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United States Cruise Plan for The Gulf of Alaska Project, July – October 2013

Jamal Moss and Wyatt Rhea-Fournier

AUKE BAY LABORATORIES
Ted Stevens Marine Research Institute
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
17109 Pt. Lena Loop Road
Juneau, AK 99801-8626, U.S.A
Phone: (907) 789-6005

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Introduction

Scientists from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory (PMEL), and the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) will conduct a fisheries oceanographic survey during summer and fall 2013 within the southeastern and central regions of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) to provide key ecological data on the pelagic ecosystem, examine oceanographic transport mechanisms, lower trophic level production, and age-0 marine fish and juvenile salmon distribution and condition. Primary objectives of the survey will be to: 1) collect biological information on ecologically important marine fish and salmon and 2) describe the physical, and biological conditions of the GOA.

Survey

A survey of epi-pelagic fish species, zooplankton, ichthyoplankton, and oceanographic measurements will be conducted at predetermined survey stations within the southeastern GOA in summer and fall and central GOA in summer aboard a contracted stern ramp trawling vessel. NOAA Ship Oscar Dyson will sample survey stations in the central GOA during fall. The survey will begin 1 July 2013 in Juneau, Alaska and end on 14 October 2013 in Kodiak, Alaska with a total duration of 92 survey days (Table 1).

Fish samples will be collected using a midwater rope trawl and the trawl will be towed at or near the surface for 30 minutes at speeds between 3.5 and 5 kts at each station.

All fish species will be counted and standard biological measurements including length and weight will be taken from subsamples of each species. Marine fish and juvenile salmon will be collected for food habits and laboratory analyses. Biological and physical oceanographic data will be collected at each trawl station.

Table 1. Tentative cruise itinerary for the Gulf of Alaska Project research cruise, July 1 - October 14, 2013.

Date	Location/Activity
LEG 1	
Jul 1	Embark scientific party /load gear (Juneau, AK)
July 2	Depart Juneau, AK and transit to southeastern GOA
Jul 3-8	Sample southeastern grid stations working from south to north (Fig. 1)
Jul 9	Inport Sitka, crew change
July 10-23	Continue sampling southeastern grid stations working from south to north (Fig. 1)
July 24	Inport Juneau, AK

LEG 2

Aug 1 Embark scientific party /load gear (Juneau, AK)
Aug 2-4 Depart Juneau, AK and transit to central GOA
Aug 5-22 Sample central GOA grid stations working from east to west (Fig. 2)
Aug 23 In port Kodiak, AK
Aug 24-27 Transit to Juneau, AK
Aug 28 Inport Juneau, AK

LEG 3

Sept 4 Embark scientific party /load gear (Juneau, AK)
Sept 3 Depart Juneau, AK and transit to southeastern GOA
Sept 4-21 Sample southeastern grid stations working from north to south (Fig. 1)
Sept 22 Inport Sitka, crew change
Sept 23-26 Continue sampling southeastern grid stations working from north to south
(Fig. 1)
Sept 27 Inport Juneau, AK

LEG 4

Sept 22 Embark scientific party /load gear (Kodiak, AK)
Sept 23 Depart Kodiak, AK and transit to central GOA
Sept 24-30 Sample central GOA grid stations working from east to west (Fig. 2)
Oct 1-12 Sample central GOA grid stations working from east to west (Fig. 2)
Oct 13 Transit to Kodiak, AK
Oct 14 Inport Kodiak, AK

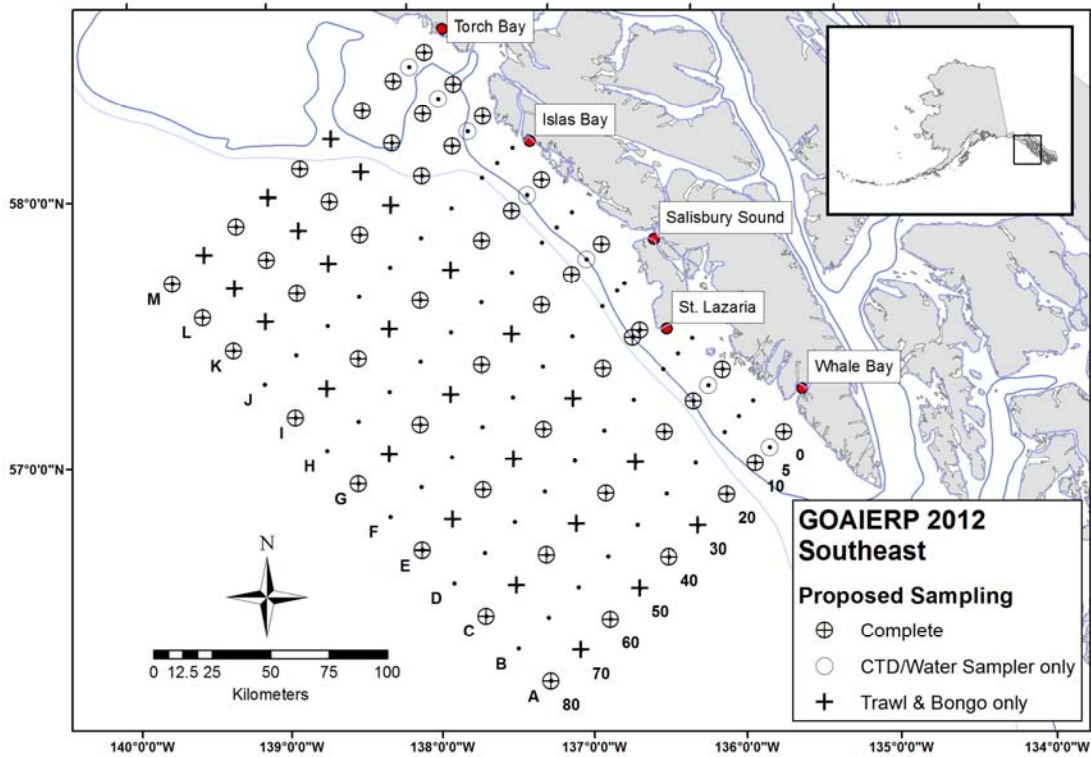


Fig. 1. Proposed southeastern GOA survey stations for the Gulf of Alaska Project.

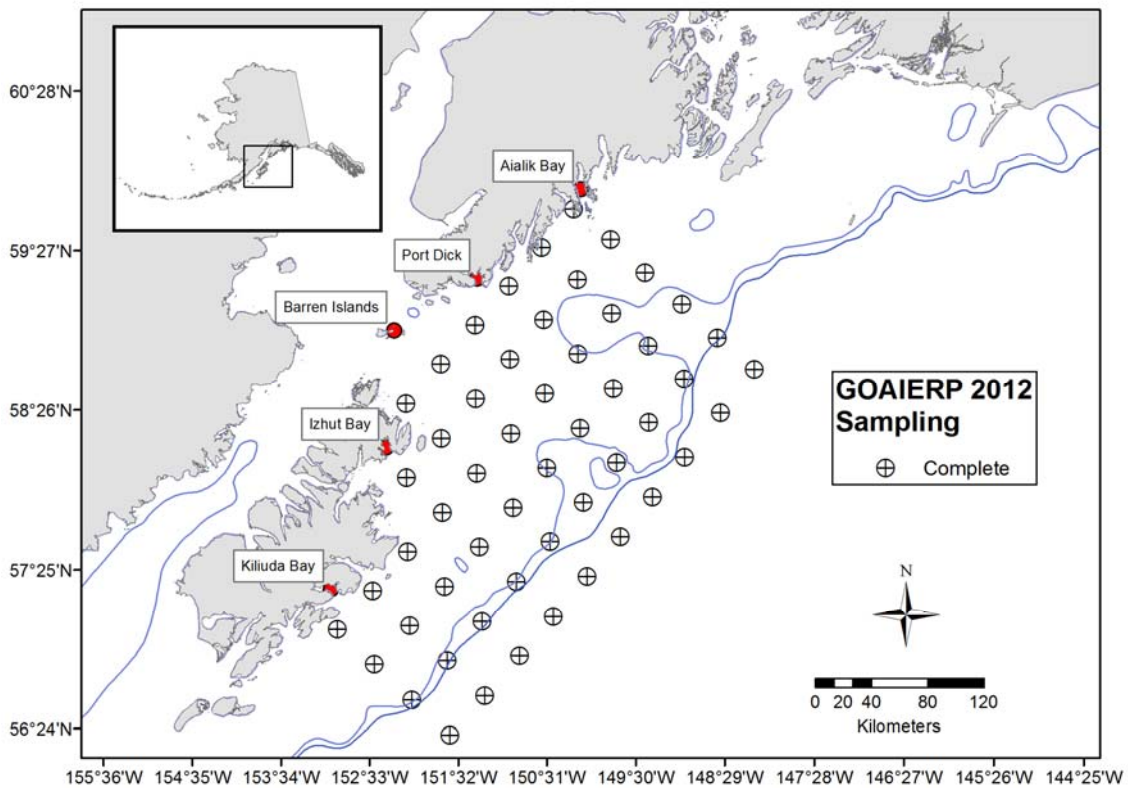


Fig. 2. Proposed central GOA survey stations for the Gulf of Alaska Project.