

<b>NOAA FORM 77-65</b> (REV 3-84)	<b>U.S DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE</b> NOAA	1. ORIGINATING OFFICE _____	2. DATE _____
<b>REQUEST FOR THE SHIP TIME (FY _____)</b>			
3. PROJECT/CRUISE TITLE _____	4. ORIGINAL REQUEST CHANGE NUMBER _____ <i>(If update complete item 5)</i>	5. DATE OF ORIGINAL REQUEST _____	
6. SHIP PREFERENCES <i>(In Order of Preference)</i>		7. PROGRAM MANAGER <i>(Name, Routing Code, Telephone)</i>	
8. CHIEF SCIENTIST <i>(Name, Routing Code, Telephone)</i>		9. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS _____	
10. PROJECT/CRUISE OBJECTIVE AND DESCRIPTION			
POSSIBLE FOREIGN RESEARCH OR PORT CLEARANCES:			
11. PROJECT AREA <i>(Include Chartlet)</i>		12. SEATIME REQUIRED (Including Transit Time) IN DAYS:	
		DESIRED _____	MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE _____
13. CRUISE PERIOD <i>(Months)</i>		14. THIS PROJECT WILL BE PRIMARY _____ PIGGYBACK _____	
<b>15a. NOAA PROGRAM PERSONNEL SHIP'S COMPANY ONLY</b>			
	MAX/MIN	OFFICE	BERTHING REQUIRED
SCIENTISITS			
TECHNICANS			
TOTAL			
<b>15b. NON-NOAA PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR AFFLIATION</b>			
PERSONNEL <i>(Names)</i>		AFFLIATIONS	
15c. NON-NOAA BERTHS REQUIRED:		15d. TOTAL BERTHS REQUIRED:	
16. SUGGESTED PIGGYBACK PROJECTS AND TIME REQUIREMENTS <i>(or Restrictions)</i> WHICH CAN BE ACCOMMODATED			
<b>17. SHIP CAPABILITIES REQUIREMENTS</b>			
ENDURANCE (Days)	LAB SPACE (Sq. feet)	WET	DRY
MINIMUM POSITION ACCURACY REQUIRED±		ON STATION TIME:	Speed <i>(Knots)</i> :
<b>18. SHIP CAPABILITIES REQUIREMENTS</b>			
ELECTRONICS	OCEANOGRAPHIC	GEAR HANDLING	
SHIP SUPPORT REQUIRED: Yes No	SHIP SUPPORT REQUIRED: Yes No	SHIP SUPPORT REQUIRED: Yes No	
19. ON BOARD PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS:		OUTPUT REQUIRED	
		PRINTOUT	MAG. TAPE PAPER TAPE ANALOG OTHER <i>(Specify)</i> _____
<b>20. PROGRAM FURNISHED EQUIPMENT</b>			
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	WT. (lbs.)	POWER REQD.
1			
2			
3			
4			
21. STAGING TIME REQUIRED <i>(Days/Location)</i> :		DESTAGING TIME REQUIRED <i>(Days/Location)</i> :	
22. APPROVED	DATE	TITLE	Remarks Continue On Reverse

**PACIFIC MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY  
OCEAN ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH DIVISION  
FISHERIES-OCEANOGRAPHY COORDINATED INVESTIGATIONS (FOCI)**

**REQUEST FOR FY 2006 SHIP TIME**

**NOAA SHIP *MILLER FREEMAN***

FOCI's preference for conducting the following operations would be to utilize the capabilities aboard **NOAA Ship *MILLER FREEMAN***. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) ships are flexible, multipurpose platforms that support a wide range of activities related to natural resource management and environmental protection. Few ships in the United States can conduct joint operations of fishery stock assessment and oceanography, as do NOAA's research vessels. NOAA's ships are the only such platforms in the United States with the capability of meeting NOAA's program requirements. Under NOAA's management, NOAA ships are cost effective, have demonstrated a tremendous safety record, and successful mission accomplishment while operating in frequently hazardous environments.

***ABSTRACT OF PROJECT PROPOSAL:***

NOAA, under congressional mandate, established the Fisheries-Oceanography Coordinated Investigations (FOCI) in 1984 to examine the physical and biological factors that affect commercially valuable finfish and shellfish in the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea ecosystems. These regions provide about half of the United States tonnage of commercial fish, and the catch is presently valued at more than a billion dollars annually. Studies focus on the relationships between fish populations and the marine environment. Long-term monitoring and process studies are at the core of FOCI's observational strategy. FOCI has established some of the longest time series of physical oceanographic and biological observations in the region. Analyses of these observations have produced more than 300 peer-reviewed scientific articles. FOCI provides predictions of fish abundance and other information to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to guide the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, the body mandated to establish quotas for commercial fishing in the region.

FOCI collaborates with multiple other funding agencies to accomplish FOCI's research goals and meet its obligations to fisheries management. These agencies currently include the North Pacific Marine Research Program (NPMRP) and Steller Sea Lion Program. FOCI scientists collaborate with scientists from other United States and foreign universities, including Canada, Great Britain, Japan, Korea, and Russia. These collaborations have provided a rich blend of academic and government scientists who have addressed many of the important issues of ecosystem understanding and marine resource management. FOCI receives \$737-thousand annually from the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) and over \$1-million annually from other programs as listed above.

***RELEVANCE TO NOAA'S MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN:***

FOCI's goal of advancing the understanding of Alaska's marine ecosystem processes supports NOAA's mission to build sustainable fisheries. FOCI's research is interdisciplinary, blending the talents of atmospheric, oceanographic, and fisheries scientists from various academic and government institutions. The FOCI approach focuses on elucidating how changes in the physical environment, from individual storm to decadal climate change time scales, directly or indirectly influence biota, hence, the eventual recruitment of economically valuable marine resources.

While recruitment is a vital part of FOCI, other important factors need to be understood for management of the ecosystem. For example, the influence of biophysical variability on marine mammal and bird populations also evolves from FOCI's research and coordinated studies. Such information is critical since these populations can affect fisheries, and they are monitored through the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Since its inception in 1984, FOCI has grown beyond its initial focus on fishery recruitment to encompass a broader ecosystem view.

Alaskan waters are the primary United States fishing grounds with the potential for remaining a rich vital resource. Some stocks in the Bering Sea are still undergoing changes in abundance due to natural variations, independent of harvesting; however, other major fisheries already have been depleted, perhaps irreversibly. Global-scale climatic changes, pollution, ongoing and future development, habitat destruction, and fishing pressures all exert an influence on marine resources. Effective management of the marine resource extant in Alaskan waters requires a better understanding of air-ocean-biota linked processes.

***CONDENSED DAILY SCHEDULE OF SCIENCE TO BE CONDUCTED:***

A typical FOCI field operations day consists of Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth (CTD) profiler casts, mooring recoveries and deployments, MOCNESS, CalVET and Bongo net tows, bottom trawls, and various bio-optical instrument deployments. Operations on this cruise will consist of retrieving and deploying oceanographic moorings and conducting sampling around moorings in the Bering Sea, Shelikof Strait, and the Gulf of Alaska.

Moorings in the Bering Sea must be replaced before the ice moves south in February and covers the area. It is necessary to have these sub-surface moorings in place to catch the start of the spring bloom in April as the ice retreats. Other operations include bottom trawl sampling on the outer continental shelf and upper slope in the Gulf of Alaska between Kodiak Island and the Shumagin Islands to collect ripe adult arrowtooth flounder. This work is needed to establish the appearance of arrowtooth flounder eggs in the plankton, so they can be identified with confidence in samples.

CTD casts up to 3,000-meters will be conducted in Shelikof Strait and at mooring sites. The instrument package contains dual temperature and salinity sensors, light meter, fluorometer, spectrophotometer, pinger, and altimeter. CTD profiler casts are spaced 10-20 kilometers apart on transects. Ten-liter Niskin water bottles are tripped to provide nutrient and phytoplankton samples. Mooring deployments and CTD profiler casts are linked because the mooring sites are important sampling nodes in CTD transects, and mooring time series are calibrated by CTD profiler cast data.

Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) data are recorded continuously during FOCI cruises, and a Global Positioning System-based (GPS) Attitude Determination Unit (ADU) is critical to accurately measure the ship's heading needed to meet ADCP accuracy requirements.

Ecosystem-oriented FOCI sampling stations include Marine Assessment Monitoring and Prediction (MARMAP) Bongo net tows and a variety of bio-optical measurements. Bio-optical instruments are fragile and often hand-lowered, requiring precise ship position-keeping capabilities. They include, but are not limited to, a Tethered Spectral Radiometer Buoy, a freefalling multi-channel profiling radiometer, and a Bio-Optical Profiling package consisting of spectrophotometer, Fast Repetition Rate (FRR) fluorometer, scatterometer, and silhouette floc camera.

***OTHER NOAA, INTERAGENCY, OR INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT:***

A single FOCI cruise will support the mooring requirements of a number of research programs in the Bering Sea with combined budgets of over \$2-million, which includes:

- 1) FOCI,
- 2) North Pacific Marine Research (NPMR), and
- 3) Endangered Species Act (ESA) – Steller Sea Lion.

***JUSTIFICATION FOR TIME FRAME, OPTIONS FOR REDUCED SUPPORT:***

- 1) FOCI's winter cruise is tied directly to the ice coverage in the Bering Sea.
- 2) The mooring recoveries and deployments are timed to coincide with the sea-ice advance in the Bering Sea in February. Moorings must be replaced before ice covers the area.
- 3) It's necessary to have sub-surface moorings in place on the shelf to catch the start of the plankton bloom as the ice retreats.
- 4) Due to a high degree of fouling to biophysical instruments in this area, moorings must be replaced every 4-5 months.
- 5) In sixteen years of fieldwork, FOCI has never failed to meet a primary cruise mission due to weather. FOCI's cruise successes are due in large part to a combination of large ship capabilities and flexibility in the order of cruise objectives. In addition, examining processes during stormy conditions is critical to understanding the ecosystem.
- 6) Surveys are tied to spawning of commercially important fish.

***WHAT FOLLOW-ON PROJECTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS?***

FOCI is a leading interdisciplinary research program in the North Pacific and Bering Sea, and as such will continue to be involved in numerous and diverse regional ecosystem studies.

***ECONOMIC BENEFIT:***

With the establishment of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of United States coastal waters in 1976, legislation was adopted to provide for the protection of marine resources. The collapse of the Georges Bank fishery off New England demonstrates how some coastal conservation programs have been less than effective. The penalties of this failure to maintain a rich, viable fishery are billions of dollars of lost revenue and loss of livelihood to all dependent on that industry.

Of all the United States coastal waters, the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea ecosystems are among the most productive, supporting vast populations of fishes, birds, and marine mammals. The Alaskan EEZ is crucial to the United States economy. Finfish and shellfish from these waters constitute nearly five-percent of the world and fifty-percent of the United States harvest. Pollock, salmon, halibut, and crab generate over two billion dollars each year in revenue and provide an important source of high protein food. Pollock also provides food for numerous fish, birds, and marine mammals and as such is a keystone of Alaskan ecosystems. Until the final decades of the last century, these most productive waters had not seen the same commercial pressures as other United States fisheries. For EEZ resource management to be effective in the new millennium we must seriously investigate and understand man's impact on these ecosystems.

FOCI contributes to resource management partly by examining the dynamics of survival of pollock in Alaskan ecosystems. The goal is to understand natural variations in year-class strength and to provide this information to those who manage these fertile waters. Incorporating scientific understanding of survival processes represents advancement from the classical fishery management technique of survey and estimation. In the Gulf of Alaska since 1992, FOCI has been providing information from research directly to NOAA's NMFS advisory team whose mission is to advise the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council on the status of pollock and other stocks in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea. In this manner, FOCI has a unique role of directly transferring research results to applied management. Moreover, the investment in FOCI research is a small fraction, less than 0.04%, of the commercial value of the Alaskan stocks.

FOCI research began in the Shelikof Strait region of the Gulf of Alaska. Owing to the consistent spawning behavior of pollock, studying the complex environmental interactions that occur while the fish is growing from the egg to juvenile stages is most tractable in Shelikof Strait. Beginning in 1992, FOCI scientists have analyzed biological and physical time series to estimate survival qualitatively. This scientific application significantly simplifies the stock projection analysis used by NMFS to recommend

fishing quotas to the management council. To date, actual fish returns have verified the FOCI forecasts. As our understanding of how biological and physical processes interact to limit or encourage survival of young pollock, our ability to provide more accurate and quantitative forecasts will increase. Recently, FOCI research has begun to address the more complex questions of survival in the Bering Sea and provide similar assistance to stock management there.

FOCI scientists are coordinating their research efforts with several international scientific organizations to address the effect of climatic fluctuations on the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea ecosystems. As we understand how these systems function, we will become more able to forecast changes. These include not only large changes in abundance of pollock, but also changes in the ecosystem that favors other species. Such knowledge will permit commercial interests to reallocate and refocus their efforts.

With time, this ongoing fisheries oceanographic research will provide expanded social and economic benefits. As our knowledge of natural variations in the population of commercially valuable stocks increases, the application of scientific techniques will occupy a growing niche in the management process. Our ability to understand ecosystem interactions will amplify our ability to maintain and allocate coastal resources effectively.