

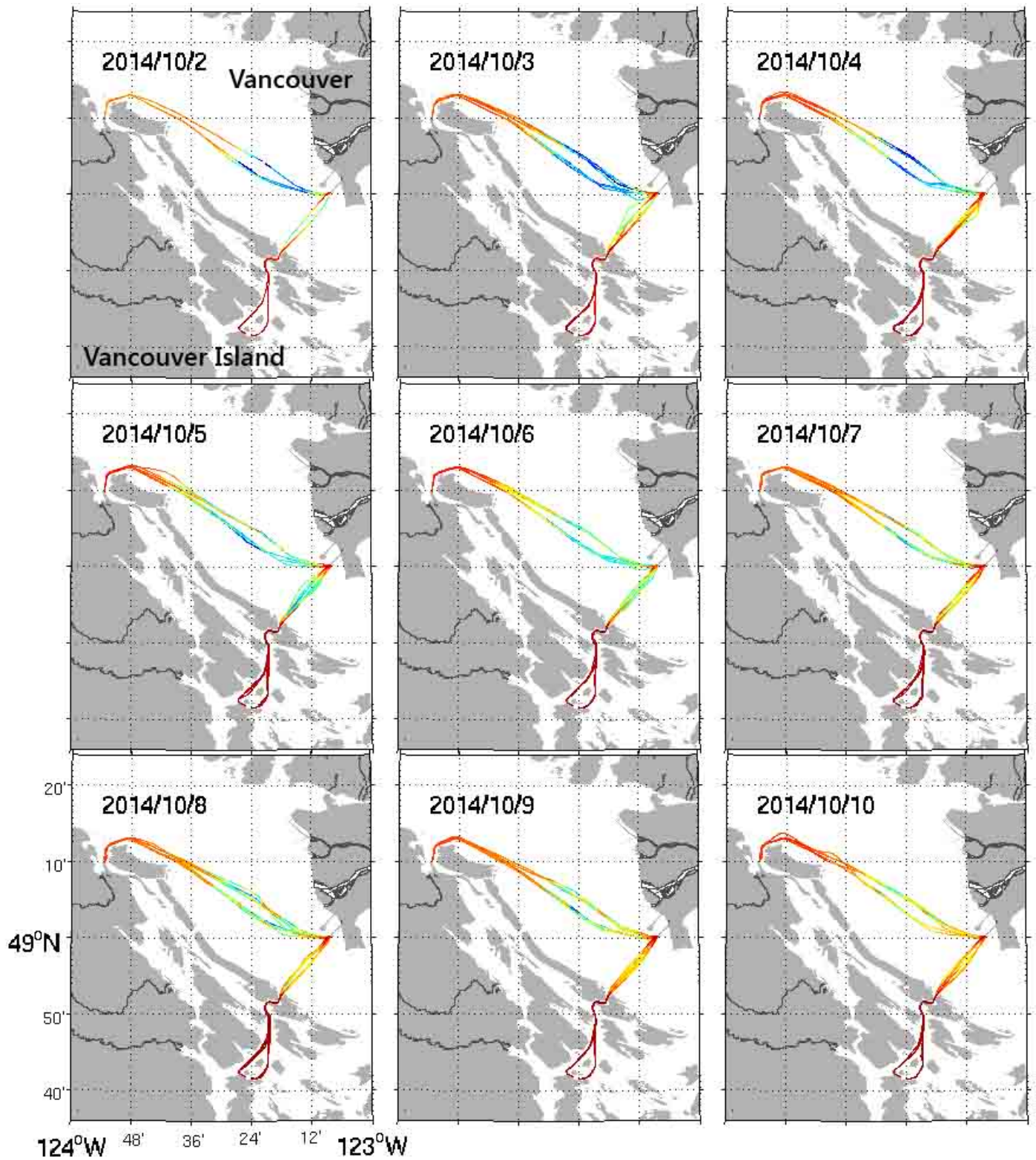
Second BC Ferry Data Now Available

Submitted by Nikolai Korniyuk Wed, 2014-12-03 10:59

Ocean Networks Canada's Strait of Georgia ferry monitoring program officially expanded operations to a second ferry, the *Spirit of Vancouver Island*, in October 2014. This ferry, part of [BC Ferries](#) fleet, connects Vancouver Island and the mainland transiting between Victoria, BC, and Vancouver, BC. The main oceanographic interest of this route is that the ferry travels through more saline, oceanic conditions on the western part of the route through to fresher Fraser River influenced waters on the eastern part of the route. The data collected along the way continues the long-term time series initiative established by Dr. Jim Gower (Fisheries and Oceans Canada).

The ferry is instrumented to make high-resolution measurements (every 10 seconds) of sea surface and meteorological properties along its route and complements the same set of measurements made by another ferry, *M/V Queen of Alberni*, which travels between Nanaimo, BC, and Vancouver, BC. As with the *Queen of Alberni* measurements, all data collected by instruments aboard the *Spirit of Vancouver Island* are available online in near real time. The increased coverage gained with the addition of a southern ferry route improves the spatial and temporal resolution of a variety of physical and biological processes including river plume dynamics and the development of the spring phytoplankton bloom.

The *Spirit of Vancouver Island* is now included in the regular maintenance and instrument calibration program started for the *M/V Queen Alberni* in early 2014. An important aspect of this program is to maintain data quality and ensure that the two ferry systems are comparable. A graduate student of Dr. Rich Pawlowicz (University of British Columbia), Chuning Wang, prepared a report comparing sea-surface properties for both vessels in early October 2014 and found good agreement for most measurements; however, some discrepancy for dissolved oxygen was identified and we are currently in the process of resolving these differences.



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Daily snapshots of surface salinity measurements collected from M/V Queen of Alberni and M/V Spirit of Vancouver Island from October 3-10, 2014. (Data plot: courtesy of Chuning Wang, graduate student, University of British Columbia.)

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