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SOUTHEAST ALASKA RECONIZED AS STATE'S FIRST COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Statewide Committee for Research Designates Southeast Alaska as ‘Community of Excellence in Research’

JUNEAU, ALASKA [March 8, 2016] --- Southeast Alaska has been recognized as Alaska's first 'Community of Excellence in Research' by the [Alaska State Committee for Research](#) (SCoR). The designation acknowledges the region for promoting research and innovation and for its potential as a research hub.

The award was presented by SCoR, to the Southeast Research and Development (R&D) cluster working group during the Juneau Economic Development Council's (JEDC) annual Innovation Summit. The R&D cluster working group represents a consortium of research and development entities working to improve the research agenda for Southeast Alaska.

"It is wonderful to have Southeast Alaska recognized for its excellence in Research. It's a fabulous location to conduct research, in many areas, coastal and marine research being amongst them," said Shannon Atkinson, co-chair of the JEDC R&D Cluster working group and Professor at University of Alaska Fairbanks's Juneau Center of School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences.

Dave A'more, co-chair of the R&D cluster working group along with Shannon, said, "Southeast Alaska has a robust array of research facilities relative to its population including the federal research labs (NOAA/NMFS, USFS RD) state labs (UAF SFOS, UAS, ADFG) and non-profit/private labs (Sealaska, TNC). These institutions provide the foundation for the tradition of excellence and the framework for the future growth of the knowledge creation network along the coastal margin of the Gulf of Alaska."

"In addition to helping us understand our world better, science is commerce for Southeast Alaska, a region that is so deeply dependent on the natural world for its economy and culture," said Lisa Busch, Executive Director of the Sitka Sound Science Center, "Scientific thinking inspires innovative ideas that can help us be more resilient to changes in our environment and allow our economies to grow."

The R&D cluster working group is a participant in JEDC's Southeast Cluster Initiative, which is an effort to stimulate economic development in Southeast Alaska, from Ketchikan to Yakutat. The R&D cluster working group understands that science and innovation create critical commerce that can contribute to the economic health of our state. As Alaska's first designated Community of Excellence in Research, the R&D Working Group collaboratively seek to be a model for other communities in the state.

The Research and Development group hopes to track:

- Growth in the number of research jobs in our region
- Marketing effort for the region as a research destination
- Growth in the number of collaborative research and development sites (e.g. an electric transportation R&D hub)



- Development of Research and Development infrastructure in the region
- Link research to the needs of industry and communities in the region

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