

Waves, Currents, & Bathymetric Evolution Near An Inlet (N00014-10-10237)

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OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The long-term objective is to develop field-verified models for the wave fields, circulation patterns, and morphological evolution near inlets and river mouths. Our approach is to collect and analyze field observations of waves, currents, winds, and bathymetry to test hypotheses and to calibrate, evaluate, and improve numerical models.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR FY 2010

The objectives for 2010 were to:

- Participate in meetings to plan a comprehensive program to study river mouths and inlets,
- Decide upon and visit a site for field work,
- Design an inlet-river mouth sensor array using numerical model simulations.

TASKS COMPLETED:

The New River Inlet, NC, near Camp Lejeune was selected as the first site for field observations. A small team of investigators and technicians visited the site in fall, 2010 and made some preliminary measurements of currents with drifters (Figure 1). Based on these observations, as well as input from colleagues conducting remote sensing and numerical simulations, we designed an experiment array (Figure 2).

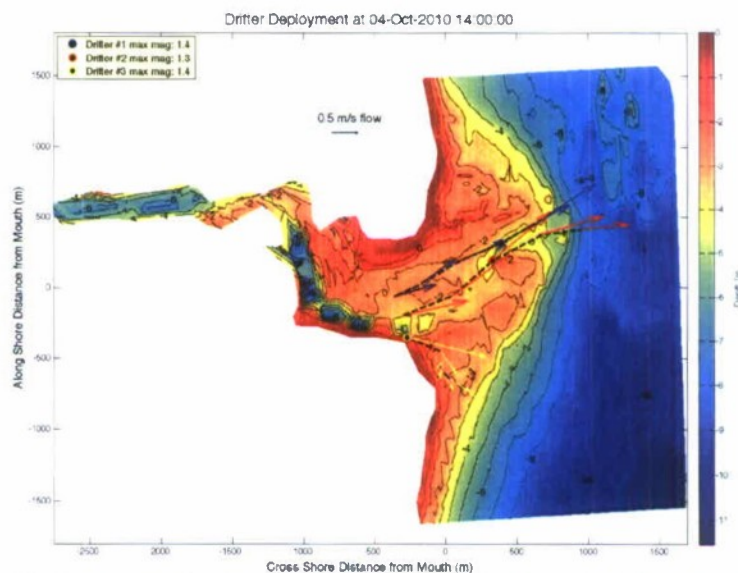


Figure 1: Drifter tracks (colored arrows) during ebb flows at New River Inlet, NC. Color contours are water depth (red is above sea level, blue is deeper water, scale on the right). GPS drifters were released near the inlet mouth (cross-shore distance = -250 m) and tracked as they traveled offshore. Maximum speeds along each track are listed in the legend.

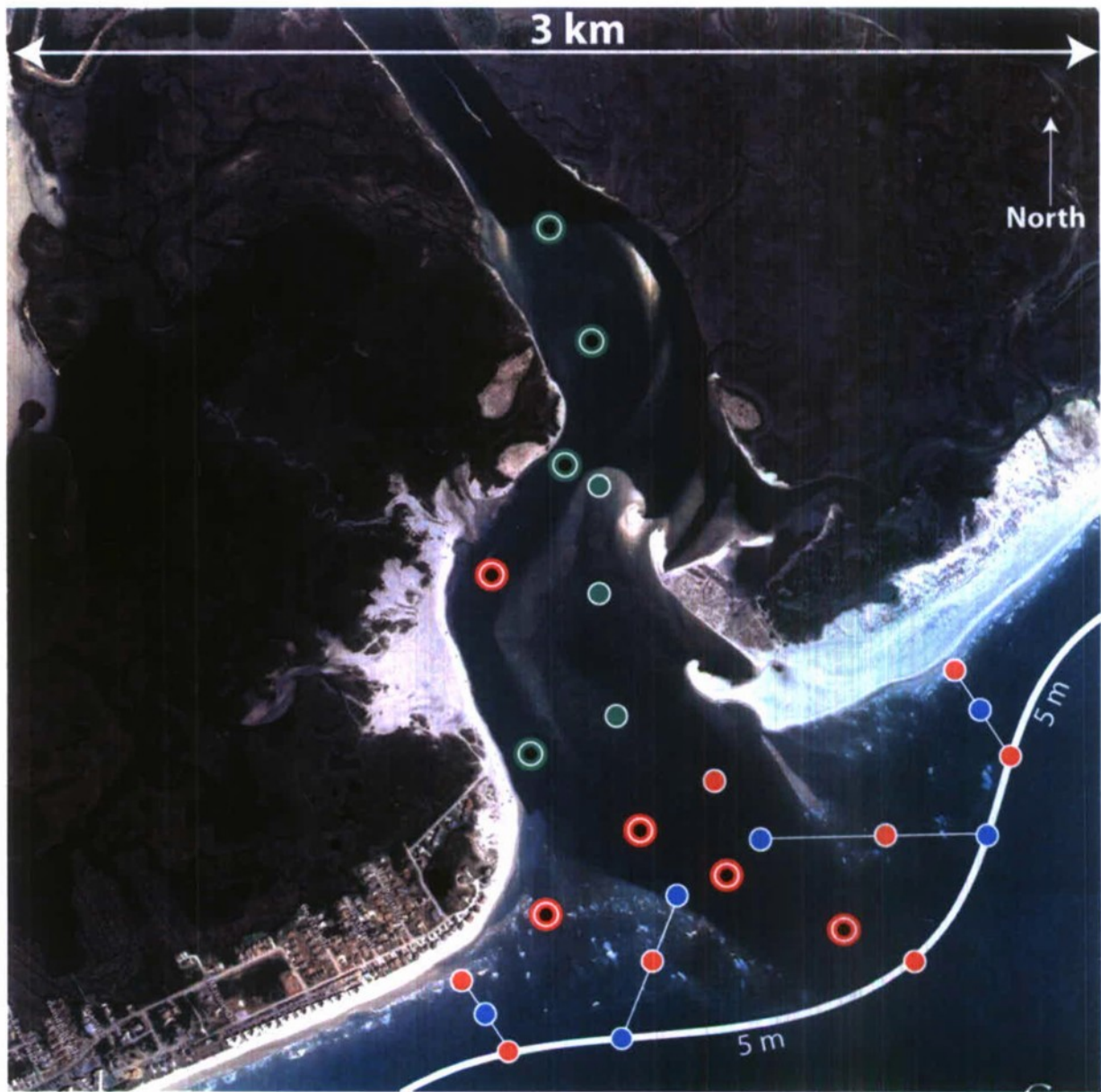


Figure 2. Aerial photograph of New River Inlet, NC with an array plan superposed. The larger symbols (red and green) with black bull's-eye centers are current profilers colocated with pressure gages. The small symbols (red, green, and blue) are current meters colocated with pressure gages. The white curve offshore of the inlet is the 5-m depth contour. The thin white lines show cross-ebb-shoal and cross-shore transects. The red symbols are the primary array to observe the wave-, setup-, and tide-induced circulation near the inlet mouth and throughout the ebb shoal. The green symbols extend the array to observe the currents into the inlet and to provide information for bathymetric inversion of in situ and remotely sensed observations. The blue symbols extend the array to provide observations of wave refraction, wave-current interaction, and wave shoaling in the presence of a strong inlet flow.

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Washington Headquarters Service, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
06-14-2011		Final		10/27/2009 - 03/31/2011	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Waves, Currents, and Bathymetric Evolution Near An Inlet				5a. CONTRACT NUMBERS	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER N00014-10-10237	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
8. AUTHOR(S) Steve Elgar and Britt Raubenheimer				5d. PROJECT NUMBER 140237SP	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution 266 Woods Hole Road Woods Hole, MA 02543				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Office of Naval Research 875 North Randolph Street Arlington, VA 22203-1995				10. SPONSORING/MONITORING ACRONYM(S) ONR	
				11. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT The long-term objective is to develop field-verified models for the wave fields, circulation patterns, and morphological evolution near inlets and river mouths. Our approach is to collect and analyze field observations of waves, currents, winds, and bathymetry to test hypotheses and to calibrate, evaluate, and improve numerical models.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS tidal flats, surfzone, nearshore circulation, sediment transport					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
R	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			Steve Elgar
U	U	U	U	3	19 b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) (508) 289-3614