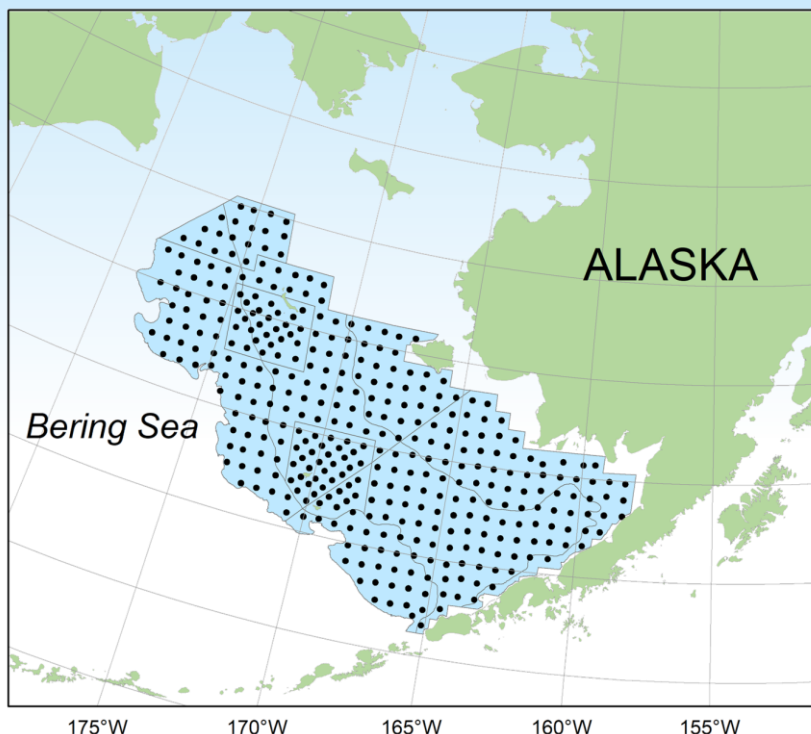




Annual Bottom Trawl Survey of the Eastern Bering Sea

May 17th – July 30th 2023



What are you sampling and where?

We plan to sample bottom-dwelling fish, crab and other marine life on two chartered fishing vessels, *FV Alaska Knight* and *FV Northwest Explorer*, in the eastern Bering Sea from May through July 2023 (see map and Table). In total, we plan to sample 376 survey stations, conducting one 30-minute bottom trawl at each station. We also plan to survey the northern Bering Sea shelf using the same methods (see separate Research Brief).

What kind of gear will be used?

Sampling will be done using the 83/112 Eastern bottom trawl, which is much smaller and lighter weight than commercial fisheries trawls. The survey is based on sampling a systematic 20 × 20 nm grid using standardized techniques that have been consistently used since 1982. Scientists will sample 376 stations during daylight hours. All organisms caught will be identified to species and weighed. Fishes and crabs will be measured, sexed, and sampled for stomach contents and age structure. We also plan to take measurements of water column profiles at each trawl location using a trawl-mounted temperature and salinity probe.

How will the information be used?

The data will be used by scientists to track abundance and distribution trends of fish, crab, and other bottom-dwelling marine species over time. Biological and oceanographic data will also be used in ecosystem modeling efforts conducted by AFSC and other scientists. All data will be made available to the public.

Who is conducting the research?

Scientists from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center will be leading the survey effort with participation from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), and regional universities.

What is the research objective?

The objectives of this survey are to monitor the marine ecosystem of the eastern Bering Sea, produce fishery-independent biomass and abundance estimates for commercially important fish and crab species, and collect other biological and environmental data for use in ecosystem-based fishery management.

[See timetable and station map on back](#)

Schedule for the 2023 Eastern Bering Sea Shelf Survey

Begin survey mobilization in Dutch Harbor, AK	May 17th
Survey vessels depart Dutch Harbor, AK	May 21st
Survey operations begin	May 22nd
Survey operations end	July 28th
Vessels transition to northern Bering Sea shelf survey	July 29th

* Tentative schedule as of March 1, 2022.

What steps are you taking to prevent spread of COVID-19

- General and Vessel Specific AFSC SOPs for Fieldwork for FY 23.
- 10-day reduced contact period prior to travel.
- Antigen testing prior to travel with negative result.
- Masks, hand-washing, and social distancing as possible during travel.
- 3-day reduced contact period at port of embarkation.
- Pre-boarding testing on day of embarkation with negative result.
- Continual daily monitoring of symptoms, rapid testing as needed.

How do you plan to communicate research results?

- Initial results will be communicated to the BSAI Plan Team during their September 2023 meeting
- Survey data products will be made available to stock assessment scientists by October 1, 2023
- NOAA Tech Memo summarizing survey results will be published in early 2024
- Haul-level catch data will be made available to the public on the Fisheries One Stop Shop: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/foss/f?p=215:28>
- AFSC scientists will participate in various local and regional communication activities



U.S. Secretary of Commerce
Gina M. Raimondo

Under Secretary of Commerce for
Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA
Administrator
Dr. Richard W. Spinrad

Assistant Administrator, National
Marine Fisheries Service.
Janet Coit

March 2023
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**National Marine
Fisheries Service**
1315 East-West Highway
SSMC 3, F/SF, Room 13362
Silver Spring, MD 20910



FV Alaska Knight



FV Northwest Explorer

Photo: International Year of the Salmon



Duane Stevenson, Survey team lead
Resource Assessment and Conservation Engineering (RACE) Division,
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
7600 Sand Point Way, NE
Seattle, WA 98115
Email: duane.stevenson@noaa.gov