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United States Cruise Plan for Bering Sea Research, September, 2008

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Introduction

Scientists from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Marine Ecosystem and Stock Assessment, Ocean Carrying Capacity (MESA-OCC) program will conduct a survey during Fall 2008 within the eastern Bering Sea to provide key ecological data on the pelagic ecosystem. Primary objectives of the survey will be to: 1) collect biological information on ecologically important fish species and to 2) describe the physical and biological oceanographic conditions of the eastern Bering Sea waters.

Survey

The survey will begin 8 September 2008 in Dutch Harbor, Alaska and end on 30 September 2008 in Dutch Harbor, for a total of 21 sea days (Fig. 1; Table 1).

The cruise will be conducted aboard the NOAA ship *Oscar Dyson*. Fish samples will be collected using a midwater rope trawl. At each station, the net will be towed at or near the surface for 30 minutes at speeds between 3.5 and 5 kts.

All fish species will be counted and standard biological measurements including length and weight will be taken from subsamples of each species. Diets of subsamples of marine fish will be examined onboard.

Biological and physical oceanographic data will be collected at each trawl station as well as opportunistically during the survey.

Table 1. Tentative cruise itinerary for the NMFS, MESA-OCC September 8 – 30, 2008 research cruise – R/V *Oscar Dyson*.

Date	Location/Activity
Leg 1	
Sep 7-8	Embark scientific party/Load Gear
Sep 9	Depart Dutch Harbor; begin sampling stations (Fig. 1)
Sep 29	Inport Dutch Harbor, Alaska
Sep 30	End cruise



Fig. 1. Proposed survey stations for the MESA-OCC eastern Bering Sea survey, September 8 to 30, 2008 on board the R/V *Oscar Dyson*.