

2008 NOAA Fisheries Employee of the Year Nomination Narrative

Emmons, Candice

Program 1-10

Candice Emmons is a fantastic employee who exemplifies the traits NOAA should be promoting in its workforce. Ms. Emmons is a dedicated and skilled marine mammal field biologist, who has provide key expertise for nearly all of the NWFSC's field projects on endangered southern resident killer whales (SRKW). Through careful study, Ms. Emmons knows each of the 85 whales by sight and therefore provides essential 'real time' identification information for every SRKW field project we conduct. In addition to her unique knowledge, Ms. Emmons has also made essential organizational contributions to all of our projects through her attention to detail and her careful planning. She is the person who keeps track of all of the hundreds of details and tasks that are necessary to coordinate a successful project in the field. Back in the laboratory, Ms. Emmons has used her organizational skills to develop databases and data management systems to keep track not only of our own data but also to help organize historical photographic data that would otherwise be in danger of being lost.

Ms. Emmons work in 2008 has directly enhanced NOAA Fisheries stewardship of our marine resources. In particular, though hard field work and extensive data analysis, she provided critical data on killer whale distribution and habitat use to the NMFS Northwest Regional office for their use in a high profile biological opinion on the new Pacific Salmon Treaty. Her work on multiple field projects on the SRKW – measuring effects of noise, sampling prey, obtaining biopsies, identifying animals through acoustic recordings – has provided information is being directly used to help conserve this endangered population. Ms. Emmons has also been extremely helpful in providing information and review of biological opinions to NMFS managers. Her hard work, dedication and unstinting "can do" attitude are an inspiration to her fellow employees, several of whom have remarked to me on more than one occasion that it would be nearly impossible to do their work without her.

In addition to inspiring her fellow NOAA employees, Ms Emmon's work has inspired our constituents. In particular, she has gone out of her way to provide information to naturalists working for the whale watch industry to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information to provide to the public, and she has given educational presentations to the community and has provided acoustic data for use in the public schools. With her extensive knowledge, and calm but confident demeanor she is an ideal public ambassador for NOAA.

In summary, Ms Emmons is an outstanding employee who through her unique skills, hard work and dedication is improving NOAA's science and stewardship, and is inspiring her fellow employees and our constituents through her example. She is therefore well deserving of being considered employee of the year.