

Marine Mammal Commission 2017 Annual Meeting
April 5-7, 2017, North Falmouth, Massachusetts
Acoustics and Advanced Technologies for Large Whales Session Summary

Advanced survey techniques for acquiring baseline data on marine mammal stocks and the use of new technologies alongside traditional methods are bolstering our stock assessment capabilities. In addition to obtaining baseline survey data, such methods and technologies can enable rapid surveys for animal presence to guide visual survey efforts, and aid in monitoring individual animal health and evaluating injuries. Passive acoustic monitoring of the temporal and spatial distribution of large whales has been identified as a high-priority research need within the Large Whale Take Reduction Plan and emphasized in both Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team meetings and in two NMFS/ MMC workshops, one on passive acoustic surveying and the other on the application of unmanned aerial systems (UAS).

Speakers in this session:

- Provided updates on current and planned acoustic monitoring and analyses by collaborators working in the western North Atlantic;
- Discussed applications of advanced technologies for surveying areas and monitoring individuals;
- Informed the audience on the implementation of the NOAA Ocean Noise Strategy and the application of acoustic ecology as a long-term monitoring tool for ecosystem health;
- Discussed integration of visual and acoustic data for both research and management.

Near real-time acoustic monitoring for large whales is proving useful for mitigation efforts and management actions in areas of human activity. Equipping new technologies, such as UAS and gliders, with acoustic recording devices, cameras, and blow sampling tools is broadening our capabilities for monitoring the presence of animals spatially, as well as improving our ability track the health and life history of individuals over time.