

NOAA Sets Focus for 2012 Hydrographic Survey



Responding to requests from the maritime industry and the U.S. Coast Guard, Coast Survey is prioritising tasks for the 2012 hydrographic survey season. The mission is to acquire hydrographic data and update navigational charts for areas with high levels of commercial traffic and passenger cruise ships, and in areas important to the development of strategic resources.

The true Arctic lies ahead for the Office of Coast Survey hydrography and charting in 2012. This year, Coast Survey will venture the furthest north it has gone in fifty years, with NOAA Ship *Fairweather* planning to survey the sparsely and inadequately measured depths of the approaches to Red Dog Mine (the world's largest producer of zinc concentrate) in the Chukchi Sea.

The importance of ensuring the accuracy of charts used by passenger cruise lines is also front and centre, especially following the *Costa Concordia* tragedy in Italy. *Fairweather* is slated to survey Alaskan coastline transited by a major cruise line, and both the *Fairweather* and *Rainier* will likely survey Alaska ferry routes as well as other commercial transit areas in the Gulf of Alaska.

Rainier is also tentatively scheduled to survey critical navigation areas around Washington state. *Thomas Jefferson* picks up where it left off in 2011, returning to areas experiencing high levels of commercial shipping in Long Island and Block Sounds, off the coast of New York, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

This year, NOAA is planning to add a new ocean and coastal survey vessel, the *Ferdinand Hassler*, to its current line-up of survey ships. *Hassler* is tentatively scheduled to survey approaches to the Chesapeake Bay.

Coast Survey will finalise the 2012 survey plans in the coming weeks. In the meantime, NOAA's hydrographic survey priorities are available through the link below.

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/article/noaa-sets-focus-for-2012-hydrographic-survey>
