently filling the Science Coordinator position and developing a short- and long-term strategic science plan. Glenn Chen, on detail from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, currently serves as the Interim Science Coordinator through the end of June. Glenn will focus the majority of his time on the development of a science plan, building on the work of previous Interim Science Coordinator Vernon Byrd. Through analysis of existing research and management plans within the region, LCC staff and partners identified major ecosystem drivers and science needs related to prevalent conservation issues within the LCC.

The Science Plan will include:

- Synthesis of available information.
- Identification of sensitive species and habitats.
- Determination of linkages between ecosystem components and processes.
- Development of forecasting models ranging from single species to whole ecosystems.
- Integration of future studies to improve ecosystem understanding.

Program Coordinator Joins the Alaska Department of Fish and Game



The Alaska Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) welcome a new face to help coordinate and manage the State of Alaska's involvement in Alaska LCC efforts. Sue Rodman, Program Coordinator with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), will take a hands-on role with the daily operations and coordination of partnership activities as they relate to the State.

Partnerships comprise the core of every LCC. The State has been a crucial partner in the development of LCCs across Alaska. Doug Vincent-Lang, Acting Director of ADF&G's Division of Wildlife Conservation, has served as Chair and Vice-Chair on two LCCs. Sue will pick up the operational end of furthering the partnership. She will help incorporate climate change into the State's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy and coordinate ADF&G input in the integration of conservation management and climate science within the Alaska LCCs planning framework.

In her past work in forestry and fire management with the Anchorage Fire Department, Sue developed a solid background in working with various agency and community partners. Before coming to Alaska, she worked in the Pacific Northwest in the timber industry.

Sue earned a master's degree from the University of Idaho and has worked in the natural resource field for 18 years. She lives in Anchorage and can be found skiing and hiking in the Chugach Mountains with her springer spaniels. Welcome Sue!

Arctic Landscape Conservation Cooperative - Sharing the Science

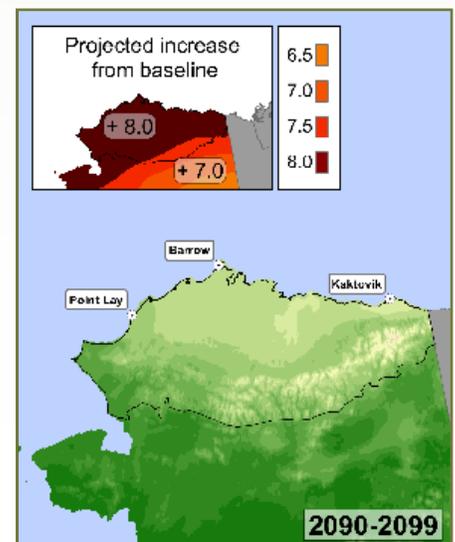
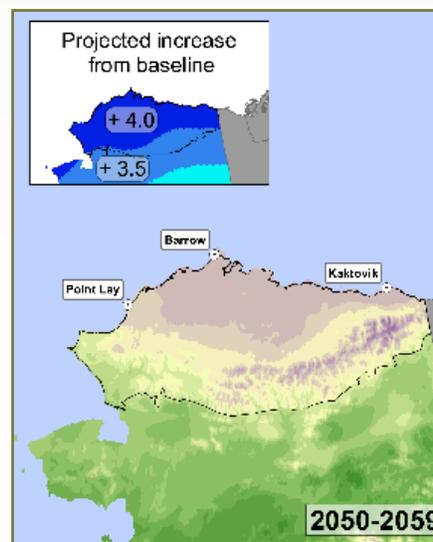
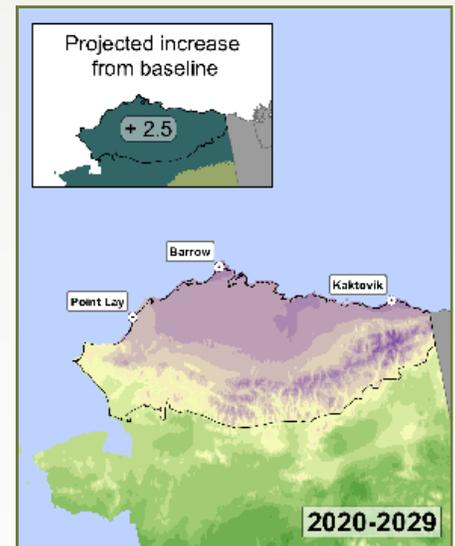
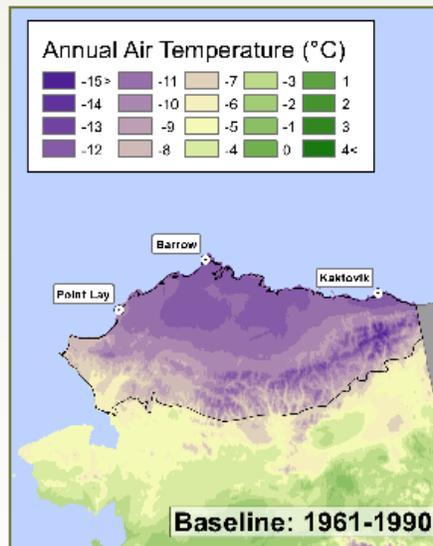
The Arctic LCC continues to advance applied science and understanding of climate-related issues in the far north. While the oldest of Alaska's LCC's remains active in funding research projects, Arctic LCC staff and partners are also leading the way in making scientific information available to others.

Arctic LCC's website, www.arcticlcc.org, serves LCC partners, resource managers, scientists and other interested parties as an information-sharing tool. The site currently makes data and information available in a number of formats. Spatial data products reflecting climate change projections can be found there, as can reports, publications and presentations documenting Arctic LCC funded projects.

However, the data sharing has just begun. The Arctic LCC has about 40 projects underway, and as data products from these efforts are completed, the website, www.arcticlcc.org, will become more and more populated with information valuable to managers and decision-makers.

Additionally, the LCC web site provides communication tools for wider uses by compiling complex data into user-friendly formats.

As the Arctic LCC's project portfolio increases, so too does its staff. Catherine Pearson is a most welcome addition as she takes on the task of project management for the LCC. Cathy, who has been with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Alaska for 10 years, came on board in early March and has jumped right into helping staff to manage the growing needs of the LCC.



An example of information available at the Arctic LCC website. LCC staff processed temperature and precipitation projections for Alaska into maps that can be downloaded and printed for use in handouts, presentations or other documents.

Data set credit: Scenarios Network for Alaska & Arctic Planning; CRU Historical Air Temperature - Alaska; 5-Model Composite - Air Temperature A2.

Western Landscape Conservation Cooperative Launches Coastal Storms Program

The past few months have seen Western Alaska LCC staff and partners busily planning the long and near-term future of the LCC. Based on information on high-priority science needs gathered during last year's science workshop, the Western Alaska LCC will focus the majority of its fiscal year 2012 and 2013 project funding on furthering understanding of coastal processes within a changing climate.

Specifically, the Steering Committee developed a pilot program focusing on changes in coastal storms and their impacts. The Steering Committee also determined to launch a mini pilot program on hydrological processes, with a focus on stream and lake temperature data collection, monitoring and management. For more information about the LCC's pilot programs, visit <http://www.arcus.org/western-alaska-lcc>.

Looking further ahead, the Steering Committee will work over the next year to develop a long-term science strategy to guide the LCC into the future. This strategic plan will help enable the LCC to serve as a key partner in furthering scientific understanding of climate change impacts in Western Alaska.

The Western Alaska LCC welcomes a new addition to its staff to help coordinate LCC-sponsored science activities. Suzanne Worker joined the team in March as the pilot program project coordinator. Suzanne will be actively involved with the coastal storms pilot program helping to ensure that projects are integrated. She is currently working with the LCC on a part-time basis while she completes her thesis work for her Master's degree in Wildlife Biology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

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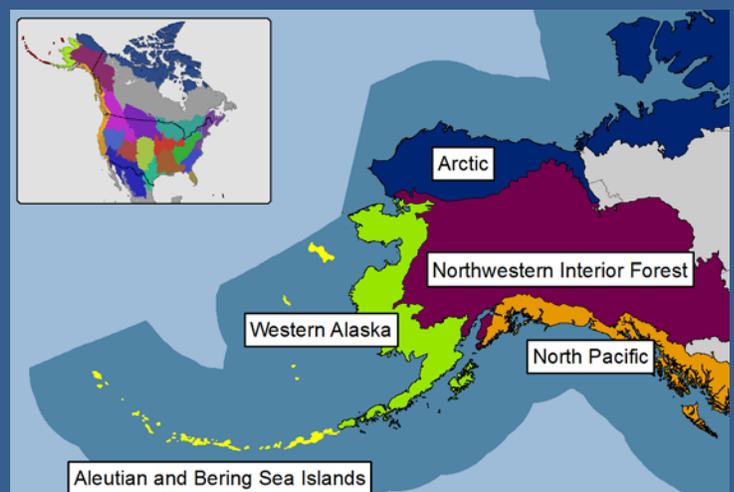
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Landscape Conservation Cooperatives

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) are self-directed partnerships that link science with conservation actions to address climate change and other stressors within and across landscapes. They complement and build upon existing science and conservation efforts – such as fish habitat partnerships and migratory bird joint ventures – as well as water resources, land, and cultural partnerships. While LCCs will not assume other partner responsibilities or supersede agency decision-making, they will provide the scientific information needed to help inform the development of strategic conservation actions.



Terrestrial areas of the five LCCs within Alaska; marine area of Alaska LCCs shown in teal blue. Inset shows distribution of LCCs across the North American continent.