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Skipper Science Bigger, Bolder and Better in 2022

This summer, boat captains and crews work together with scientists to document ecosystem data and changes in real time

ANCHORAGE– The Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government, SalmonState’s [Salmon Habitat Information Program](#) (SHIP) and Aleutian Bering Sea Initiative, along with commercial fishing industry partners, in 2022 are continuing their groundbreaking citizen science program, Skipper Science. In 2021, Skipper Science enlisted more than 100 commercial fishermen to collect ecological observations, including changes in fisheries and ocean conditions. After gaining recognition and interest from state and federal agencies such as the Alaska Fisheries Science Center and the [House Fisheries Committee of the Alaska Legislature](#), Skipper Science is building momentum and partnerships amongst fishermen and scientists.

One of Skipper Science’s key tools is a smartphone app that allows fishermen to log observations in real time from the fishing grounds. In 2022, Skipper Science is also equipping up to six vessels with data collection instruments to record water temperature, salinity and other data.

Highlights from the 2021 program include:

- 100 fishermen signed up for the program
- 19 Alaska-based fishing trade organizations supported and endorsed the program, demonstrating strong interest from the industry
- 1,697 fishermen provided their opinions on climate change via phone interviews
- Participants completed 49 data entries in the *Skipper Science* app

“Skipper Science is already a valuable resource for researchers, managers and policy-makers — and with every season, it will grow more valuable. Based on last year's pilot season we know fishermen have what it takes to translate observations into quality data through the use of the app. We hope that as the Skipper Science Partnership continues to grow, fisheries managers and the scientific community will continue to incorporate fishermen’s data and observations into their decision making. In concert with Alaska’s fishing fleets, we can meet the challenges of fishing and managing sustainable fisheries in a changing climate, ensuring commercial fishing economies remain strong for generations to come,” said Lauren Divine, Director of the Ecosystem Conservation Office for the Tribal Government of St. Paul.

“The partnership presents a really exciting opportunity for scientists, managers, and fishermen to connect, build relationships, and recognize the lived experiences and knowledge of fishing communities,” said Hannah-Marie Garcia, current Alaska Sea Grant Fellow with the Northern Latitudes Partnerships. “Their observations can help drive better decision-making when it comes to fisheries management and habitat protection.”

“Participation and interest from the industry, commercial fishing groups and fishermen has been positive and we are hoping for many more observations in 2022,” said Lindsey Bloom, manager of the Salmon Habitat Information Program. “The success of the 2021 pilot program bodes well for a future in which fishermen’s input in data collection and policy making is supported and amplified. We are very excited about all that is to come for the future of this collaboration.”

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[The full report on the SkipperScience 2021 program can be found here.](#)

Fishermen can sign up to participate at <http://skipperscience.org>

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