



Sealaska Hosts Protected Species Observer Training

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Sealaska's first Protected Species Observer training program, held Feb. 17-18, resulted in successful completion by 23 Sealaska shareholders and descendants, who are now ready to work on construction sites, on fishing and weather vessels and elsewhere to monitor impacts on federally protected species like walrus, orcas and humpback whales.

A unique profession in the marine industry, Protected Species Observers (PSOs) are certified professionals trained in protected species monitoring and mitigation procedures. The program recently offered by Sealaska accepts Indigenous knowledge in lieu of or in addition to a college degree in recognition of the value of Indigenous knowledge and lifelong experience hunting, fishing and being on the water.

"I went into this training just for fun, with absolutely no knowledge of the field, and have come out imagining what life would be like in this career that is so different from mine," said training participant Ariel Diltz. "Thanks so much to Sealaska for this interesting and helpful opportunity to learn not just how to perform this job, but also for the insights into marine life and science. I really appreciated the shared knowledge and experience."



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Jobs in the field are available along the coast from the Gulf

of Mexico to Alaska, making it an ideal opportunity for shareholders and descendants living in coastal communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and California. Participants who attended the virtual training came from Southeast Alaska, Anchorage, Washington, Oregon, California and Hawaii.

In the coming weeks, the Sealaska Shareholder Development team will work with participants on a one-on-one basis to prepare their resumes and apply for the formal certification. Once certified, Sealaska will connect with them to find and apply for job opportunities. The skills learned through the PSO training are transferable to many careers across the industry.

Providing access and support for shareholders to explore diverse career pathways is vital to Sealaska's goal of creating stability for future generations, according to Sealaska Director of Shareholder Development Tesla Cox. Programs like the PSO training link shareholders with educational resources and innovative opportunities—especially in STEM/STEAM fields—that may not have been accessible otherwise.

“Leaning into our expertise and building on existing Indigenous knowledge empowers shareholders,” Cox said. “We look forward to providing similar opportunities in the future, where cultural values like curiosity and innovation, STEM career paths, and Indigenous knowledge all intersect.”

Interested in upcoming training opportunities? Sealaska will be rolling out a variety of new Shareholder Development programs in 2022. Visit MySealaska.com/Opportunities to see the latest news or [follow Sealaska on social media](#).

This press release was originally posted on the website of [Sealaska](#).

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Date Created

2022/03/01

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