

Bruce Wright

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Bruce Wright has served as the Senior Scientist for the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA) since 2005. Wright is the PI on several current projects: Testing and Monitoring for Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning in Aleut Communities; Domoic Acid Monitoring in the North Pacific, Oil Spill Capacity Building, Preparedness and Monitoring Project; Seven Generations Project; and Energy Conservation Education.

Wright was the co-principal investigator for a testing and monitoring for paralytic shellfish poisoning in Aleut communities project from May 2006-April 2008. The project, Response and Intervention System for Climate Change Induced Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning in Aleut Communities, was funded by the North Pacific Research Board. Wright co-led the effort to test for paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) and determine the growing health concern to Aleut communities. Subsistence users rely on their local knowledge to determine whether it is safe to consume shellfish. Increased variability of weather and extreme events, especially in the transition months in spring and fall make it difficult to correctly identify the time frame for gathering shellfish. A good deal of traditional knowledge is based on the times of seasons and not temperature. While information based on traditional knowledge helped document and validate the changing climate, these changes often render some traditional knowledge that people rely on for subsistence, insufficient. This project explored ways to supplement traditional knowledge with conventional scientific research through a complementary approach. Educating residents about the causes and training them to monitor relevant environmental changes increases the knowledge of PSP in the Aleut region and may reduce the threat of PSP poisoning. This project developed methods for communities to monitor occurrence and distribution of toxins in connection with climate change observations that increase communities' capacities in devising a mechanism to better respond to the threat and minimize the risks of poisoning. The results improved communities' abilities to adapt to the climate change impacts.

Wright completed his biology and ecology degrees in 1978 at San Diego State University where he studied white-tailed kites for his graduate project. Wright earned his education credentials at the University of Alaska. He worked as a fisheries biologist and habitat biologist with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, then, after receiving his teaching certificate, he worked as an elementary and high school science and math teacher. Wright began his tenure with the University of Alaska as a wildlife curriculum writer and later as a university instructor. At the University of Alaska, Wright was involved in writing six university distance-delivery course curriculums and taught those courses to an international audience (Brown Bears of Southeast Alaska Bio 393; Teaching About

Brown Bears, ED 693; Bald Eagles of Alaska's Coastal Rain Forest, Bio 393; Teaching About Bald Eagles, ED 693; Killer and Humpback Whales of the Northeast Pacific, Bio 393, and Teaching About Killer and Humpback Whales of the Northeast Pacific, ED 493). Wright received the Conservation Education Outstanding Achievement Award for 1998 for the bald eagle course.

During his tenure with NOAA Fisheries, Wright worked for the *Exxon Valdez* Oil Spill Trustee Council helping to guide their science program and directing the Alaska Predator Ecosystem Experiment and Alaska Shark Assessment Program. From 1997 to 2001 Wright was the chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bald Eagle Research Institute. In 2000, Wright was selected as host scientist for Alaska for the JASON XIII: Frozen Worlds. Also in 2000, he was assigned to be the science advisor to Alaska's Governor Tony Knowles and his work for the Pew Oceans Commission. Wright has been on national and international media (60 Minutes, SKY News and others) where he discussed Alaska topics including the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, bald eagles, climate change and sharks. Wright has some publications to his credit including three books; *Ecology and Conservation of Alaska's Predators* (expected release 2009, Hancock House Publishing), *Bald Eagles in Alaska* and *Alaska's Great White Sharks*.

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