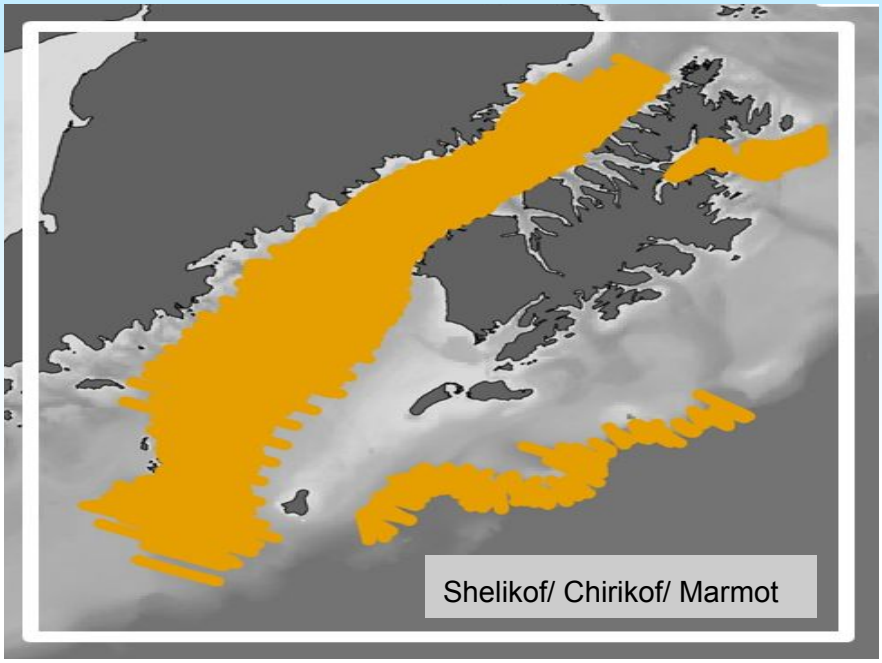
NOAA FISHERIES
National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Fisheries Science Center
Research Brief

2025 Winter Acoustic-Trawl Pre-spawning Pollock Surveys in the Gulf of Alaska

March -April 2025



Planned survey areas for the 2025 winter acoustic-trawl survey of pre-spawning walleye pollock in the Gulf of Alaska

What is the research objective?

The objective is to estimate the abundance and distribution of pre-spawning walleye pollock (*Gadus chalcogrammus*) in winter spawning regions of the Gulf of Alaska (GOA), using acoustics and targeted trawling on acoustic backscatter, to inform fish stock assessment models and catch allocation.

Where is the research being conducted?

This survey covers several walleye pollock main spawning grounds. Historically, most of these efforts have been focused on the Shelikof Strait area, which has been surveyed annually since 1981 except in 1982, 1999, and 2011. Chirikof Shelf Break and Marmot Bay have been surveyed intermittently over the past 2-3 decades.

Who is conducting the research?

Scientists from the Alaska Fisheries Science Center's Midwater Assessment and Conservation Engineering (MACE) Program will work aboard the NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson*.

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

Data from the acoustic-trawl surveys provide estimates of pre-spawning pollock numbers and biomass by length and age, environmental observations, and observations on other species in the water column. These are key ingredients and environmental indicators for the GOA Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation report and the GOA Ecosystem Status Report provided by GOA Plan Teams to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council for science-based management of the pollock fishery.

Research Schedule

Embark scientific party in Kodiak, AK	Mar 15
Depart Kodiak, AK; transit to Kalsin Bay	Mar 16
Deploy seafloor-mounted echosounder; calibration of shipboard acoustics	Mar 16
Acoustic-trawl survey of Shelikof Strait, Chirikof Shelf Break, and Marmot Bay	Mar 17-31
Transit Kalsin Bay and recovery/redeploy seafloor-mounted echosounder	Mar 31
End survey operations in Kodiak, AK	Apr 1

How will this research benefit Alaska communities and stakeholders?

This fishery-independent survey is a crucial part of the pollock stock assessment, allocation, and ecosystem indicators that ensure the stability and continued health of the fishes in the GOA.

NOAA Ship Oscar Dyson

How do you plan to communicate research results? (e.g., outreach document, webstory, radio interview, community meeting, etc.)

A short written summary of preliminary results will be available to the public after each survey ends. The Chief Scientist will present preliminary results from the winter 2025 survey areas to interested members of the Kodiak fishing community and the public after the end of the survey. Final results will be presented at the September 2025 GOA Team meetings hosted by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and AFSC.

Contacts:

Darin Jones, darin.jones@noaa.gov (Shelikof Chief Scientist, Lead Analyst)
Sandy Parker-Stetter, sandy.parker-stetter@noaa.gov (MACE Program Manager)

Howard Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce

Vice Admiral Nancy Hann
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations and performing the duties of Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator

Emily Menashes
Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations for NOAA Fisheries, performing the duties of Acting Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere and Acting

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www.fisheries.noaa.gov

Alaska Fisheries Science Center
7600 Sand Point Way
Seattle, WA 98115