Rural teachers in-service offers lessons about salmon

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Fairbanks, Alaska — Two dozen teachers from rural Alaska communities will attend an in-service training in Fairbanks Sept. 22-25, designed to increase science literacy by using a subject familiar to most of their students — salmon.

The in-service supports a classroom salmon incubation project coordinated by the Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Natural Resource and Youth Development Program. Other in-service co-sponsors include Alaska Sea Grant and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Teachers will learn how to participate in the incubation project, and scientists and researchers will talk about the salmon life cycle, Alaska rivers and ecological concepts underlying the project. They will tie their presentations to curriculum, as well as climate change, sustainability and stewardship. Scientists will also share projects they are conducting and offer opportunities to involve students and communities.

Organizer Peter Stortz, the 4-H natural resource and youth development specialist, inherited the program shortly after it began in 1991 and continues to support it in rural communities. The original purpose of the program — to provide math and science literacy through natural resource education, to students to those communities hit hardest by declining salmon returns and prices during the 1990s — remains highly relevant today, he said.

The teachers will represent mostly small Bush communities, such as Akiak, Aniak, Atmautluak, Grayling, Koyuk, Noorvik, Quinhagak, Ruby, Chuathbaluk, St. Mary’s, Grayling, Koyuk, Igiugig, Kwethluk, Napaskiak and Togiak, as well as Nome, Nenana, Tok and Delta Junction. More than 70 rural schools have been involved with the program since its beginning.

The in-service will take place at the Alpine Lodge. For more information, contact Peter Stortz at pjstortz@alaska.edu or 746-9459.

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ADDITIONAL CONTACTS: Peter Stortz, 4-H natural resource and youth development specialist, at 907-354-7194 (cell) or via e-mail at pjstortz@alaska.edu.
ON THE WEB: URL here: www.uaf.edu/ces

NOTE TO EDITORS: Salmon dissection from 1-2 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 23, will provide good visual opportunities for media
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