

## Beaufort Gyre Exploration Project: Dispatch 14: Mooring Recovery

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Light snow covers the foredeck of the ship this morning as we arrive at the location of Mooring A (nominally 75° N, 150° W). Although there is some thin pancake ice that has just begun to form during freeze up, the ice conditions are favorable for our recovery, as there is very little thick (multiyear) sea ice in the vicinity.

Even before breakfast we initiate communications with our subsurface releases using a deck unit that sends special sonar pulses to the underwater units, so that we may triangulate on them to determine the exact location of the mooring. Using this information, the Captain clears ice over the site and positions the ship for release. We send a command down to one of the release units (2 are on each mooring for backup) and in less than one minute the surface buoyancy sphere surfaces just a few tens of meters from the bow of the ship. We breathe a sigh of relief knowing first that we have found the mooring, and second that the sphere surfaced in open water, thus facilitating the recovery effort.

The recovery operation proceeds smoothly (except for an annoying snow squall midway through the effort), and all of the instruments are back on deck less than 4 hours after attaching to the sphere. Due to time constraints we will have to reinstall the system tomorrow before we even have time to dump last year's data (although we are anxious to know the results), so preparations begin immediately in preparing the new hardware and instruments that will go on the mooring for another year.

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