

West Coast component of the Coastal Ocean Modeling Testbed (COMT)

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ABSTRACT

Accurate forecasts of oceanic physical and biochemical variables along the US West Coast will provide information in support of safe navigation, environmental hazard response, search and rescue, fishery management, and public health. Development of the data assimilating West Coast Operational Forecast System (WCOFS) has been started at NOAA National Ocean Service, Coast Survey Development Lab (NOS CSDL). It should be transferred for routine operational application to NOAA NOS Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) by 2017. NOAA partners envision that WCOFS will be extended to provide ecological forecasts (including hypoxia, harmful algae blooms), in response to the Strategic Vision for NOAA's Ecological Forecasting Roadmap. To help develop the WCOFS, technology transfer to NOAA has started with immediate involvement of the West Coast Coastal Ocean Modeling Testbed (COMT) team members. WCOFS will be the first regional-scale operational model supported by NOAA CO-OPS, defining a framework for development of operational models for other regions around the US. The West Coast COMT component provides critical information to NOAA operational ocean model developers about optimal choices of a model, data assimilation methods, tools for forecast quality assessment, and products based on the coastal ocean forecasts.