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Report Documents Ocean-Saving Research by Cal Poly Professor and Others

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly Biological Sciences Professor Mark Moline was one of several scientists whose work is expected to improve marine operations such as oil spill response, search and rescue, and maritime transportation. The research could also become a key component in understanding how climate change influences biological systems.

The new information is the result of monitoring coastal waters through a network of high-frequency radar systems that delivers the information in real time. The network is designed to map ocean surface currents to determine coastal ocean dynamics along the U.S. West Coast.

The radar network delivers the greatest detail -- kilometers in space and hourly in time -- ever documented for coastal surface circulation and is expected to provide high-quality records of ocean climate signals for long-term study.

The network has grown over the last decade from a few radar sites to what is now considered the largest network of its kind in the world -- 78 radar sites as of May 1. As partners in this network, Cal Poly's Center for Coastal Marine Sciences operates nine of these sites stretching from Point Conception in the south to Ragged Point in the north. For local real-time surface current maps around the United States, including the Central Coast of California, go to <http://cordc.ucsd.edu/projects/mapping/maps/>.

A recent paper published in the *Journal of Geophysical Research – Oceans*, reports several scientific aspects of coastal surface circulation derived from the radar network operated by the team of oceanographers.

The research is being led by Sung Yong Kim, a postdoctoral researcher at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego. Additional scientists contributing to the report include Burt Jones from USC; Libe Washburn from UC Santa Barbara; Moline from Cal Poly; Jeffrey Paduan from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey; Newell Garfield from San Francisco State University; John Largier from UC Davis-Bodega Marine Laboratory; Greg Crawford from Humboldt State University (now at Vancouver Island University in Canada); Michael Kosro from Oregon State University, and Scripps oceanographers Eric Terrill and Bruce Cornuelle.

"This work illustrates the collaborative nature of the West Coast oceanographic community in establishing a scientific facility that is now beginning to pay dividends in increasing our knowledge about how our coastline interacts with the ocean," said Terrill, director of the Coastal Observing Research and Development Center at Scripps, who led the installation of radars in Southern California and whose group manages the data from all the radars.

The researchers envision the network will continue to provide valuable real-time monitoring of the West Coast as well as provide long-term, high-quality records of ocean climate signals.

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