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UNOLS Council
UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee
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I am writing to present to you the proposed transition plan for the *CAPE HENLOPEN Replacement Vessel (CHRV)*.

The CHRV is scheduled to be delivered to Port Everglades, FL on October 15, 2005. After the vessel is brought to Delaware, acquisition systems and appropriate deck equipment will be cross-decked, and the CAPE HENLOPEN will be retired from service. These facts need to be considered as the CAPE HENLOPEN's 2005 sailing schedule is developed over the next few months. Also, a satisfactory plan for the 2006 operational proposals needs to be addressed at the same time.

The goals of this transition plan are as follows:

1. Make the transition to the new vessel as seamless to the scientific community as possible.
2. Maintain science-support capabilities with only one vessel being operational at any one time.
3. Maintain financial support and continuity for Marine Operations staff including ship's crew and technicians.

These objectives were factored into the funding plan from the very beginning. The University's financial contribution to the new vessel is already very substantial, and it is felt that federal operational funding is appropriate to support this transition period.

Marine Operations will maintain the science capability of the CAPE HENLOPEN through December 2005 as required. The 2005 schedule will be crafted so that only “light” operations are conducted after the October delivery to facilitate cross-decking requirements.

Science acquisition systems represent the majority of the equipment that needs to be transferred. These systems are rack-mounted and always in the process of being updated, removed for calibration, modified, and installed. Thus, their transfer to the new vessel will be fairly straight forward and similar to routine operations.

Almost all deck equipment and pilothouse electronics will come new with the CHRV. The aft deck crane (which will become the foredeck crane) is the only major piece of deck equipment that will transfer over. The CTD Handling System and the new aft deck crane may have to be installed in Lewes after delivery depending on availability of funding. However, potential funding sources for these critical systems have been identified. The remaining deck equipment (lab vans, deck winches, etc.) is considered “portable”, and is quickly and easily placed aboard when requested. Lab outfit is completely modular and can be installed based on cruise requirements per the original concept.

The new ship itself will be fully operational and classed with the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) at acceptance in Florida, so safety and operability should not be a concern. The proposed plan indicates that the NSF inspections will be conducted in two steps, and that the application for UNOLS membership will begin early and proceed in parallel with delivery, trials, and cross-decking.

In short, it is felt that the proposed schedule is adequate to bring the new vessel on line for operations in early 2006, and that it does not substantially differ from any normal winter in port period (either alongside or in the yard).

The ship’s crew and technicians are essential in executing this plan. Besides needing adequate hands to physically complete the work, they need to be given ample opportunity to broaden their understanding and experience with the vessel before operations begin.

I look forward to discussing the proposed plan in detail so that the new vessel can be brought on line to the benefit of the science community, the University, and the federal funding partners.

Proposed Schedule:

January 1, 2005	Current Cooperative Agreement ends. Modify new 5-year Cooperative Agreement (2005-2009) to read where appropriate: "...CAPE HENLOPEN <u>or</u> <i>CAPE HENLOPEN Replacement Vessel</i> ..."
June 2005	Submit written application for "preliminary" UNOLS membership. "Final" membership contingent upon successful NSF inspection and CAPE HENLOPEN being retired from service.
July 2005	Generate 2006 sailing schedule for new vessel under normal scheduling process. LOI developed in May/June in preparation for July scheduling meeting.
August 2005	Sea trials/Preliminary acoustic trials, Anacortes, WA Periodic crew familiarization during construction and trials.
October 2005	New Vessel delivered to Florida. CAPE HENLOPEN's crew to deliver to Delaware. University of Delaware to cover crew costs for delivery (~ 2 weeks). <u>Note</u> : All insurance costs for new vessel are planned to be paid for by the University until January 2006. Conduct formal acoustic trials while enroute (Navy range/Bahamas). Conduct NSF <u>Safety</u> Inspection enroute for operations proposal submission and "Preliminary" acceptance as a UNOLS vessel. Inspection costs covered by University of Delaware. Vote taken at UNOLS Annual Meeting contingent upon successful inspection. <u>Science</u> Inspection to follow after cross-decking complete. Operations proposals submitted for 2006
November 2005	New vessel alongside in Delaware. Begin cross-decking of equipment and systems as operations permit.
December 31, 2005	2005 operations proposal ends. CAPE HENLOPEN retired from service.
January 1, 2006	<i>CAPE HENLOPEN Replacement Vessel</i> begins service with new operations proposal.
March 2006	Cross-decking completed. Shakedown cruises and NSF <u>Science</u> Inspection. Final acceptance as UNOLS Vessel to follow pending successful inspection.
April 2006	New vessel begins science operations.