



HLY0802: March 29-May 6, 2008

Chief Scientist's Log

April 3: Into the Ice

Post by Carin Ashjian

We finally have found some ice that is of sufficient size and strength that we can do an ice station. This morning, at first light, Rolf Gradinger and Rob Rember went to the bridge to watch for a suitable floe. They were looking for a piece of sufficient size that a science party of 17 plus several Coast Guard helpers could safely walk and work on.

We had just finished a station and were heading off to the next location to work. Rolf called me shortly and excitedly said that he thought this was a good place and could we stop here! As the ship was wedged into a secure position in the ice (it could not move while the scientists were working on the ice), a flurry of activity ensued on *Healy*. There was an announcement of a meeting to discuss the logistics of the ice work) over the PA system: *"There will be an on-ice brief in 20 minutes in the aviation workshop."*

Some scientists were sleeping and had to be woken to be ready for the work. Gear had to be collected and carried to the bow of the ship, ready to be carried down the steep "gangplank" from the bow of *Healy* to the ice. The scientists donned special suits that were waterproof and warm in case they should fall into the sea through the ice. Finally, the gangplank was in place and the scientists could foray out to sample the ice. Four hours later, a group of red-cheeked, smiling scientists returned to the warmth of *Healy*, very happy with the samples and discoveries that they had made out on the ice.

We have been doing very well with our work. The ice conditions have not been that bad and we are rocketing through our station list. The weather conditions have not been that bad either, although a persistent 20-30 knot wind has made the conditions less than balmy. We are fortunate, though, that the wind has not been from the north, so that the air temperatures have been tolerable (20s-low 30s). Yesterday we had snow that even accumulated on the deck. Two of the scientists took the opportunity to build a very small snowman on the aft deck while waiting for the ship to maneuver into position to sample.

Those of us who remained on board during the ice station were busy setting up for experiments, finishing experiments, and doing the mundane chores of life on board including burning the paper trash (to save space, we burn the paper trash on board and carry the plastic trash back to Seattle).

Tomorrow we are doing another "process" station, one where we do many different types of experiments that all fit together to describe the ecosystem.



The North Pacific Research Board and the National Science Foundation are partners in a six-year, \$50 million study of the Bering Sea marine ecosystem and the effects of climate change on this vital area. Learn more about the BEST-BSIERP Bering Sea research program at <http://bsierp.nprb.org>

