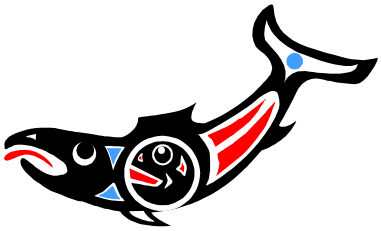
ANNUAL MEETING: 13 – 15 JULY, KODIAK

gregg_rosenkranz@fishgame.state.ak.us



The Tuesday-Thursday meeting will feature a short-course entitled **An Introduction to GIS and Spatial Statistics for Environmental Health Applications** presented by Carol Gotway-Crawford of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta. Please visit our website at http://www.amstat.org/chapters/Alaska/ for further information on the short course, meeting activities, and housing.

The annual chapter business meeting will be held in Kodiak on Wednesday July 14th at 2:30 p.m. **There will be an election for the new chapter vice president**; **if there are any other items to be voted on, the membership must be notified 2 weeks in advance.** Dana Thomas will provide us with information regarding the 2005 Western North American Region of The International Biometric Society (WNAR) meeting that will be held in Fairbanks. There will also be reports on committee activities during the past year. To add additional items of new business to the agenda, please contact Gregg prior to the meeting.

CHAPTER DONATES BOOKS TO SURINAME

The November AmStat News had an article describing the loss of all library resource materials, as well as computers and data, due to a fire at the General Bureau of Statistics in Paramaribo, Suriname (just N of Brazil). The article gave contact information for the director and a request for any statistics materials that people were willing to donate.

Members of the Alaska Chapter responded by donating statistical texts ranging from essential references (e.g., Cochran's 'Sampling Techniques', Agresti's 'Categorical Data Analysis', and Conover's 'Practical Nonparametric Statistics'), to recent works by Burnham & Anderson and Cressie.

Mr. Iwan Snow, Director of the General Bureau of Statistics, was sincerely thankful for the chapter donation: "Since 17 February 2004, the Bureau of Statistics is in its new premises and since 1 March we have resumed our regular activities. The donation will certainly ease our getting back to normal business!" He also invited us to come visit. Maybe we should hold a chapter meeting in Central America?

ACES - HTTP://WWW.ACES.UAF.EDU/

The Alaska Center for Environmental Statistics (ACES) has been initiated at UAF to facilitate interaction among statisticians, biometricians, and biologists at UAF and in state and federal agencies. The main objectives of ACES are to 1) provide concentrated educational opportunities in statistics as applied to wildlife, fisheries, ecological, and the environmental data, 2) provide a centralized location for sharing software code developed in languages such as R, WinBUGS, SAS, and SPLUS, 3) provide a seminar series devoted to statistics in the environment, and 4) foster collaboration on research in environmental statistics. The first course will be taught this fall, and is described below. Other information is provided at the ACES website, http://www.aces.uaf.edu.

Monitoring Trends and Abundance in Environmental Data: Models and Analyses
4-5 November 2004
Registration Deadline: 15 September

Do you have a long term data set (7 to hundreds of values)? Examples are annual surveys of animals, fish, or plants for a study area, or daily environmental measurements such as air quality. This workshop will help provide tools for analyzing these data. The goals of monitoring programs are usually two-fold; to monitor abundance and estimate trend. The workshop will begin with a review of simple regression, which is often used to estimate trend. However, if data come from annual surveys with sampling error, this variation should be incorporated into trend models, and will allow better estimates of abundance. Monitoring data are often temporally autocorrelated, so time series models can also be incorporated. You may also have multiple locations that form a monitoring network, so we develop models for combining individual sites. We end with some principles for designing good monitoring networks, including power analysis. The workshop will include discussion of recent literature and a wide variety of data sets. It will be taught as an interactive lab, with software that allows the analysis of data while the course is being taught. There will be some time on Thursday evening to analyze your own data with the instructors' assistance. We will have a banquet on Friday evening at the end of the course. Register on-line at http://www.aces.uaf.edu.

Cost: $500
Instructors: Jay Ver Hoef, Ron Barry, Eric Rexstad, Devin Johnson
Maximum number of participants: 20

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF NOTE

Brad Efron, current ASA president and formulator of the bootstrap, wrote an interesting article in a recent ASA News (April 2004) on the 'image problem' statisticians face in defining what they do for the organizations employing them (http://www.amstat.org/publications/amsn/index.cfm?fuseaction=pres042004), let alone explaining what they do to the general public. As he sees it, the greatest difficulty is that by

helping scientists develop and interpret their data, statisticians work "two levels away from nature": "in its essence our work is more abstract than most of science, and science itself is scary enough for most people." He draws some interesting conclusions regarding communication and the contributions of statistical thinking; worth the ten minute reading investment.

The recent series of guest columns in the 'President's Corner' of Amstat News have also provided an opportunity to learn about the various environments our colleagues work in.

If you often faced with applied problems that aren't solved by off-the-shelf methods, some guidance and useful advice may be gleaned from a recent general article in the American Statistician (Hamada & Sitter 2004). They focus on academic research but include general advice on how to solve new problems (see below) and on writing and presentations.

L. J. SAVAGE'S APPROACH TO RESEARCH (from Mosteller 1981 – see full reference in Hamada & Sitter 2004):

1. As soon as a problem is stated, start right away to solve it; use simple examples.

2. Keep starting from first principles, explaining again and again just what it is you are trying to do.

3. Believe that this problem can be solved and that you will enjoy working it out.

4. Don't be too hampered by the original statement of the problem. Try other problems in its neighborhood; maybe there is a better problem than yours.

5. Work an hour or so on it frequently.

6. Talk about it; explain it to people.

Hamada, Michael, and Sitter, Randy. 2004. Statistical Research: Some advice for beginners. Am. Stat. 58 (2) : 93 – 101.

MEETINGS

MATHEMATICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA PNW Section – UAA, Anchorage, **24-26 June**. http://www.math.uaa.alaska.edu/pnwmaa/

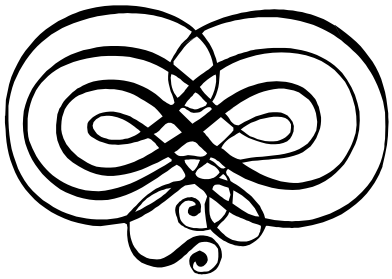
Includes, among other events, sessions on Quantitative Literacy/Quantitative Reasoning, Math Applications in the North, and keynote talks by Ronald Graham, UAF alumni and MAA president, and I. Martin Isaacs, George Polya Lecturer, from U Wisc., Madison.

CALL FOR SPEAKERS: The organizers are looking for speakers to present interesting applications of math (and statistics) in Alaska for a session 25 June (Friday). Contact Joel Reynolds if interested (joel_reynolds@fws.gov).

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMETRICS SOCIETY
Portland, Maine, **June 28- July 1**
http://www.ncrs2.fs.fed.us/4801/meetings/ties/default.asp

INTERNATIONAL BIOMETRICS SOCIETY Western North American Region (WNAR)
Albuquerque, New Mexico, **June 27- June 30**
http://www.wnar.org/

JOINT STATISTICS MEETING Toronto, Canada, Aug 8 - 12
http://www.amstat.org/meetings/jsm/2004/



UAA Math Department is collaborating in a nationally funded 'Journeys in Mathematics' program to help improve mathematics education in k-8. More details are available at http://www.math.uaa.alaska.edu/JiM/main.php