

SEAMAP Fall 2017 Groundfish Survey Cruise Report

Prepared by:
Craig Newton
Alabama Marine Resources Division
P.O. Box 189
Dauphin Island, Al. 36528

R/V Alabama Discovery, Cruise 1702

Introduction

Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) Fall Groundfish cruises are annually conducted during October and November of each year. The goal of SEAMAP Groundfish program is to produce fishery-independent monitoring and assessment data which are essential for management of Alabama and nearshore FMZ Gulf of Mexico fisheries resources. State and federal agencies collaboratively coordinate the scheduling of cruise dates and the selection of stations to be sampled by each agency, which results in a coordinated and cost-efficient program.

Objectives

1. Conduct a fall trawl survey to generate shrimp, groundfish, and demersal invertebrate abundance and distribution data with a standard SEAMAP 40-ft trawl.
2. Sample at stations located east of the Mississippi River that are randomly selected from NMFS generated charts of SEAMAP station locations. Identify, enumerate, and determine taxon-specific weight of all organisms collected during trawl sampling as well as determine length and weight of selected individuals according to NMFS SEAMAP Operations Manual.
3. Collect information on environmental parameters (salinity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, wind speed, wind direction, and barometric pressure) in conjunction with trawl sampling.
4. Code all data according to approved NMFS SEAMAP Operations Manual guidelines, and enter data through the NMFS SEAMAP data entry system.
5. Submit data to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Methods

Five stations were sampled in gulf statistical zone 10 aboard R/V Alabama Discovery on October 26, 2017. A 40-foot trawl with 1.63 inch stretched mesh was lowered to depth at each site and the net was towed at each station for 30 minutes at a desired vessel speed of 2.0 – 2.5 knots.

Sample and data processing was conducted in accordance with the NMFS SEAMAP Operations Manual guidelines, and data were entered and checked with the NMFS SEAMAP Data Entry Database. Atmospheric and hydrologic data were collected prior to each trawl.

A crew member was designated as the “Protected Species Observer” to monitor and document interactions with protected species (marine mammals and sea turtles). Documentation describing interactions with protected species while steaming to/from each station and interactions while collecting samples were recorded.

Results

Alabama Marine Resources Division collected samples at five SEAMAP Groundfish stations in the territorial sea and adjacent EEZ of Alabama. Stations located north of 29° 53.25’ latitude, south of 30° 04.35’ latitude, east of -87° 54.60’ longitude, and west of -87° 13.39’ longitude were sampled according to SEAMAP Groundfish protocols (Table 1). All of the five SEAMAP Groundfish stations (E1001, E1002, E1003, E1004, and E1007) were sampled October 26, 2017. Environmental variables, effort, station locations and catch by station are summarized (Table 1).

No protected species were observed during the cruise.

Deviations

A snag was encountered at E1007 after towing the net for 24 minutes and the trawl was hauled in. The crew anticipated the trawl to be badly damaged based on the amount of tension observed on the cable, A-frame, and winch. The vessel never altered its course during the tow, but a roller line was broken and an approximately 3” hole was observed near the mouth of the net. Given the location of the relatively small hole in the net and the constant path of the vessel, the crew felt it was appropriate to consider the sample a “good sample”.

Cruise participants:

Alabama Marine Resources Division personnel.

Submitted By:



D. Craig Newton

SEAMAP Field Party Chief

Table 1. AMRD SEAMAP 2017 Fall Groundfish Cruise Report Summary
 77 R/V Alabama Discovery

STA#	DATE MM/DD/YY	TIME	LAT	LONG	STAT ZONE	MAX DEPTH	D.O. (mg/L)			SALINITY (PSU)			TEMP (C)			TOW SPEED	MINUTES FISHED	TAXON COUNT
							SUR	MI D	MAX	SUR	MID	MAX	SUR	MID	MAX			
E1003	10/26/2017	14:59	29 57.43	87 55.05	10	29.5	6.7	6.1	6.2	32.26	34.62	34.75	23.43	26.14	26.66	2.38	30	18
E1007	10/26/2017	18:36	29 53.02	87 13.68	10	74.4	6.1	6.2	4.1	35.61	35.60	36.38	26.63	26.45	21.37	2.35	24	35
E1002	10/26/2017	20:45	29 57.74	87 21.67	10	28.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	34.70	34.75	35.09	25.67	25.44	25.73	2.31	30	9
E1004	10/26/2017	22:12	30 02.85	87 15.57	10	33.8	6.4	6.3	6.3	34.00	34.49	34.67	24.90	25.28	24.40	2.05	30	20
E1001	10/26/2017	23:36	30 04.39	87 22.84	10	28.5	6.4	6.4	6.3	34.49	34.51	34.59	24.34	25.25	25.25	2.31	30	23

Submitted by: D. Craig Newton
 Date submitted: February 8, 2018
