



**NOAA Teacher at Sea
Stephanie Wally
Onboard NOAA Ship RAINIER
August 28 – September 10, 2005**

Log 2

NOAA Teacher at Sea: Stephanie Wally

NOAA Ship RAINIER

Mission: Eastern Prince William Sound Hydrographic Survey

Date: Wednesday, September 7, 2005

Weather Data from Bridge

Time: 1500

Cloud Cover: Partly Cloudy, 3/8

Visibility: 10 nm (nautical miles)

Wind: 355°

Sea Wave Height: 0'

Swell Wave Height: 0'

Sea Water Temperature: 4.4°C

Sea Level Pressure: 1006.5 mb (millibars)

Temperature: 7.8°C

Science and Technology Log

This morning, I barely had time to scarf down a delicious breakfast sandwich before heading out on one of the skiffs with Ensigns Gonsalves, Hauser, and Pounds. All of the officers have science/math/engineering degrees that provide them with the necessary background to complete NOAA's hydrographic objectives. It was a crisp morning, with fresh snow on the Chugach mountaintops. Speeding out on the uncovered skiff can get very cold if you're not dressed warmly. Goggles, hoods, gloves, and a thermos of coffee helped keep us warm. The two-hour morning mission consisted of monitoring horizontal and vertical control, and monitoring the tide station. Since Ensign Hauser is a tides officer aboard RAINIER, she is in charge of recording observations and making sure gauges are operating properly. With the data and observations recorded, water depth will be calculated. The horizontal and vertical control teams are responsible for establishing accurate latitude and longitude coordinates for soundings taken by RAINIER and the launches.

In the afternoon we got underway back toward Boulder Bay. During the transit, another visitor on the ship during this leg, Kyle Ward, and I reflected on the Exxon Valdez oil spill that occurred on March 24, 1989. Mr. Ward is a physical scientist who annually works aboard the RAINIER with hydro projects. We agreed that, considering the fact that the oil spill was the largest and most destructive to have happened in the U.S., Bligh

Reef and the sound show barely a trace of this spill today. The spill, estimated to have killed 250,000 seabirds, 2,800 sea otters, 300 harbor seals, 250 bald eagles, 22 killer whales, and billions of fish eggs, drastically affected many species and the entire sound ecosystem. Fortunately, this habitat has been recovering during the past fifteen years. Today, oil is still present on some shores and remains trapped beneath rocks.

Answer to yesterday's question of the day: The Alaskan Earthquake of 1964



Ensign Stevenson collects multi-beam bathymetric data from the launch