

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ocean Conservation Expedition Funded by Rockefeller Family and Tiffany Foundation Heads Into The Northwest Passage – A Melting Frontier

Around the Americas project demonstrates global warming and climate change impacts on the environments and ecosystems, its Ocean Watch crew departs Barrow, hopes for a safe journey through the ice encrusted Amundsen Gulf

SEATTLE— After eight weeks at sea following its departure on May 31 from Seattle, the crew of Ocean Watch – the 64-foot steel-hulled sailboat – representing the 13 month-long Around the Americas expedition has turned east into the ice-filled Northwest Passage after travelling a predominantly northerly course.

The Realities of the Navigating the Northwest Passage

The expedition is focused on the realities of global warming and climate change. Captain Mark Schrader describes in the latest Captain's Log what the boat and crew face as they enter the Northwest Passage.

“(Sunday) at 0745 the anchor was up and Ocean Watch headed to Point Barrow, approximately 8nm to the north. At Point Barrow we make a sharp turn east, exit the Chukchi Sea, enter the Beaufort Sea and finally point our bow into the Northwest Passage. With Cambridge Bay roughly 1050nm (nautical miles) due east and still blocked by ice in Amundsen Gulf. We'll make several stops along the way while waiting for the forecast mid-August breakup.

“The next community with a sheltered harbor, fuel and services with enough depth for OW [Ocean Watch] is Tuktoyaktuk (Tuk), 490nm down the line. All of our ice reports indicate the passage from here to Tuk is currently open. The predicted winds for the next few days should keep the ice away from the shore and leave plenty of room for us. If the conditions change we have some options; Thetis Island, Stockton Island, Kaktovik and Herschel Island can all afford some protection from wind and ice. Herschel Island with its long and rich whaling and over-wintering-for-stranded-sailors-history is on our 'must visit' list.

Ocean Watch is carrying the message of the Around the Americas expedition that the oceans surrounding North and South America are very fragile and we need to be aware of the problems and make changes in our lives to help correct them. Led by Captain Mark Schrader, the first American to solo circumnavigate the earth via the five southern capes, the 25,000-mile voyage will be one of only about 100 boats to have travelled through the Northwest Passage in the past

100 years. This crossing is testament to the warming of the Arctic Ocean and the global climate changes that the expedition is observing.

Schrader continues in the Log, "Writing this was just interrupted by a whale sighting off the bow, then a Polar Bear sighting on the beach. The beach is a little less than 1/3 nm away, the bear appears to be sleeping. The helmsperson also just announced we're finally turning east. Ocean Watch hasn't sailed an easterly course since leaving Seattle, some 3,400nm and 8-weeks ago. This is a significant waypoint for us - we're now truly going 'over the top' and into the Passage."

With a permanent crew of four experienced sailors, a scientist and educator on board, Ocean Watch will traverse the treacherous frozen waters of the Northwest Passage for the next four to six weeks making scientific observations and collecting information for the online curriculum. Daily reports of their progress are filed from the boat along with photos and video at www.aroundtheamericas.org. Co-produced by [Sailors for the Sea](#) and [Pacific Science Center](#) in Seattle, the expedition has received major funding from Tiffany & Co. Foundation.

About Around the Americas

Around the Americas is an historic 25,000-mile clockwise-circumnavigation of the North and South American continents, never before undertaken in continuous fashion. The sailboat, equipped with some of the latest technology, along with scientists and educators who join during various legs of the voyage, is making 31 stopovers in 13 months to draw attention to the changing condition of the oceans. With major funding support from Tiffany & Co. Foundation, a non-profit consortium has been formed to make the public more aware of the plight of our oceans. Developed by Sailors for the Sea, a non-profit organization that educates and empowers the boating community to protect and restore our oceans and coastal waters, in partnership with Pacific Science Center, a nationally-recognized leader in informal science and environmental education. The crew includes Captain Mark Schrader, a world-record-holding, solo circumnavigator and ocean race director, and three talented, experienced, professional sailors, who all care about ocean conservation. Daily updates of the voyage are being posted from the boat at www.aroundtheamericas.org.