

STATE OF ALASKA

SEAN PARENLL, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF SPORT FISH

Carol Kerkvliet and Mike Booz
3298 DOUGLAS PLACE
HOMER, ALASKA 99603-8027
VOICE (907) 235-8191
FAX (907) 235-2448

Don Bantz and David Scheel
Alaska Pacific University
4101 University Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

We are extremely grateful to Alaska Pacific University for supporting Dr. Brad Harris and his marine biology students for assistance with sampling razor clams at the Ninilchik Beach in May 2011. The high quality data they collected will be used to estimate razor clam abundance and the results will be used to manage the fishery. Sampling razor clams and collecting high quality data is no small task because the inclement weather conditions and early morning hours can be physically and mentally challenging. We credit a large part of the success of this sampling effort to the leadership of Dr. Harris and the professionalism he nurtured in his students. We believe the student's success was due to how well Dr. Harris prepared the students to meet these challenges of the work. He accomplished this through class instructions of the project operational plan and introduced the student to the methods using hands on instruction in the field while they were still in Anchorage. Once he reached Homer, we were impressed on how he was able to motivate and inspire his students to get the most out of this experience throughout the duration of the project. From the first day of the project we could tell Dr. Harris, his assistant, and students had developed into a team with the common goal of collecting data that would result in sound management decision.

We credit Dr. Harris for having the foresight for creating this opportunity for his students and feel fortunate that he contacted me to do this work. Even though we had never met Dr. Harris before this cooperative agreement, we did not have one moment of hesitation entering into the agreement because not only is he held in high regard by other Homer fish and game staff who have worked with him, he is highly regarded by the scientific community. Dr. Harris not only inspired and motivated his student to perform at their highest level, through his example and passion for doing the work correctly and professionally, he inspired me and other fish and game staff too.

Cooperative agreements such as this provide an avenue for numerous benefits for the Division of Sport Fish and we believe for the student's too. Students can gain real life experience in a field they may be considering. For those who venture in other directions, an experience such as this builds an understanding of how resources are studied and managed. Either way the students have had a positive life experience. The department also wins through this collaboration. This collaboration was more successful than we could have hoped. We sincerely hope this collaboration will continue next year and into the future.

Respectfully,



Carol Kerkvliet
Lower Cook Inlet
Assistant Area Management Biologist



Mike Booz
Lower Cook Inlet Sport Fisheries Biologist