

ALASKA LEGISLATURE

HONORING

DR. JENNIFER “JEN” SCHMIDT

The members of the Thirty-Fourth Alaska State Legislature recognize and applaud the outstanding contributions of Dr. Jennifer “Jen” Schmidt to community-engaged research, and her dedication to advancing science in partnership with the people and communities of Alaska.

Jen serves as an associate professor of natural resource management and policy at the University of Alaska Anchorage’s Institute of Social and Economic Research, where her work focuses on the complex relationship between people, natural systems, and the challenges facing Alaska’s communities. Her research spans wildfire risk, climate impacts, energy systems, and land use, with a consistent emphasis on addressing real-world challenges through collaboration and applied science.

Central to Jen’s work is an engaged university model that brings research into direct partnership with communities. She has worked extensively with community councils, local organizations, and public agencies across Anchorage and beyond, ensuring residents help shape the research that affects them and building relationships grounded in trust and transparency. Her wildfire preparedness and evacuation planning work in Anchorage reflects this approach, incorporating local knowledge into modeling and analysis through active participation in community meetings and sustained engagement with groups such as the Rabbit Creek Community Council and the Home and Landowners Organization (HALO).

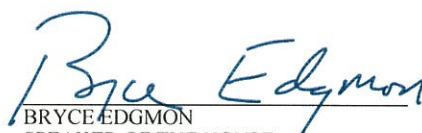
This co-creation of knowledge has strengthened the quality of Jen’s research while building community capacity to understand wildfire risk, evacuation challenges, and planning strategies, helping residents make informed decisions and contribute to solutions that improve public safety. Her work has also helped secure state and federal funding and advance new approaches to wildfire risk in the wildland-urban interface, demonstrating how community-engaged science can inform policy, improve infrastructure planning, and support more resilient communities across Alaska.

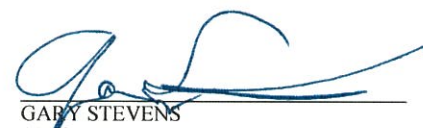
Beyond her academic and community contributions, Jen is also a world-class endurance athlete whose determination and resilience reflect the same spirit she brings to her professional work. In 2026, she competed in the USA Triathlon Cross National Championships in Austin, Texas, where she navigated a technically demanding course and emerged as the national champion, despite suffering a hand injury in the leadup to the race. Her achievement has earned her the opportunity to represent at the World Championships in Edmonton, Canada, further highlighting her commitment to excellence both in and beyond her field.

Jen has set a powerful example of how research, when conducted in true partnership with the public, can both advance science and build stronger, more informed communities. Her leadership reflects the best of Alaska’s spirit of cooperation, innovation, and shared responsibility.

The members of the Thirty-Fourth Alaska State Legislature recognize and commend Dr. Jennifer “Jen” Schmidt for her significant and continuing contributions to the state of Alaska, and wish her many more years of impactful research, community partnership, and service.




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