

NPAFC
Doc. 1235
Rev. _____
Rev. Date: _____

United States Cruise Plan for BASIS on the F/V *Epic Explorer*, September 2010

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Submitted to the
NORTH PACIFIC ANADROMOUS FISH COMMISSION
by the

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

April 2010

THIS PAPER MAY BE CITED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:

Anonymous. 2010. United States Cruise Plan for BASIS on the F/V *Epic Explorer* September, 2010. NPAFC Doc. 1235. 2 pp. Auke Bay Laboratories, Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute, NMFS, NOAA, 17109 Pt. Lena Loop Road, Juneau, AK 99801-8626, U.S.A. (Available at <http://www.npafc.org>).

Introduction

Scientists from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Marine Ecosystem and Stock Assessment (MESA) Program will conduct a survey during Fall 2010 within the northern Bering Sea shelf to provide key ecological data on pelagic fish species and their habitat. Primary objectives of the survey will be to: 1) assess the status of juvenile salmon for use in run projection models and pre-season harvest guidelines, 2) collect information on the distribution, abundance, trophic relationships, and population structure (age and stock structure) of key pelagic fish species within the northern Bering Sea shelf 3) describe the physical and biological oceanographic conditions and features of the northern Bering Sea shelf.

Survey

A survey of pelagic fish species, zooplankton, ichthyoplankton, and oceanographic measurements will be conducted at stations within the eastern Bering Sea aboard the *F/V Epic Explorer*. The survey will begin on 3 September 2010 in Dutch Harbor, Alaska and end on 27 September 2010 in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, for a total of 25 sea days (Fig. 1; Table 1). The cruise will be conducted aboard the *F/V Epic Explorer*. 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. 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 Northern BASIS research cruise – *F/V Epic Explorer*, September 3-27, 2010.

Date	Location/Activity
Sep 3	Embark scientific party/Load Gear
Sep 4	Depart Dutch Harbor, acoustic calibration
Sep 5-6	Transit to 60.5N
Sep 7-24	Sample station grid (Fig. 1)
Sep 25-26	Transit to Dutch Harbor
Sep 27	Offload

Fig. 1. Proposed survey stations for the Northern Bering Sea BASIS research survey, September 3 to September 27, 2010 aboard the *F/V Epic Explorer*.

