

## CRUISE ANNOUNCEMENT

Charter Vessels *F/V Vesteraalen* (Cruise 2002-02),  
*F/V Sea Storm*, and *F/V Morning Star* (Cruise 2002-01)

### AREA AND PERIOD OF OPERATION

The fishing vessel *F/V Vesteraalen* has been chartered for 56 days and the *F/V Sea Storm* has been chartered for 70 days to conduct the 2002 biennial bottom trawl survey of the Aleutian Islands region. The *F/V Morning Star* has been chartered for 70 days to survey the northern side of the eastern Aleutian Islands and the upper continental slope of the eastern Bering Sea. A separate cruise announcement will outline the operation plans for the slope survey.

After loading and equipment setup on May 13 and 14 in Dutch Harbor, AK, the *Vesteraalen* will conduct tests of sonic bottom typing equipment and gather catch data until May 26 after which the Aleutian groundfish survey sampling will begin in the eastern Aleutian Islands. Sampling will proceed westward to Stalemate Bank (long. 170°E), west of Attu Island. The *Vesteraalen* charter period will end in Dutch Harbor on July 21.

After loading and equipment setup on May 23 and 24 in Dutch Harbor, the *Morning Star* will proceed to the vicinity of Segum Island to place a time-lapse camera near Atka mackerel spawning habitat, and begin survey sampling operations. Sampling will proceed eastward toward Unimak Pass (long. 165°W.) along the north side of the islands. On June 4 the *Morning Star* will commence sampling operations along the upper continental slope of the eastern Bering Sea.

After loading and equipment setup in Seattle, WA, during the week of May 26, the *Sea Storm* will proceed directly to Dutch Harbor where the scientific party will board. *Sea Storm* will meet *Vesteraalen* after which both vessels will work quickly westward to Stalemate Bank and return eastward sampling the remaining stations. The *Sea Storm* charter will end in Dutch Harbor on August 15.

## OBJECTIVES

The major survey objective is to continue the data time series begun in 1980 to monitor trends in distribution and abundance of important groundfish species and to describe and measure various biological and environmental parameters. Specific objectives of the 2002 survey include:

1. define the distribution and relative abundance of the principal groundfish and commercially important invertebrate species that inhabit the Aleutian archipelago;
2. obtain catch and effort data from which to estimate the abundance of the principal groundfish species;
3. collect data to define selected biological parameters, *i.e.* size, sex, age, growth, length-weight relationships, feeding habits, and spawning condition for selected species;
4. monitor and collect trawl performance information; and
5. complete special collections as requested by other researchers or research groups.

## METHODS AND GEAR

The survey design is a stratified random sampling scheme consisting of approximately 425 stations selected randomly from a combination of successful tows completed during previous surveys and sites not previously trawled. The selected sampling sites are allocated to 45 sampling strata defined by geographical location and depth, ranging from shallow, near shore depths to 500 meters (m) on the continental slope.

Whenever possible, the charter vessels will conduct survey operations in close proximity to each other, with each vessel attempting a 15 minute trawl haul at preassigned stations. Catches will be sorted, weighed and enumerated by species. Biological information (length, age structures, maturity, individual weights, stomach contents, tissue samples, etc.) will be collected for some preselected species. Collections of rare fish and invertebrates, and of corals, sponges and other sessile organisms will be conducted on an opportunistic basis.

Standard survey bottom trawling will be conducted with four seam, high-opening polyethylene Nor'eastern trawls equipped with rubber

bobbin roller gear. This standard survey trawl has a 27.2 m headrope and 36.75 m footrope consisting of a 24.9 m center section with adjacent 5.9 m "flying wing" extensions. Accessory gear for the Nor'eastern trawl includes 54.9 m triple dandy lines and 1.8 X 2.7 m steel V-doors weighing approximately 850 kg each.

#### **ITINERARY**

##### **F/V *Vesteraalen*:**

May 13 First day of charter - Load and setup in Dutch Harbor

May 15 Begin Leg 1 - Test sonic seafloor sensing equipment

May 27 Begin trawl survey sampling operations

June 4 End of Leg 1 in Dutch Harbor - Resupply vessel, exchange personnel, resume survey

June 27 End of Leg 2 in Adak - Resupply vessel, exchange personnel, resume survey

July 20 Arrive Dutch Harbor

July 21 Unload vessel, end of charter

##### **F/V *Morning Star*:**

May 23 First day of charter - Load and setup in Dutch Harbor

May 25 Begin Leg 1 - Vessel proceeds to Seguam Island to place camera and begin sampling operations

June 4 End sampling in Aleutian area, begin operations on upper continental slope of the eastern Bering Sea.

##### **F/V *Sea Storm*:**

May 29 Load and setup in Seattle

May 31 Depart Seattle for Dutch Harbor

June 7 Arrive Dutch Harbor - Board scientific personnel, begin Leg 1

July 1 End Leg 1 in Adak - Resupply vessel

July 2      Begin Leg 2 - Exchange personnel, resume survey  
July 24     End Leg 2 in Adak - Resupply vessel  
July 25     Begin Leg 3 - Exchange personnel, resume survey  
August 14   Arrive Dutch Harbor  
August 15   Unload vessel, end of charter

**SCIENTIFIC STAFF AND AFFILIATIONS  
ALEUTIAN ISLANDS BIENNIAL TRAWL SURVEY, 2002**

**SEA STORM - LEG 1**

**VESTERAALEN - LEG 1**

DATES: May 13 - June 4  
PORTS: Dutch Harbor - Dutch Harbor

FPC	Michael Martin	AFSC
	Bill Flerx	AFSC
	Mei-sun Yang	AFSC
	Nate Raring	AFSC
	Robin Harrison	AFSC
	Steve Syrala*	AFSC
	George Cronin **	AFSC

DATES: June 7 - July 1  
PORTS: Dutch Harbor - Adak

FPC	Liz Chilton	AFSC
	Eric Brown	AFSC
	Katherine Pearson	AFSC
	Paul Spencer	AFSC
	TBN	AFSC
	TBN	AFSC

**VESTERAALEN - LEG 2**

DATES: June 5 - June 27  
PORTS: Dutch Harbor - Adak

FPC	Bill Flerx	AFSC
	Russ Nelson	AFSC
	Chris Rooper	AFSC
	Chris Gbursky	AFSC
	Rob Katona	AFSC
	Roger Clark	AFSC

**SEA STORM - LEG 2**

DATES: July 2 - July 24  
PORTS: Adak - Adak

FPC	Mark Wilkins	AFSC
	Jay Orr	AFSC
	Alberto Lindner	SMIT
	Bob van Syoc	ACAD
	Ashley Forbes	AFSC
	TBN	AFSC

**VESTERAALEN - LEG 3**

DATES: June 28 - July 21  
PORTS: Adak - Dutch Harbor

FPC	Nate Raring	AFSC
	Alisa Abookire	AFSC
	Jim Stark	AFSC
	Nancy Roberson	AFSC
	Roger Clark	AFSC
	Jerry Berger	AFSC

**SEA STORM - LEG 3**

DATES: July 25 - August 15  
PORTS: Adak - Dutch Harbor

FPC	Bob Lauth	AFSC
	Robin Harrison	AFSC
	Paul von Szalay	AFSC
	Mei-Sun Yang	AFSC
	Chris Rilling	OCRM
	April Devitt	ACAD

**Abbreviations**

AFSC - Alaska Fisheries Science Center  
ACAD - California Academy of Science  
OCRM - NOAA/Ocean and Coastal Resource Management  
SMIT - Smithsonian Institute  
FPC - Field Party Chief  
TBN - To be named

\* On board for survey only  
\*\* On board for gear tests only

**MORNING STAR - LEG 1**

DATES: May 23 - June 4  
PORTS: Dutch Harbor - Dutch Harbor

FPC	Jerry Hoff	AFSC
	Bob Lauth	AFSC
	Jay Orr	AFSC
	Duane Stevenson	AFSC
	John Short	AFSC
	TBN	