



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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UFA Announces New President Arni Thomson and Executive Committee Members

Effective today, United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) has elected Arni Thomson, Executive Director of the Alaska Crab Coalition (ACC), to lead the statewide fishing trade association as President for 2010 - 2011. Thomson has served on the UFA Board of Directors since 1997 as the representative of the ACC, and served as UFA's National committee chair since 2005. He also serves as the Shellfish Committee Chair for the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI).

In preparation for taking this office Thomson moved to Anchorage as part of his commitment to being available to Alaska fishermen and state and federal officials. Thomson met with Alaska and national fishing industry representatives at the meetings of regional fishery management council chairs and NOAA aquaculture representatives in May, and has also recently visited Homer, Cook Inlet, Kenai, Soldotna, Sitka, and Juneau and met with representatives to discuss issues affecting their fisheries.

Thomson replaces Joe Childers, who served as UFA President since 2007. Childers helped raised UFA to an all time 37 member groups and 56 lifetime members, and helped UFA increase its outreach and prominence outside Alaska.

"I intend to continue Childers' work to elevate the public awareness of the importance of commercial fisheries, ensure that fishermen have access to fisheries, that those fisheries resources continue to be managed sustainably, and to continue the momentum of UFA's increasing membership support from fishing groups and individual fishermen," said Thomson.

"Alaska has done a good job of marketing our seafood products and sustaining our seafood resource, but we also need to help raise the awareness within our own state of the value that the fishing industry represents in the state, and the importance of sustaining the thousands of individual fishing family businesses.

Other changes include Cheryl Sutton of Ninilchik, who will follow Kathy Hansen as Statewide chair, Stephanie Madsen of Juneau who succeeds Thomson as National chair, and Duncan Fields of Kodiak following Roland Maw as Admin chair. Chip Treinen of Anchorage will continue as Vice President and Rich Davis of Juneau continues as Secretary Treasurer.

In addition to its President and these officers, UFA's Executive Committee includes nine committee chairs. Bruce Wallace of Juneau continues as Environmental chair, Bruce Schactler of Kodiak as Marketing chair, Julianne Curry of Petersburg as Subsistence chair, Gary Fandrei of Kenai as Enhancement chair, and Paul Shadura of Kenai as Membership chair. Childers will hold an Executive Committee seat for one year as past President.

"These leadership posts are critical to the process UFA uses to focus on the common interests to the wide variety of Alaska fishing fleets, with committee chairs responsible for identifying topics for the organization's biannual meetings. These are very all-consuming volunteer positions, and we appreciate the huge workload that Joe, Kathy, and Roland have contributed," said UFA Executive Director Mark Vinsel.

UFA represents 37 Alaska commercial fishing associations from fisheries throughout the state and its offshore waters. Recent accomplishments include raising the Fishermen's Fund claim limit, broadening of the state's fisheries energy efficiency loan programs, and tax relief for Exxon Valdez oil spill claimants.

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Incoming UFA President Arni Thomson.



UFA National Chair Stephanie Madsen



UFA Statewide Chair Cheryl Sutton

(Photos courtesy of United Fishermen of Alaska)

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Crab Coalition • Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association • Alaska Independent Tendermen's Association
Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association • Alaska Scallop Association • Alaska Trollers Association • Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association
Aleutian Pribilof Islands Community Development Association • Armstrong Keta • At-sea Processors Association • Bristol Bay Reserve
Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association • Cape Barnabas Inc. • Concerned Area "M" Fishermen • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association
Cordova District Fishermen United • Crab Group of Independent Harvesters • Douglas Island Pink and Chum • Fishing Vessel Owners Association
Groundfish Forum • Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association • Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association
Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation
Purse Seine Vessel Owner Association • Seafood Producers Cooperative • Sitka Herring Association • Southeast Alaska Fisherman's Alliance
Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association • Southeast Alaska Seiners • Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association
United Catcher Boats • United Cook Inlet Drift Association • United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters • Valdez Fisheries Development Association