

Extended Continental Shelf Project

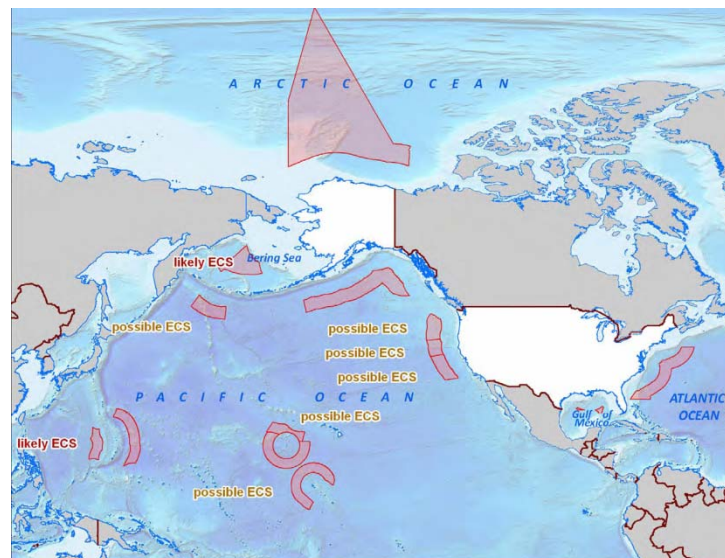
Report for the AICC

March 22-23, 2012

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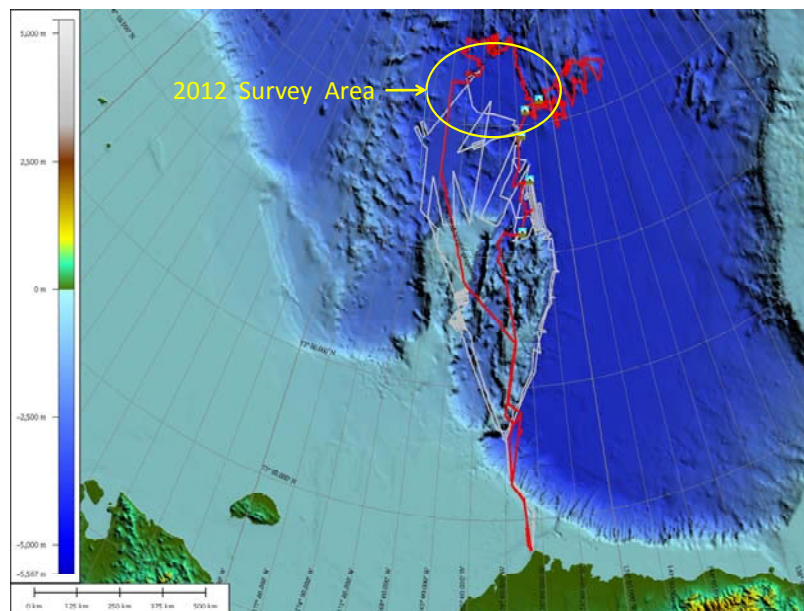
The Extended Continental Shelf Project is the United States' effort to delineate the continental shelf of our nation under provisions of the Law of the Sea Treaty. Led by the Department of State, the project is guided through the multi-agency ECS Task Force; other principal operational agencies, NOAA and USGS, are co-vice chairs of the Task Force. The work of the Task Force began officially in 2007. It is expected to be completed by 2017.

The U.S. believes it has continental shelves extending beyond the 200 mile Economic Zone in a number of separate geographic regions. The largest areas of ECS are likely to be in the Arctic and off the Atlantic margin. Two types of data are important to finding the edge of the continental shelf using the criteria proscribed in the LOS Convention. Bathymetry defines the shape of the seafloor; seismic data is used to calculate sediment thickness. One or both types of measurements may be required depending on the geology of the region. Since 2003, we have been engaged in collecting the data necessary to substantiate the U.S. ECS in the Arctic. Data substantiating ECS in other regions with potential ECS has also been collected in recent years.



Shaded areas are being evaluated for continental shelves beyond 200 nm.

The *Healy* has been an important asset to the ECS Project in the Arctic. The multi-beam bathymetry capabilities of the ship along with the expertise of the NOAA Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping at the University of New Hampshire have enabled collection of bathymetric data throughout large portions of the Arctic Ocean. U.S.G.S. has led the seismic data collection efforts. In partnership with Canada, four joint Arctic cruises have taken place. The *Healy* (with its multi-beam bathymetry capabilities) and the *Louis S. St. Laurant* (with seismic data collection capabilities) were able to cover vast areas of mutual ECS interest to both nations. Seismic data collection in the Arctic for both Canada and the U.S. have been completed. Some bathymetric data remains to be collected in the Arctic for the ECS Project. Without undue complications, the U.S. should be able to complete most of its remaining data collection during the 2012 *Healy* cruise. If successful during the 2012 cruise, we do not see the need for an additional ECS *Healy* cruise beyond 2012. Although some bathymetric data collection close to the Barrow margin may be warranted; this can likely be collected without the ice breaking capabilities of the *Healy*. Survey work during the 2012 cruise will focus on the Nautilus Basin area.



Planned survey area for the 2012 ECS cruise