

NOAA awards Woolpert US\$7 million contract for hydrographic surveying in Alaska's Nome region



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has signed Woolpert to a US\$7 million contract to perform hydrographic surveying and collect bathymetric data in and around Nome, Alaska. This data will support commercial fishing, shipping channels, coastal resilience, scientific research and Seabed 2030, a collaborative project that aims to map the world's ocean floor by

2030.

Woolpert will collect data over 1,874 square nautical miles in Northern Norton Sound, which stretches from Golovin Bay through Nome to Cape Woolley on the eastern edge of Alaska. Nome is adjacent to the Bering Strait and central to America's marine presence in the Arctic. The region serves as a major transit route for shipping traffic to the Port of Nome, which has supplied food, construction materials, equipment and other goods to over 60 Alaskan communities for more than a century.

Wave adaptive modular vessels

Regional hydrographic data was most recently collected in the 1930s. This project will update National Ocean Service nautical charting products and services and will support the [Seabed 2030](#) Project. This collaborative effort between the [Nippon Foundation](#) and the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) aims to integrate and share all available bathymetric data to produce a definitive map of the world's ocean floor by 2030.

Woolpert has collected topographic, bathymetric and hydrographic data in and around Alaska for decades and has an office in Wasilla. Multiple hydrographic survey vessels will be used to collect the data, including two large live-aboard ships and two wave adaptive modular vessels (WAM-Vs). The WAM-Vs will be used primarily in a force multiplication strategy in coordination with the larger vessels performing this work. A combination of the right tools and experience are critical for this contract.

"Hydrographic surveying in Alaska can be logistically challenging, and moving equipment requires a range of vehicles and aircraft," Woolpert certified hydrographer Dave Neff said. "Local knowledge and relationships are highly beneficial for any project in Alaska. Our work over the years both as [Woolpert](#) and [eTrac](#), a Woolpert Company, has given us the scope and confidence to cost-effectively execute, while managing inherent regional risk. We're at home in Alaska, and we are excited to provide this needed data for Nome and all who rely on the region for goods and services."



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