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**NOAA
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National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Fisheries Science Center

2021 AFSC Seminar Series

Bryan Costa & Chris Caldwell, NOAA NCCOS & CINMS
Tuesday, March 9th @ 10 am Pacific

Potential Benefits of the Expanding Pacific Research and Exploration of Submerged Systems (EXPRESS) Campaign in Alaska

Data on deep sea organisms and their associated habitats are critical for a wide range of decisions about natural resources, uses and hazards within the United States EEZ. Although this information is critical, large gaps in our understanding of the seafloor still exist for many U.S. federal management and regulatory agencies. In 2018, individuals from NOAA, BOEM, USGS and MBARI came together to launch the Expanding Pacific Research and Exploration of Submerged Systems (EXPRESS) Campaign. The focus of this effort was to leverage their participant resources to fill common, high priority data gaps in the

U.S. West CONUS Coast (WCC). To date, EXPRESS partners have completed 326 days at sea on 9 different research vessels on the WCC with more cruises planned in 2021. In FY2020, NOAA's Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program's initiative began in the Alaska region. This initiative highlighted the potential need for a similar EXPRESS-like working group to help coordinate the acquisition of deep-sea data offshore of Alaska. Initial conversations about an Alaska EXPRESS Campaign were held in early 2021 to solicit interest and input from federal agencies actively collecting deep-sea data in the Alaska region. The goal of this presentation is to continue to build on these discussions about why, how and who an EXPRESS-like Campaign would potentially benefit in the Alaska region.

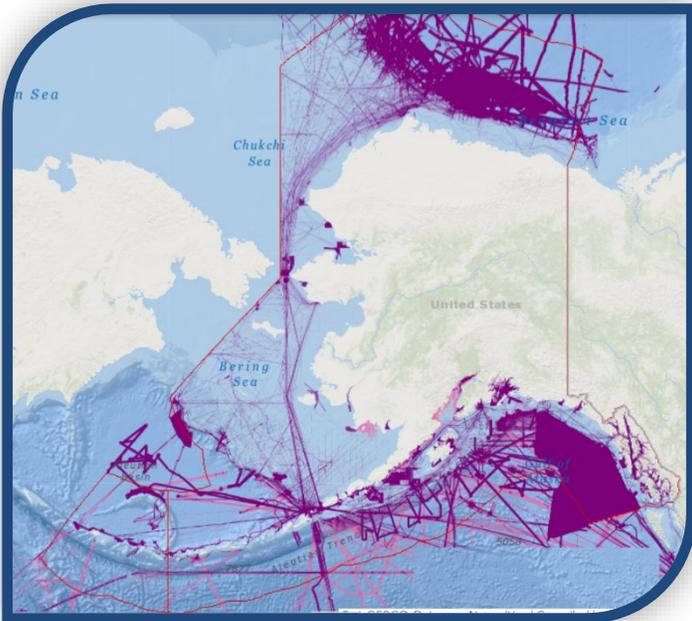


Figure. Map of Alaska showing existing depth information. Purple shows areas with >3 soundings and the pink areas denote locations with <3 soundings per 100 sq m. Many areas in the Alaska region are missing critical information about the seafloor, requiring a coordinated effort leverage ships and resources to map these data gaps.

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