

# **Regional Studies Presenters**

## **(listed as presented)**

### **Introduction to presentation format and commenting**

**Jennifer Lee Ewald**  
**Special Assistant and Adviser to the Chief Environmental Officer**  
**Physical Oceanographer**

Ms. Jennifer Ewald is a Physical Oceanographer and Marine Hydro-kinetic Subject Matter Expert, operationally experienced in 60 physical oceanographic buoy deployments per season while working with NOAA, the Prince William Sound Science Center and Oil Spill Recovery Institute. Projects included circulation studies in Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound and Southeast Alaska, Humboldt Bay, CA, Narragansett Bay, RI and Chesapeake Bay. She developed and managed engineering improvements for submersible buoy systems to sustain in high speed, heavy sediment environments in support of acoustic technology including the development of the Cook Inlet Beluga Alaska Fish and Game Monitoring Program. She began service with the former Minerals Management Service during the Deepwater Horizon event in 2010, immediately stepping into a high level programmatic support role, and continues in current position as special assistant and adviser to the Chief Environmental Officer for the BOEM Office of Environmental Programs and coordinator on partnerships, cooperative agreements and scientific collaboration. Ms. Ewald is currently working with the Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Units, Inter-agency Working Group on Ocean Partnerships, Federal Renewable Ocean Energy Working Group, Coordinate and Support actions under the National Ocean Policy and National Academy of Science.

### **Physical/Chemical Oceanography Studies**

**A. Lugo-Fernández**  
**Oceanographer**

Dr. Alexis Lugo-Fernández obtained his BSc in Physics and MSc in Marine Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez and his Ph.D. in Marine Sciences from Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge in 1989. Subsequently, he has worked for BOEM and its various incarnations for the last 25 years. During this seemingly never ending period, Dr. Lugo-Fernández worked about 5 years doing environmental assessments and the remaining time in studies. He has published about 30 peer-review articles, contributed to two AGU Monographs, a chapter to a book on coral reefs, and two entries in a recent encyclopedia on modern coral reefs.

**Susan Zaleski**  
**Pacific OCS Region**

Ms. Susan Zaleski has been a BOEM Biological Oceanographer since 2011, with expertise in water quality, rocky intertidal ecology, and invasive species. Her research interests focus on oil spill modeling, sediment transport, wave climate in the rocky intertidal, and invasive species.

**Heather Crowley**  
**Physical Oceanographer**

Dr. Heather Crowley joined the Alaska OCS Region as a physical oceanographer in 2007 from NOAA's West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center. She earned a Ph.D. in Coastal Oceanography from Stony Brook University where she studied density-driven circulation in estuarine systems. In addition to her role in developing and overseeing environmental research projects, Dr. Crowley serves as the Alaska Region's Studies Plan Coordinator

**Biology/Ecology Studies**

**Rebecca E. Green**  
**Senior Oceanographer**

Dr. Rebecca Green is a Senior Biological Oceanographer with BOEM in New Orleans, where she has worked since 2010. She currently serves as GOMR Biological Studies Lead and Atlantic (non-renewables) Studies Lead. She received her B.S. degree in 1994 from the California Institute of Technology (Pasadena, CA) and her Ph.D. in Biological Oceanography in 2002 from M.I.T. and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Dr. Green has ~20 years of experience in oceanography, working on research topics including biogeochemical cycling, ecosystem modeling, ocean color remote sensing, and oil spills. As a member of the Environmental Studies Program, she develops and oversees new studies, performs research relevant to the agency's mission, and helps provide vision and strategic planning.

**James Michael Price**  
**Marine Mammal Studies Program Coordinator**

Dr. James Price was an undergraduate Physics major at the University of Colorado and received a doctorate in Physical Oceanography from the University of Hawaii. He had a postdoctoral position at the oceanographic institute at the Christian Albrechts Universitaet Kiel, Germany, followed by a National Research Council Fellowship to work at the Naval Oceanographic Research and Development Activity, a Naval research laboratory in Mississippi. He then returned to the Hawaii Institute of Geophysics for 6 years doing research on the circulation around the Hawaiian Islands before coming to work for the Minerals Management Service (now BOEM) in the Oil Spill Modeling Group. Several years ago, he assumed the honorable position of coordinator for marine mammals research in the Environmental Studies Program.

**Donna Schroeder**  
**Marine Biologist**

Ms. Donna Schroeder has been a BOEM marine biologist since 2007, with expertise in fishes, fisheries, and marine habitats. Her research interests focus on offshore energy, marine population dynamics, seafloor mapping, artificial reefs, effects of contaminants (DDT, heavy metals, and PAHs) on marine species, and marine policy.

**Carol Fairfield**  
**Ecologist/Marine Mammal Specialist**

Ms. Carol Fairfield joined BOEM in March 2013, where she collaborates with colleagues to design and manage the Alaska OCS Region's marine mammal research program. She previously worked at MMS Headquarters as the National Protected Species Coordinator in the early 1990's. Having worked in the field of marine mammal research/management and satellite oceanography for 35 years, she has worked with NOAA Fisheries at the Northeast,

Southeast and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers focusing on individual identification of animals, population dynamics, stock assessments, scientific research permitting, habitat modeling through integration of remotely sensed data with synoptic observations, acoustic disturbance assessments and NEPA analyses. She served as the NOAA liaison to the former Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, as a policy advisor for the U.S. delegation of the International Whaling Commission, and on the Board of Governors for the Society for Marine Mammalogy, to which she is a charter member. She received an M.S. in Biological Oceanography from the Graduate School of Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island (URI), and a B.S. with Honors in zoology also from URI, and is enrolled in a Ph.D. program at the University of New Hampshire's Earth & Environmental Sciences Department, which she plans to complete at the University of Alaska.

**David Bigger**  
**Avian Biologist**

Dr. David Bigger is the avian biologist in the Office of Renewable Energy Programs in the Environmental Branch for Renewable Energy. Dr. Bigger has over 15 years of professional experience with endangered species and natural resource management. He is responsible for avian issues associated with renewable energy leasing, operations and environmental compliance and serves as the program lead on ESA consultations. Dr. Bigger also manages several contracts and interagency agreements for environmental studies aimed at informing the leasing decision process. Prior to joining the Department of Interior, Dr. Bigger was a Senior Scientist in the private sector where he directed the development of a habitat conservation plan's scientific research program for a threatened species, designed and managed an inland population monitoring program to assess the effectiveness of conservation strategies, and explored alternative conservation strategies for several listed species including the spotted owl and marbled murrelet. Dr. Bigger earned his Ph.D. in Biology from the University of California at Santa Cruz.

**Brian R. Hooker**  
**Marine Biologist**

Mr. Brian Hooker was born and raised on the shores of the lower Chesapeake Bay in Virginia. He graduated from Lynchburg College in Virginia with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences. After a short stint with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science planting seagrass in the lower Bay, he joined the U.S. Peace Corps in Senegal, West Africa as an Agroforestry Extension Agent. Upon his return to the States, Mr. Hooker earned a degree of Master of Environmental Management from Duke University and soon thereafter accepted a job with NOAA's Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in Gloucester, Massachusetts. He worked for 7 years with NMFS in various fishery management capacities including coordinating fishery management plans for golden tilefish, surfclams and other ocean quahogs, horseshoe crabs, weakfish, Atlantic sturgeon and American eel. He has extensive experience with the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Mr. Hooker began working with BOEM's Office of Renewable Energy Programs in 2010 to aid in the assessment of environmental impacts from offshore renewable energy projects in the Atlantic Region.

**Desray Reeb**  
**Marine Biologist**

Dr. Desray Reeb received her Master's and Doctoral degrees in South Africa, having done research on marine algae all the way through to marine mammals, both in the lab and in the field. Her research on whales has included anatomical, biochemical, behavioral and acoustic aspects with a special focus on right whales. Dr. Reeb is one of only a few researchers to have

studied and seen all three species of right whale. Following two post doctoral positions, one at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and one at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, Dr. Reeb worked for NOAA for 5 years on their marine mammal line transect surveys, as well as a Protected Species Observer during seismic and other industrial survey operations, working throughout the USA and internationally. Currently she is a marine biologist at the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, in the Office of Renewable Energy Programs.

## **Marine Minerals/Benthic Ecology**

### **Josh Wadlington Geographer**

Dr. Josh Wadlington is a Geographer with the Office of Renewable Energy Programs, Environmental Branch for Renewable Energy. He performs geospatial analysis that leads to the design and production of GIS-derived maps, tables, graphs, databases, charts, and posters as they relate to the environmental impacts of offshore renewable energy development on the OCS. He also develops and advises on geospatial guidance and policy in support of program goals. He is a graduate of the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia and holds a B.L.S. in Geography. When not performing official duties for BOEM, he enjoys topographic field reconnaissance by way of running ultramarathons on both coasts and all landscapes in between.

### **Doug Piatkowski Physical Scientist**

Mr. Doug Piatkowski is a Physical Scientist in the Office of Environmental Programs, Division of Environmental Assessment, where he is responsible for the oversight of environmental assessment and studies supporting OCS marine mineral leasing. Specifically, Mr. Piatkowski serves as a technical lead on environmental issues related to the Marine Minerals Program, ensuring compliance with NEPA and other environmental laws. Prior to joining the Bureau, Mr. Piatkowski spent 12 years working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers where he served as a regional subject matter expert on the environmental implications of beach nourishment and dredging activities on sea turtles and other threatened and/or endangered species. He has been the environmental team lead in preparing and coordinating NEPA documents and associated environmental resource investigations for multiple coastal storm damage reduction projects. Mr. Piatkowski received a master's degree in Marine Biology at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington where he studied the effects of beach nourishment on the nest success of loggerhead sea turtles.

## **Social Science**

### **Brandi Carrier Archaeologist**

Ms. Brandi Carrier is a Registered Professional Archaeologist with more than twelve years of professional supervisory experience in cultural resources management, and an MA in Archaeology and Prehistory. She has extensive archaeological field and laboratory experience, having directed historic and prehistoric Phase I, II, and III surveys and mitigations throughout fifteen states, in the United Kingdom (UK), and in Greece. She has been responsible for all aspects of cultural resources management, including project design and implementation, field survey, artifact analysis, and report writing on projects ranging from corridor survey to urban construction monitoring to historic and prehistoric site excavation to large-scale records reviews and predictive modeling. In addition to a thorough knowledge of Sections 110 and 106

of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Ms. Carrier has had extensive experience applying the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility criteria, and has received certifications from the National Preservation Institute for Section 106 Review and GIS, and from OSHA for Trench Safety. She joined BOEM in 2011 to provide regulatory and marine archaeological support for the nation's development of offshore renewable energy.

**Chris Campbell**  
**Sociocultural Specialist**

Ms. Chris Campbell is the Sociocultural Specialist for the Environmental Studies Program in the Alaska OCS Region and also serves as the Alaska OCS Region Historic Preservation Officer. Born, raised, and educated in Alaska, she has an M.A. in cultural resource management and has been responsible for all phases of cultural resource management, from writing research designs through writing final reports. She has led archaeological surveys while employed by the State Office of History and Archaeology, the USDA Forest Service Ketchikan Area of the Tongass National Forest, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Civil Works Department. As an employee of the University of Alaska, Ms. Campbell assisted Alaska Natives make historic and cemetery site selections under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, taught archaeological field schools, and taught classes at the University. She also established a consulting company and performed archaeological consulting work for over a decade. Ms. Campbell has considerable experience including determinations of eligibility for the National Historic Preservation Act and writing Programmatic Agreements and Memoranda of Agreements with the Advisory Council and the State Historic Preservation Officer. Always interested in ethnoarchaeology, she gravitated toward sociocultural work, and now conceptualizes research designs (study profiles), writes contract statements of work, leads selection committees, and works with consultants to produce quality final reports. In recent years, progress has been documenting geospatial analysis of Inupiat subsistence hunting in the marine and terrestrial environments, and social indicators of well-being.

**Harry Luton**  
**Lead Social Scientist**

Dr. Harry Luton received his MA from the University of Pennsylvania and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan with a dissertation on an Inupiat whaling community in northern Alaska. Dr. Luton served as a social scientist for the BOEM (formerly MMS) Alaska Regional Office from 1983 until 1989 and as the ESP coordinator for socioeconomic studies in Headquarters from 1989 until 1994. Since then, Dr. Luton has served as a social scientist in the Gulf of Mexico except for a one plus year Katrina interruption when he worked in the environmental assessment office in Headquarters.

**Melanie Damour**  
**Marine Archaeologist**

Dr. Melanie Damour is a Marine Archaeologist and the Environmental Studies Coordinator for BOEM's Gulf of Mexico OCS Region office in New Orleans, LA. She earned her Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts degrees in Anthropology, focusing on marine archaeology, from the Florida State University. With more than 16 years of experience, she has participated in or led marine archaeology research projects throughout the Gulf of Mexico, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Guatemala, and Panama. Dr. Damour has worked on submerged archaeological sites ranging from drowned Paleoindian sites in Florida's rivers to shipwrecks in thousands of feet of water in the Gulf. Her experience includes investigations of shipwrecks ranging in age from the 16th century Spanish colonial period to World War II casualties in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean. She also conducted a marine archaeological survey of a

Mayan port site in Lake Petén Itzá, Guatemala and most recently is a volunteer on the Lost Ships of Henry Morgan project in Panama.

**Donna Schroeder**  
**Marine Biologist**

Ms. Donna Schroeder has been a BOEM marine biologist since 2007, with expertise in fishes, fisheries, and marine habitats. Her research interests focus on offshore energy, marine population dynamics, seafloor mapping, artificial reefs, effects of contaminants (DDT, heavy metals, and PAHs) on marine species, and marine policy.

**Multi-disciplinary or Regional Scale**

**Lisa Gilbane**  
**Biologist**

Ms. Lisa Gilbane grew up in Connecticut and has lived in California for over 15 years. She received her Bachelor's degree in Biology from University of Southern California and focused on molecular and microbiology before returning to school to earn a Master's from California State University Fullerton. Her thesis focused on understanding the sources of carbon and nitrogen to intertidal communities in southern California using stable isotopes. In 2008, she began working for Minerals Management Service, now, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management as a biologist focusing on benthic ecology studies and National Environmental Policy Act analysis. From the high intertidal to the continental slope, she is interested in benthic communities and how they are effected by natural and anthropogenic impacts. Ms. Gilbane presently works in the Environmental Analysis Section for the Pacific Outer Continental Shelf Region.

**Mike Rasser**  
**Marine Ecologist**

Dr. Mike Rasser currently serves as the national headquarters marine ecologist in the BOEM Environmental Studies Program overseeing the planning, initiation, coordination and budgeting of applied marine ecology studies. His areas of expertise include salt marsh ecology, coastal processes, scientific data management and the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing as tools for environmental monitoring and assessment. He holds an MS from the University of Florida, PhD from the University of Texas Marine Science Institute and a BA from Florida International University. Prior to joining BOEM in 2009, Dr. Rasser worked as a lead ecologist for a consultancy on large-scale environmental planning projects including the siting of interstate electric transmission lines.