

## ROPOS

Reported on at Dec DESSC meeting

**ROPOS News - What's up down.** <<http://www.ropos.com/news/0106news.htm>>

from ROPOS Operations - SIDNEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Astoria Canyon! When Lewis and Clark arrived at the mouth of the Columbia river in 1804, they had no way of knowing that a significant part of the expedition remained to be done. There'd be a lot of water under the bridge by the time ROPOS arrived to finish the job.

The fact is, the location from which Lewis and Clark looked out to sea had not always been the coastline. Astoria Canyon continues offshore; out to where an ancient people had stood on another beach, in another time. We had the rare privilege to visit and film that beach as part of a NOAA 'Ocean Explorer' project.

This NOAA sponsored expedition explored the canyon in detail using sonar and high-resolution video. ROPOS was involved in the deployment of a variety of physical samplers and was used extensively for video survey. Participants were particularly pleased with our ability to take multiple push-core samples throughout the dive series, as interesting sites were encountered.

For a full account of this program, visit NOAA's excellent 'Lewis and Clark legacy' site; and for us it's off to...

Hecate Bank! From Astoria Canyon, we move to a nearby location to assist with a NOAA National Undersea Research Program study of Hecata Bank. The ongoing habitat study in this heavily fished area uses historical data, high resolution seafloor imagery, and new survey techniques to support future efforts at stock assessment and conservation.

We have come to be very excited about the repeated, successful use of ROPOS as a stock assessment tool. Equipped with laser scales, ROPOS performed 'fish transects' at a number of locations at night as well as during the day.

Apparently undisturbed by the presence of the vehicle, a variety of species of Rockfish and Flatfish were surveyed.

Unfortunately, the results tend to support fears that population densities are very low.

A wealth of info on the Hecate Bank project is available on the 'net. A good place to start is the NOAA/PMEL 'Habitat-Based Fisheries Research' page.

### **Canadian Scientific Submersible Facility - Current Schedule for ROPOS (02.02)**

< <http://www.ropos.com/calendar/itin.htm>>

PROJECT	DATE	STATUS
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NOAA/NSERC - NeMO '02

Jul 14 - Jul 19 ROPOS will continue the longitudinal studies begun in 1998 on the New Millennium Observatory site at Axial Seamount.

Jul 20 - Aug 5 ROPOS will support exploration of new and existing sites on Explorer Ridge

NSERC - Endeavour '02

Aug 5 - Aug 12 ROPOS will continue exploration of gas hydrate sites in the Vancouver Island Margin area.

Aug 12 - Aug 22 ROPOS will continue study of new and existing sites on Endeavour Ridge