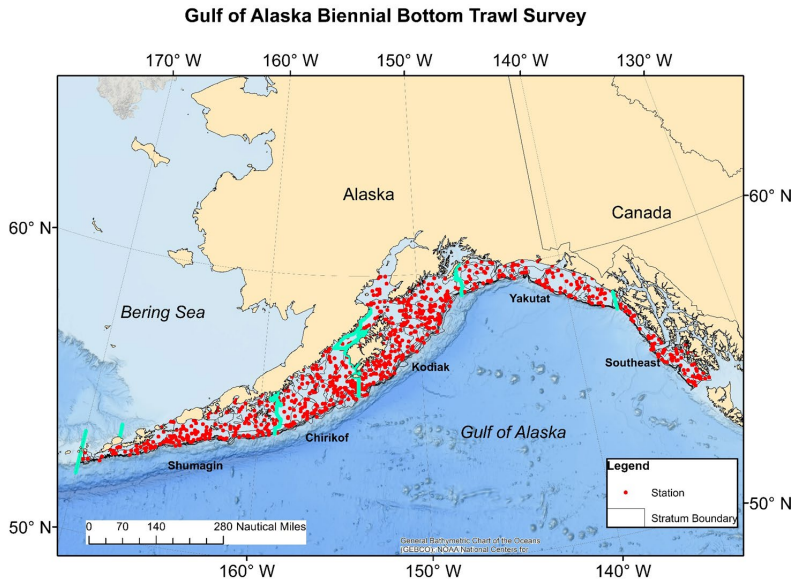


Gulf of Alaska Biennial Bottom Trawl Survey

May 18 to August 6, 2023



Who is conducting the research?

The Groundfish Assessment Program at Alaska Fisheries Science Center of the National Marine Fisheries Service conducts the fishery-independent biennial bottom trawl surveys aboard contracted commercial fishing vessels. Survey teams consist of commercial fishers and NMFS survey scientists, contractors, and fishery observers.

What is the research objective?

Our objective is to characterize the distribution and abundance of the ecologically and economically important species that live on or near the seafloor in Alaska. Our survey produces observations of species occurrence, species densities, and biological characteristics such as length, gender, age, and food habits. These data collected on our surveys are used to support annual stock assessments and ecological models.

Where is the research being conducted?

This is a survey of the Gulf of Alaska and progresses east from the Islands of Four Mountains to Dixon Entrance sampling around the Shumagin Islands, Kodiak Island, in lower Cook Inlet, and Southeast Alaska. Trawl samples are collected from the continental shelf and upper slope down to 700 m.

Map a showing typical distribution of around 500 bottom trawl stations in the Gulf of Alaska along a distance of 2,300 km from the Island of Four Mountains to Dixon Entrance. Stations are sited at random in strata based on region, sub-region, and depth. This survey is conducted every other year during odd-numbered years. Data collected include species occurrence and abundance, length and age composition, and environmental observations.

Why are the data important? How will data be used?

The fishery-independent survey provides indexes of abundance along with length and age composition of the sampled population of economically important fish and crabs species managed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. These data are integrated into stock assessments conducted by NMFS scientists that provide a comprehensive picture of the health of managed species. Bottom trawl survey results can provide early warnings of unusual increases or decreases in key species, helping to inform management decisions that assure sustainable fisheries.

Related data such as water temperatures, fish body condition, and the relative abundances of prey and other ecologically important species provide ecosystem scientists with the information they need to characterize the overall health of the Gulf of Alaska.

See timetable and station map on back

Schedule for the 2023 Gulf of Alaska Biennial Bottom Trawl Survey

Survey preparation in Seattle	April 1 st -30 th
Mobilize Survey in Dutch Harbor	May 18 th – 22 nd
Begin Survey Operations	May 21 st – 23 rd
Exchange Science Crews @ Sand Point, Alaska Kodiak Island, Alaska Seward, Alaska	June 5 th June 25 th July 14 th
Survey Operations End – Ketchikan Alaska	August 1 st & 6 th
Demobilization in Seattle	After August 16 th

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

- General and Vessel Specific AFSC SOPs for Fieldwork for 2023.
- Suggested 10-day reduced contact period prior to travel.
- Testing 2 days prior to travel with negative result.
- Masks and social distancing as possible during travel.
- 72-hour shelter-in-place at port of embarkation for all science staff
- Testing with negative result before boarding vessel after SIP.
- Continual daily monitoring of symptoms, rapid testing as needed.

How do you plan to communicate research results

- Initial results will be communicated to the Gulf of Alaska Plan team during their September 2023 meeting.
- Survey data and estimates are made available to stock assessment scientists in September.
- Data are included in each GOA Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation published by NOAA Fisheries.
- Station density data are made available on the NOAA website.
- Data are shared on [AKFIN](#) and [FOSS](#) websites.



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May 2023

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