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Across the Arctic, Teachers Experience Field Research

June 10, 2005 – From studying snow geese on the North Slope of Alaska to sediment coring aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Healy* in the Arctic Ocean, K–12 teachers embark on scientific expeditions as part of a program that strives to make science in the Arctic a “virtual” reality.

After a nationwide search, six K–12 teachers have been selected to take part in the Teachers and Researchers Exploring and Collaborating (TREC) program that pairs teachers with researchers to improve science education through arctic field experiences.

The first expedition begins in early June—Tom Crumrine, a high school science teacher from Concord, New Hampshire is headed to the Alaskan tundra where he will spend two weeks working with Dr. Syndonia Bret-Harte, an ecologist from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, studying plants at Toolik Field Station—a research facility located 150 miles above the Arctic Circle. Another high school science teacher, Steve Marshall, from Suffolk, Virginia, will join Dr. Dennis Darby from Old Dominion University aboard the USCGC *Healy*. While at sea in the Arctic Ocean, they will collect sediment cores that will later be intensively studied for what they can reveal about the climate of the last 10,000 years.

Funded by the National Science Foundation Office of Polar Programs, TREC uses online outreach elements to convey the research experience to a broad audience. While in remote field locations, teachers and researchers interact with students and the public through live calls from the field and online journals with accompanying photos. Since the program's inception in 2004, the TREC website has been viewed over 250,000 times by visitors sharing information and interacting with teachers, researchers, and students.

Other TREC field projects and locations this summer include investigation of carbon and water cycles in Thule, Greenland; fluxes in the Yukon and Mackenzie Rivers; snow geese and revegetation on Alaska's North Slope; climate change in Svalbard, Norway; and a second cruise aboard the USCGC *Healy* collecting an integrated geophysical data set.

TREC is administered by the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS) with logistical support from VECO Polar Resources. Classrooms and the general public are encouraged to participate through online message boards, photo albums, Internet presentations, and online teaching resources. The first live call from the field is scheduled for June 14, 2005 at 8 a.m. AKDT. For further information and to participate, see the TREC website: www.arcus.org/trec, or contact Helen Wiggins, ARCUS Program Coordinator, at helen@arcus.org or 907-474-1600.

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The Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS) is based in Fairbanks, Alaska and was formed in 1988 to provide leadership in advancing knowledge and understanding of the Arctic. ARCUS is a member consortium of educational and scientific institutions. Further information is available at: www.arcus.org.