

Endurance Array (Grays Harbor Line) Micro-siting Public Meeting
Westport Maritime Museum, Westport, WA
November 17, 2010, 7-9 PM

OOI Participants:

Jean McGovern (NSF)

Bob Collier (OSU)

Ed Dever (OSU)

Chris Romsos (OSU)

Rick Spaulding (TEC)

Jennifer Dorton (Ocean Leadership)

Laura Miller (Tetra Tech)

Community Participants: See attached attendance list

Summary:

Bob Collier provided a brief presentation about the OOI Washington Line, also known as the Grays Harbor Line. After the initial presentation as well as micro-siting discussions, an overview of OOI science was also provided.

Questions (*in italics*) asked during the presentation with answers provided by Bob Collier, Ed Dever and Rick Spaulding

1. *Where will gliders operate?* Some of the gliders will travel East-West along transects between and offshore of the Endurance Array moorings. The gliders will be programmed to go out to 128° W. The glider following the North – South transect line will stay offshore. The gliders have a deployment period of approximately 2 months.
2. *Can the gliders get entangled in crab pot lines?* Gliders have been deployed in the area during the past several years and to date, there have not been any entanglements with crab pots. If one does get entangled, it should not cause damage to the crab pot.
3. *Can the gliders be damaged in a fishing net?* The glider may be damaged, but that won't be the fishermen's fault. We have operated one glider continuously off of Newport for 4 years and the University of Washington has been operating them off the coast of WA as well. A few years ago a glider was caught in a fishing net but neither the glider nor the net were damaged. The gliders will have phone numbers on them, so if one is caught, just call the phone number to report the incident and get instructions for dealing with the glider. In general, you would be asked to return the glider back to the water.
4. *Will there be "no fishing" zones around the gliders?* No, there will be not be any fishing restrictions established around gliders or their associated tracks.
5. *Will moorings cause a closure to fishing zones?* We will work with the USCG to determine appropriate buffer zones (i.e., areas to be avoided) for the moorings. Right now we think that the nearshore mooring will need a 0.2-nm radius buffer zone and the shelf and offshore moorings will need a 0.5-nm radius buffer zone.
6. *If a USCG Cutter comes by a fishing vessel that is inside of the 0.5 nm buffer zone, will the vessel be fined?* No. The USCG will not fine fishermen for being within the 0.5-nm buffer zone.

7. *How did you come up with the buffer zone sizes?* The buffer zones (or watch circles) are voluntary and are meant to add a margin of safety to boaters and fishermen. We need to determine the sites for the moorings before we can accurately determine the buffer zones since buffer zones will be dependent on mooring depth.
8. *How strong are the mooring lines?* The mooring line itself is very strong and is basically a rubber-stretch hose.

Micro-siting Discussion

The micro-siting process was explained, noting that there are 3 proposed areas in which OOI would like to deploy the moorings. OOI requested that the fishermen and the public provide their input to help determine where, within the currently identified micro-siting areas, the moorings could be deployed to avoid or minimize potential impacts to fishermen and other marine users.

The biggest potential conflict may be with trawlers and longliners since they have more of a chance to get entangled whereas other types of fishing gear may have less potential for entanglement. Therefore, the proposed buffer zones may have different meanings based on gear type.

The Proposed Offshore Site (219-339 fathoms [fm])

- Bob Alverson, Fishing Vessel Owners' Association, discussed potential conflicts with the longline fishery and proposed a candidate site for the offshore mooring. Fishermen asked that the mooring be placed on the south side of Grays Canyon. The site is approximately 320 fm (approximately 580 m). Ed Dever noted that going deeper than 500 m might not be a problem. There is no closure in the area for this fishery's gear.
- OOI representatives should contact the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) to determine if there are other active fisheries that operate south of the Grays Canyon Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Bottom Trawl Closure Area that might be in conflict with an OOI site selected south of the canyon.
- Mr. Alverson requested a copy of the chart with the boundaries and depth overlays that were presented at the meeting so that he could take the charts back to the fishermen he works with.

ACTIONS:

1. Determine if the potential mooring location provided by Mr. Alverson impacts any spot prawn fisheries in the area.
2. Provide Mr. Alverson the GIS nautical charts presented at meeting. Add any EFH, including habitat areas of particular concern (HAPCs), and Bottom Trawl Closure Area layers to the chart as well (under Amendment 19 of the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan).
3. Contact PFMC to identify fisheries that might operate south of the canyon in the proposed area.

The Proposed Shelf Site (38-49 fm)

- Shrimpers trawl 48 fm line and offshore. Salmon trawls operate along the 45 fm line and inshore of 45 fm. Moving the station to an area between 45 – 47 fm would reduce potential impacts with the shrimp and salmon trawlers.
- The original candidate location (green dot) was near a highly valued rocky area. An alternative option was identified before the micro-siting meeting. During the micro-siting meeting, it was proposed that the site

could be moved slightly west and between 45 – 47 fm. Chris Romsos added a purple mark to the chart to note the new, potential mooring location.

ACTIONS:

4. Provide new chart to the following industry representatives for discussions within those fishing communities: Doug Fricke – salmon trawl representative; Gary Vining – shrimp trawl representative; and, Mark Cedergreen – recreational fishing representative.

The Proposed Nearshore Site (14-16 fm)

- It was suggested that the mooring be placed in the red line (navigation line) for Grays Harbor since the line is protected on three sides by other moorings in the area. Bob Collier noted that the mooring needs to be a certain distance north of Grays Harbor in order for data collected to be representative of the coastal area and not representative of Grays Harbor waters. Also, operation and maintenance of the mooring site would conflict with traffic entering the harbor and maintenance of the navigation channel.
- Meeting attendees noted that the southern boundary of the Quinault Special Management Area* (SMA) would be a good location. Bob Collier noted that any proposed location within the Quinault Usual and Accustomed (U&A) area will need to be approved by the Quinault. Bob also noted an additional bathymetric survey farther north would be required since our current survey data stops south of the SMA line.
* The Quinault SMA boundary lies within the southern area of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS).
- It was mentioned that the 14 fm buoy is going to be in a bad location no matter where it is placed due to the limited fishing area available to non-tribal fishers along the WA coast. Concern was expressed that any negative impacts to the mooring from fishing activities would result in a larger than 0.2 nm closure.
- A suggestion was made to consider deploying the 14 fm slightly farther offshore, such as at 16- or 18- fm. Ed Dever noted that the wave action at the 14 fm location is very interesting due to weather and the wave climate. It was noted that the 14 fm location is a difficult location to deploy a buoy and the last OOI test mooring made it through the winter until the very last storm when it was washed up on the beach.
- It was noted that during storms, gear deployed between nearshore and 16 fm moves more than gear deployed in deeper waters.

ACTIONS:

5. Present the option of moving the 14 fm mooring site to southern area of the OCNMS.
6. Schedule an additional public meeting if needed.

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Community Attendees

1. Bob Alverson, Fishing Vessel Owners' Association, Seattle, WA
2. Barb Fricke
3. Douglas Fricke, Washington Trawlers Association
4. Arthur Gronbaum, Westport, WA
5. Ray Toste, Washington Dungeness Crab Fishermen's Association, Westport, WA
6. Libie Cain, Westport, WA
7. Mark Cedergreen, Westport Charter Association, Westport, WA
8. Davis Mascarenas, Everett, WA
9. Kathy Greer, Grays Harbor County Marine Resources Committee
10. Bill Walsh, Coalition of Coastal Fisheries, Westport, WA
11. Gary Vining, Westport, WA
12. Rhett Weber
13. Robin Leraas, Port of Grays Harbor, Grays Harbor, WA
14. Chris Cain, Westport, WA
15. Jim Borkley, Anacortes, WA