

**United States Cruise Plan for the Gulf of Alaska
Assessment Survey for 2016**

by

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ABSTRACT

Scientists from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will conduct a fisheries oceanographic survey within the southeastern region of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) during summer of 2016 to provide key ecological data on the pelagic ecosystem, examine oceanographic transport mechanisms, lower trophic level production, age-0 marine fish distribution and energetic status, and juvenile salmon distribution and energetic status. 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.

GOA Assessment sampling planned for 2016

A primary objective of this research is to survey epi-pelagic fish populations, zooplankton, ichthyoplankton, and physical and biological oceanographic conditions. Sampling will be conducted at predetermined survey stations within the southeastern GOA aboard a contracted stern ramp trawling vessel. The survey will begin 3 July 2016 in Juneau, Alaska and end 24 July 2016 in Juneau, Alaska with a total duration of 22 survey days (Table 1). Fish samples will be collected using a midwater rope trawl towed at or near the surface for 30 minutes at speeds between 3.5 and 5 kts. All fish will be sorted according to species and life stage. Standard biological measurements including length and weight will be taken from subsamples of each species. Marine fish and juvenile salmon will be collected and preserved for food habits

and laboratory analyses. Biological and physical oceanographic data will be collected at each survey station.

Table 1.— Tentative cruise itinerary for the Gulf of Alaska research cruise; July 3 - 24, 2016.

Date	Location/Activity
LEG 1a	
Jul 3	Embark scientific party/load gear/depart Juneau, AK
Jul 4-14	Sample southern block of grid stations working from south to north (Fig. 1)
Jul 15	In port Sitka, crew change
LEG 1b	
Jul 16-23	Sample northern block of grid stations working from south to north (Fig. 1)
Jul 24	In port Juneau, off-load

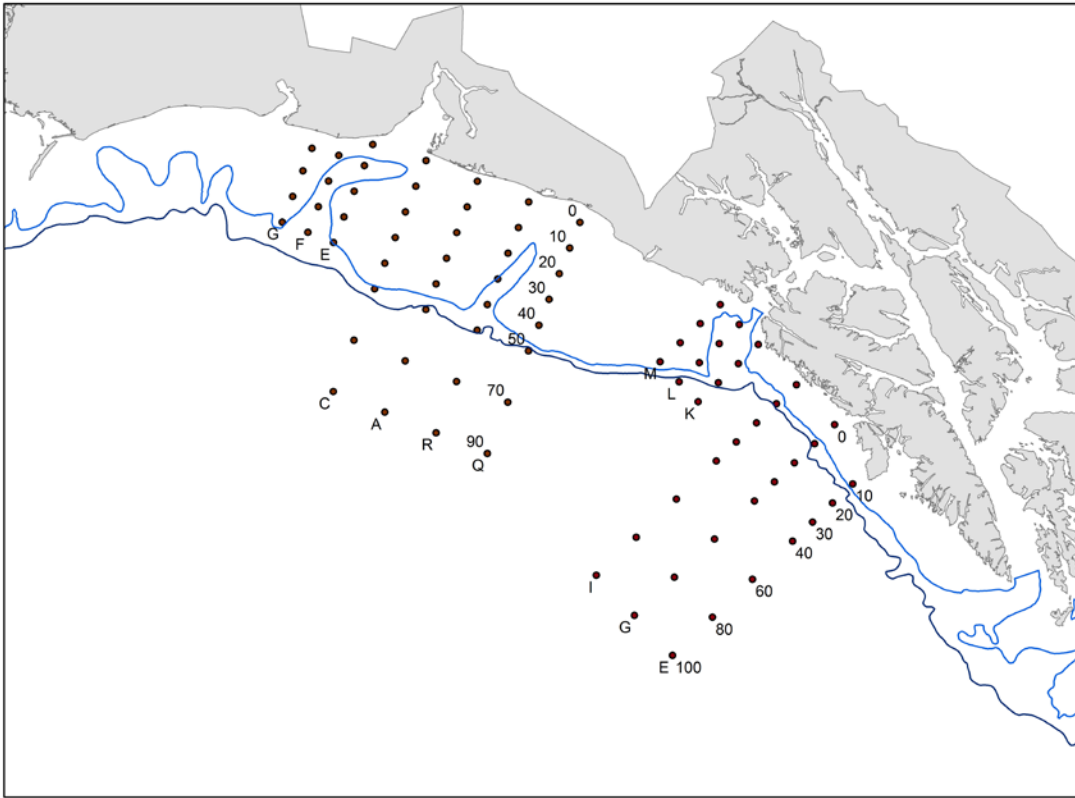


Figure 1.—Stations scheduled for sampling in July 2016 by the Gulf of Alaska Assessment survey.