

Ocean Exploration and Research

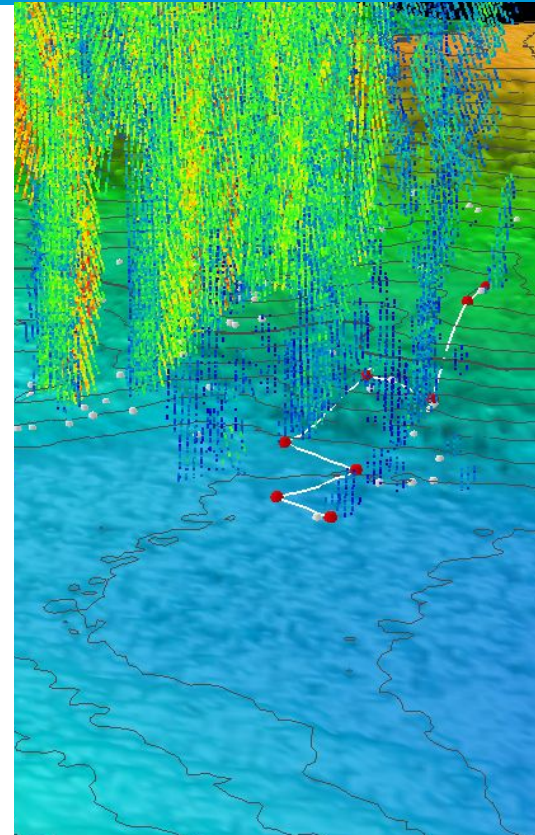
NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research Update

Alan Leonardi, Director

Ocean Exploration: A National Priority

Previous Administration's Ocean Exploration Policies and Plans

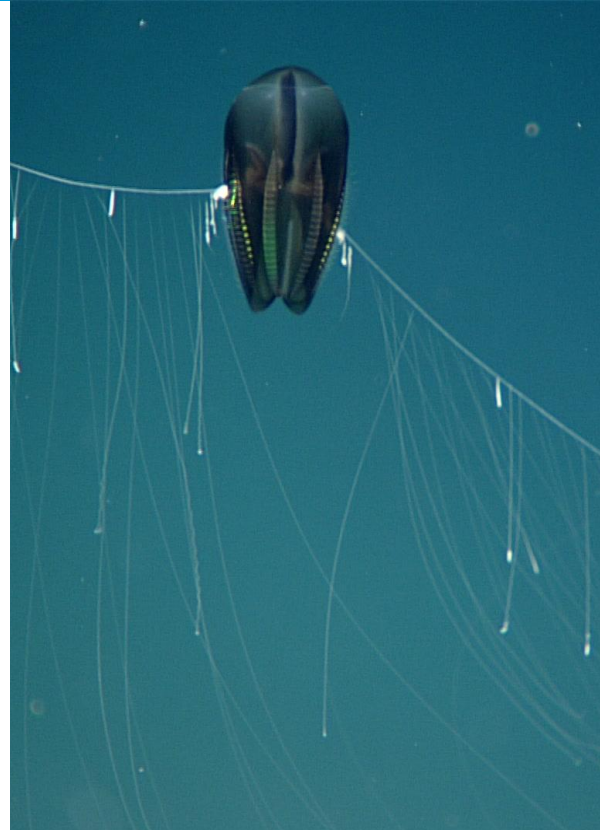
- Presidential Memorandum
 - National Strategy for Mapping, Exploring, and Characterizing the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (and implementation plan)
 - National Ocean Mapping, Exploration, and Characterization Council (and working groups)
- NOAA Strategies
 - Blue Economy strategy
 - Science and technology strategies



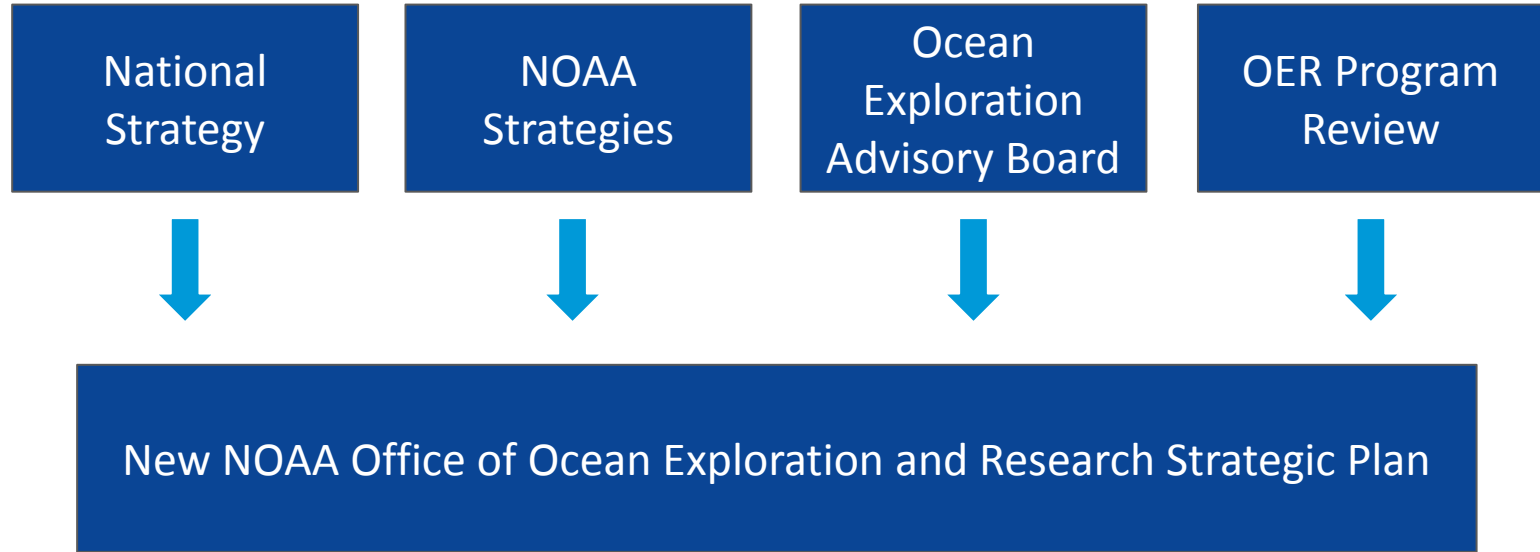
Ocean Exploration: Still a National Priority

Indications that ocean exploration is still a priority:

- New National Ocean Exploration Act (S. 381) introduced with bi-partisan support
- Changes in Congress are favorable to ocean exploration
- Secretary of Commerce knows NOAA/comes from an ocean-friendly state (Rhode Island)
- OER's budget is looking strong



Moving Ocean Exploration Forward



Consideration: Replacement for *Okeanos Explorer*



NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer*



R/V *Sally Ride*

Setting the Stage

Looking Ahead

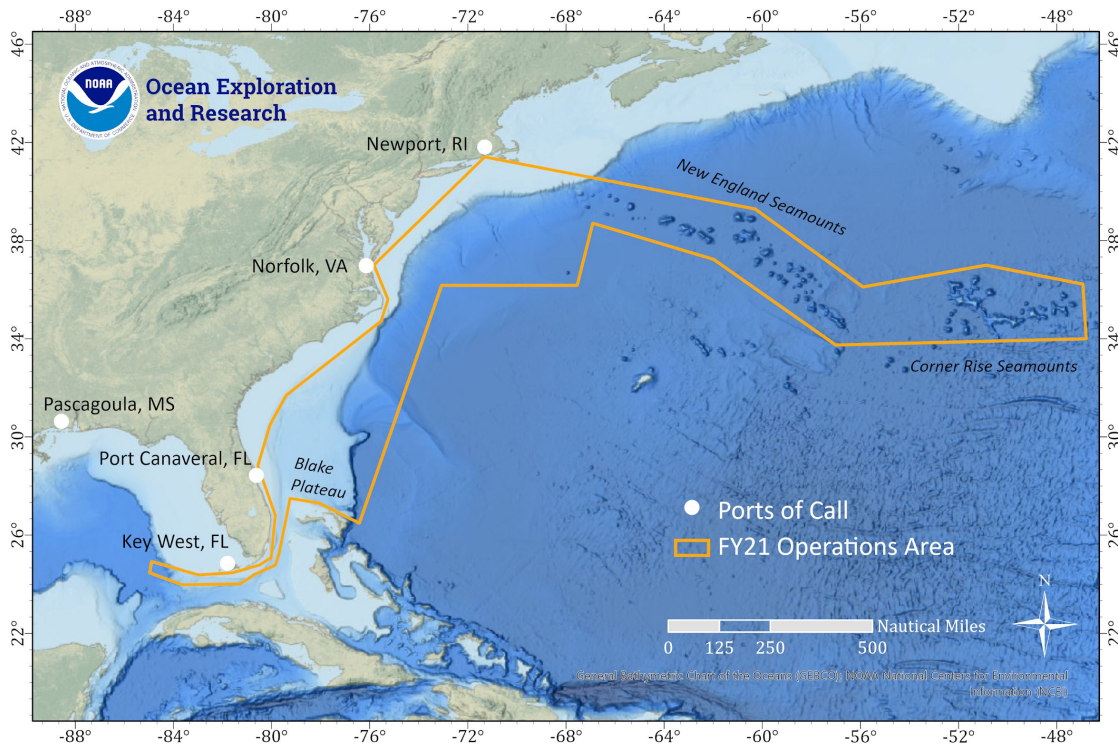
Getting Back to Sea

Highlights



Ocean Exploration
and Research

FY21 OER *Okeanos Explorer* Expeditions



April-May: Mapping shakedown/EM 304 system acceptance tests, Blake Plateau mapping, tech demo (*Orpheus* AUV/eDNA)

June-July: ROV shakedown, New England and Corner Rise Seamounts ROV expedition

August-September: Blake Plateau Mapping

Setting the Stage

Looking Ahead

Getting Back to Sea

Highlights

NOAA Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute (OECI)

University of New Hampshire

Delivery of the DriX and launch and recovery system is expected in May followed by acceptance tests and field trials.

University of Southern Mississippi

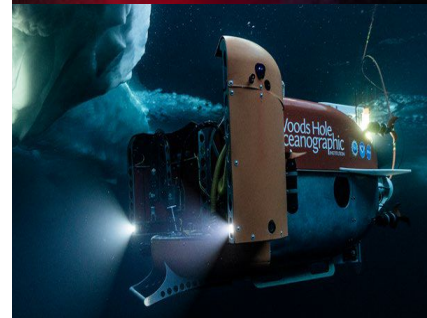
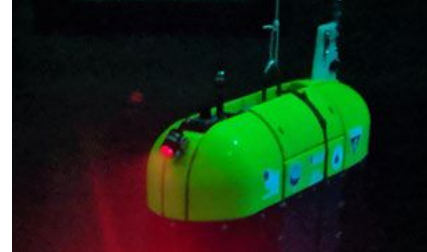
Planned demonstration of imaging and bathymetric autonomous underwater operations planned for the summer.

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

The *Orpheus* full-ocean-depth vehicle concept will be demonstrated on NOAA Ship *Okeanos Explorer* in May.

Ocean Exploration Trust

The OECI will support expeditions on E/V *Nautilus*, including a technology demonstration (DriX, *Mesobot*, *Nereid Under Ice*)



2021 Ocean Exploration Trust *Nautilus* Expeditions



July-December 2021

Setting the Stage

Looking Ahead

Getting Back to Sea

Highlights

New Staff



Kristen Crossett
Chief Outreach and
Education Division



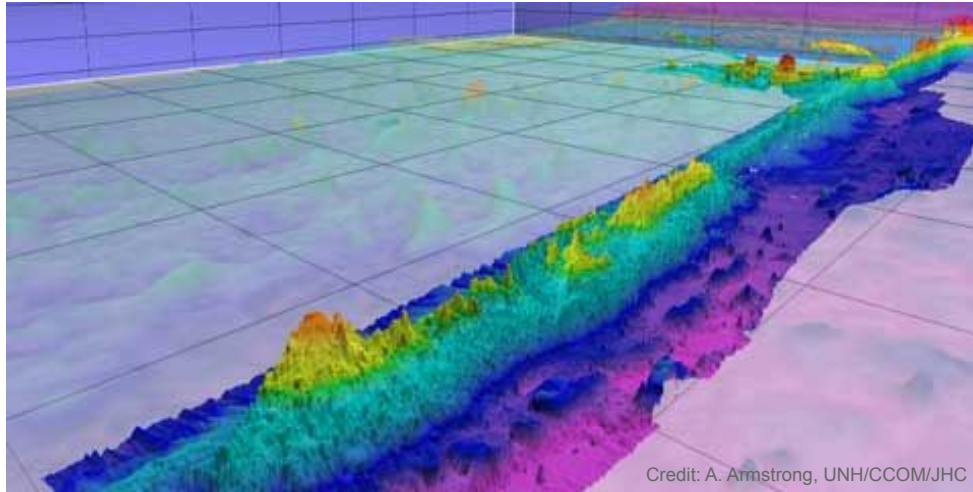
Aurora Elmore
OER Cooperative
Institute Manager



Mapping: Department of Commerce Gold Medal

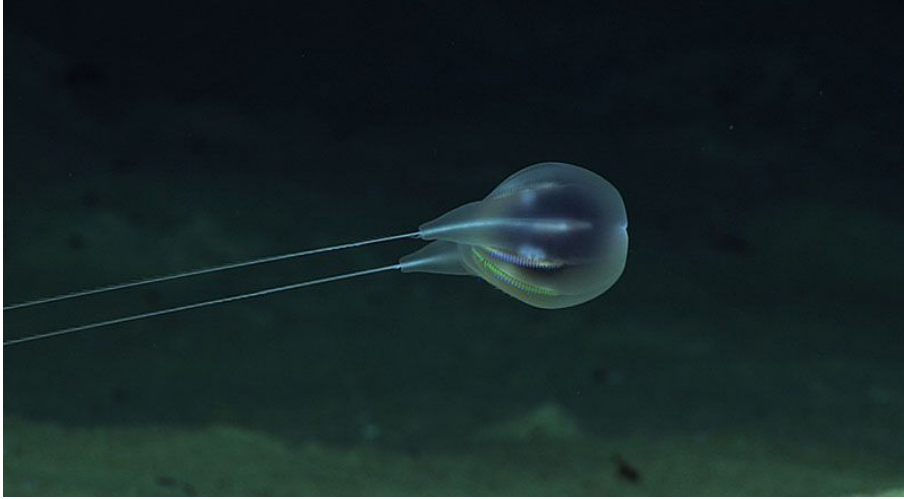
Group Gold Medal – Scientific/Engineering Achievement

For successful orchestration of seafloor mapping and data science initiatives imperative to fulfill U.S. Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) Project goals



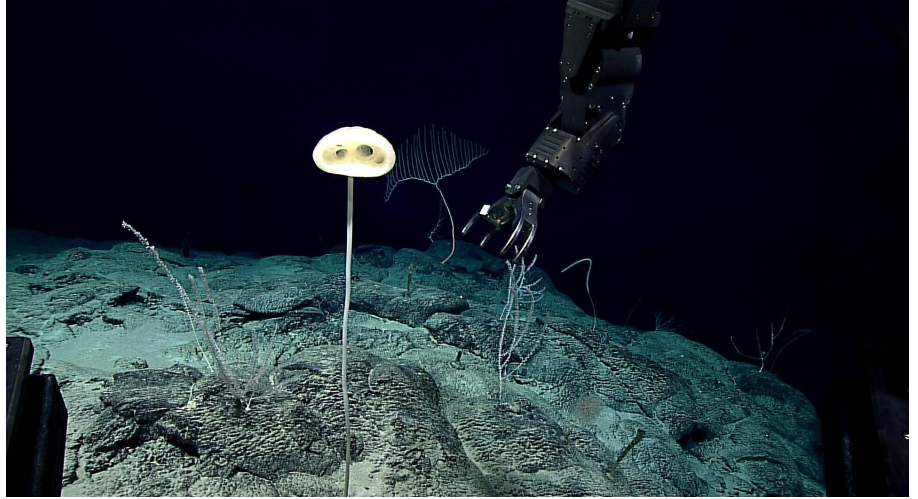
This award, the highest honorary award given by the department, is granted by for distinguished performance characterized by extraordinary, notable, or prestigious contributions that impact the mission of the department and/or one or more operating units.

New Species



Ctenophore

Duobrachium sparksae



E.T. Sponge

Advhena magnifica

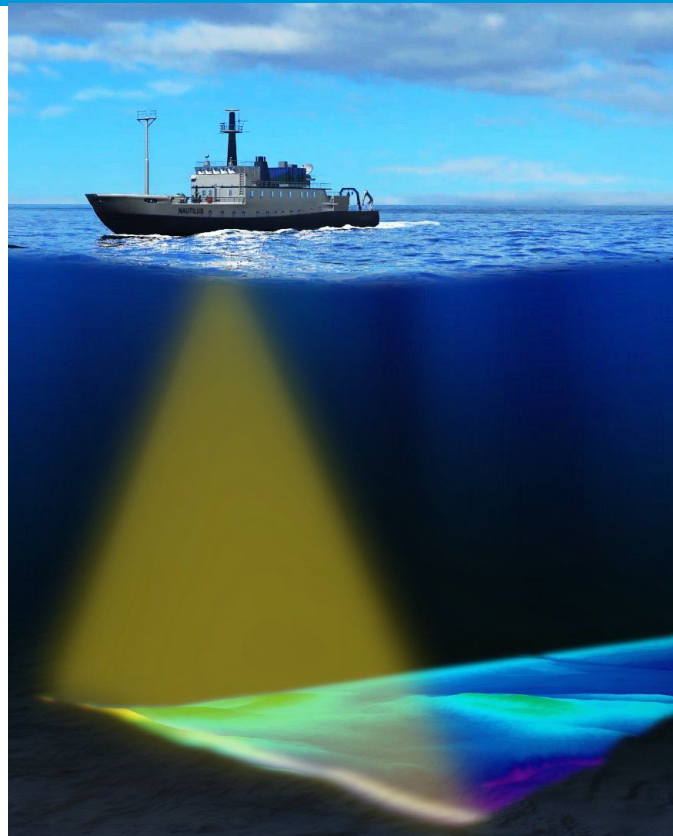
Outreach and Education Highlights

- New products
 - Social media video shorts
 - Monthly wallpaper calendar
 - Deep Sea Dialogues
 - Fledermaus activities for educators
- New milestones
 - The OER Instagram account surpassed 100K followers (in February)
 - OER's total social media reach is now over half a million total (across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube)
- Second set of online professional development workshops (on hydrothermal vents)



NOAA Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute

- The OECI developed a data management plan.
- The OECI developed an augmentation proposal for the increased funding cap.
- Adam Soule joined the University of Rhode Island (URI) as the OECI executive director.
- Jason Fahy joined URI as the OECI program manager.
- The URI Inner Space Center worked with OER's Education Team on educator workshops.
- Ocean Exploration Trust wrapped up the 2020 field season on E/V *Nautilus* in December.



Technology: Saildrone Surveyor

- Funded by OER through the National Oceanographic Partnership Program
- Partners include University of New Hampshire, Saildrone, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute
- Powered by wind and solar energy
- Carries sonar equipment capable of seafloor mapping down to 7,000 m
- Will accelerate ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization in a cost-effective way
- Launched in January



Celebrating 20 Years of NOAA Ocean Exploration

- Brand refresh to be implemented over time
 - New informal name
 - New emblem
- 20th anniversary emblem
- Branded activities
- Web stories
- Social media campaign
- Oral histories





Questions?

oceanexplorer.noaa.gov



**Ocean Exploration
and Research**