

27JAN00

Larry Atkinson
 Center for Coastal Physical Oceanography
 Department of Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
 Old Dominion University
 Norfolk, VA 23529

The first meeting of the Regional Research Vessel Group (RRVG) was held during the UNOLS sponsored Wire and Winch Symposium in New Orleans on 30NOV99. As you know there are nine vessels of this class in the UNOLS fleet:

	<u>Length</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Owner</u>
CAPE HATTERAS	135'	1981	NSF
POINT SUR	135'	1981	NSF
ALPHA HELIX	133'	1966	NSF
CAPE HENLOPEN	125'	1976	U of Delaware
ROBERT G. SPROUL	125'	1981	SIO
WEATHERBIRD II	115'	1982	BBSR
SEA DIVER	113'	1959	HBOI
PELICAN	105'	1985	LUMCON
LONGHORN	105'	1971	U of Texas

All of the vessels were represented with the exception of the ALPHA HELIX. The meeting also included scientists and marine technicians as well as representatives from the UNOLS office. The focus of this group is to work together in planning the mid-life refits of the five vessels under 20 years of age and to help the process of replacing the four older vessels in this fleet. We hope future meetings of this group will be viewed as a community forum for ship operators, scientists and funding agencies.

Here is a list of the attendees:

BBSR Lee Black, Marine Superintendent
 Rod Johnson, BATS Program Manager
 Lee Ellett, Marine Technician

DUKE Larry Morris, Asst. Marine Superintendent
 Tim Shaw, Marine Technician

HBOI Tim Askew, Marine Superintendent

LUMCON Steve Rabalais, Asst. Director

MLML Mike Prince, Marine Superintendent

MBARI Ken Johnson, Chemical Oceanographer

SIO Tom Althouse, Marine Superintendent
 Ron Comer, Resident Technician

U. of Delaware Tim Deering, Marine Technician

UNOLS Annette DeSilva, Asst. Executive Secretary
 Jack Bash, Executive Secretary

UT Noe Cantu, Senior Captain

WHOI Dutch Wegman, Port Engineer
 Jon Alberts, Marine Operations Coordinator

The topics of discussion included the Science Mission Requirement (SMR) established by the Fleet Improvement Committee (FIC) for these vessels, standardizing vessel capabilities, useful life of these vessels, scope of refit work to be done, improving scientific involvement in planning, funding sources and time-lines for this work. We also agreed that while final planning would be done on an individual basis much of the general planning could be accomplished using a community forum. While the discussions were good there was just not enough time to go into detail on any of these topics.

The consensus was that another meeting to continue this effort would be of great help. Our hope is that it could coincide with the spring meeting, in Baltimore, of the UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee. The

presence of FIC members would certainly enhance this forum. Travel cost would be minimized as Baltimore would be convenient for many of the members of the RRVG and some would already be in town for the FIC meeting.

Please let me know what you think.

Cheers,

Lee Black

Cc: T. Althouse, T. Askew, J. Bash, N. Cantu, J. Coburn, A. DeSilva, E. Dieter, M. Hawkins, K. Johnson, Q. Lewis, P. Ljunggren, M. Prince, S. Rabalais, T. Smith