

901206 Development of a Coastal Profiling Float

Rating: Some possibility of approval

MT contact: Chris Scholin

Management Team Feedback:

Ken and Gene,

Thank you for bringing this idea forward. We all agree that this is a very interesting project and one that touches on a number of other research groups that have similar interests in using profiling floats for a variety of applications complementary to those that you outlined.

As you prepare your full proposal please keep the following in mind:

- 1) What are the issues related to permitting, particularly with a near-term goal of deploying floats in the Sanctuary/CA coastal zone recognizing that there is no guarantee you can keep them off the beach or out of an MPA, e.g.? In that regard, please work with Mandy Allen on this element of the proposal as she is MBARI's primary point of contact for securing permits and compiling annual reports, etc. As an aside, you should be aware of a concerted effort by Congressman Sam Farr and the Sanctuary (etc.) to push for federal/state legislation to limit "marine debris" – you want to be sure coastal floats don't end up inadvertently put in the same category as waste plastic!
- 2) To what extent does an unanticipated grounding pose a threat to humans or wildlife should the pressure vessel be compromised and internal components be exposed?
- 3) Is it necessary to purchase a couple of profiling floats, instrument them as you desire and deploy as the first step (i.e., first year, 2012) in assessing the feasibility of this approach? Acquiring two, fully instrumented floats would represent a relatively large capital expenditure, and once they are deployed there may be limited opportunity to recover them should they be deemed to be in danger of loss or damage. This is not to say we are adverse to risk (so long as we are in compliance with all applicable laws and have proper permits), but rather request that you consider a stepwise approach that allows us to mitigate risk to the extent possible while evaluating the concept in a meaningful way. For example, would a feasibility study that aims to first work with cognizant agencies to present the idea, win their support, agree on a target site for deployment based on 3D trajectory modeling, etc., be a reasonable way to initiate the project so that you are better informed to make purchasing decisions and conduct field operations for 2013?