

Letter from the Principal Investigator

March 2019

Hello everybody,

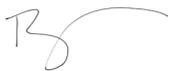
As many of you know, we have had a transition in leadership here at Alaska EPSCoR: Anupma Prakash has stepped into the role of UAF Provost, and I now follow in her footsteps as the Principal Investigator of the EPSCoR Fire and Ice project. I'm excited about leading and supporting this dynamic and important enterprise, and I'm grateful to everyone who has shown confidence in me along the way. The EPSCoR team is deeply indebted to Anupma, who led our previous research project for four years and who headed up the effort to get Fire and Ice off the ground. Though she has her hands full with her new position, she's promised to stay involved with F&I and will be helping out with our remote sensing efforts.

And speaking of Fire and Ice, the project is picking up real momentum. On March 1 we held a productive mini All-Hands meeting in Anchorage, bringing together more than 30 people to discuss our initial progress and to work on the details of our first field season. We heard presentations from the Boreal Fires, Coastal Margins and DEW teams as well as more focused discussion about the role hyperspectral sensing will play in F&I research. Then researchers split into breakout groups for a chance to meet in person and to discuss plans for a very ambitious summer field season. Our External Advisory Council members also joined via videoconference, and external evaluators Drs. Julia Melkers and Eric Welch traveled to Anchorage to meet with the team. It was a productive day and paves the way for our first full All-Hands, which will take place this fall in Fairbanks. In the meantime, people are starting to hire students and postdocs, and we're moving ahead with our five planned faculty hires: we're advertising for a remote sensing faculty position at UAF to primarily work with our Boreal Fires team, and are also considering candidates for the first Coastal Team hire.

As Fire and Ice continues to pick up steam, we're also putting the finishing touches on our previous research project, Alaska Adapting to Changing Environments (ACE). One significant outcome of the project is Sharing Questions, Sharing Answers, a 28-page report detailing the different ways we engaged with a variety of stakeholder groups across the state. I'd also like to mention Local Knowledge and Science: Observation of Climate Change in the Nuiqsut Homelands, a summary of research by our Northern Test Case about climate change and people's perceptions of these changes in a remote Arctic village. They both make for interesting reading and help to summarize major portions of a very expansive project. In addition to online versions, you can find hard copies in the EPSCoR offices at UAF (202 WRRB).

These are just two of a long list of noteworthy products and accomplishments from the ACE project. I'm looking forward to a similar string of successes from Fire and Ice, and based on what I've seen so far from this amazing team, I think we're well on our way.

Cheers,



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NSF ESTABLISHED PROGRAM TO STIMULATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH