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**For Release: May 2003**

### **Gulf of Alaska Research Trip Launched**

FineEdge.com's Research Vessel *Baidarka* left April 30 on its most ambitious exploration to date. Don Douglass and Réanne Hemingway-Douglass embarked on a thorough reconnaissance and documentation of the Gulf of Alaska from Cape Spencer to Prince William Sound and the Kenai Peninsula to Kodiak. Their 7,000 mile trip, spanning 5 months, will provide detailed data for a new cruising guide, *Exploring the Gulf of Alaska*, to be published next year as well as a series of magazine articles. The Douglass' research will focus on the many inadequately and uncharted anchorages along the entire route that could provide shelter for recreational boaters and kayakers. The goal is to extend their leading *Exploring* series books to show how to cruise in one season from Mexico to Kodiak, Alaska, and back as a series of day-hops from one anchor site to another.

Accompanied by veteran crewman John Leone of Anacortes and others enroute, Don and Réanne will collect hydrographic and recreational information in their specially equipped Nordhavn 40 research vessel, *Baidarka*. They will have three computers on board to help record and analyze their data and photos. Their robust trawler, which is perfectly suited to explore the remote seas of the world, has a self-sufficient range of 2,500 miles and sophisticated navigation and safety gear. (In 2002, a sister ship of *Baidarka* completed a circumnavigation of the world last year in 7 months, a new accomplishment for a production cruising vessel of this size.)

Sponsors for this year's expedition include, Nordhavn, Nobeltec navigation software, Mustang Survival clothing, Iridium satellite communications, Interphase Technology forward and side to side scanning sonar, and the Canadian Hydrographic Service.

The Douglasses will complete their provisioning in Sitka the third week of May and be ready for a good-weather window to help them explore Lituya Bay, Yakatak and Icy Bay, as well as potential anchor sites along the coast of Cape Fairweather, Cape Suckling, Cape Saint Elias and Cape Hitichingbrook. In early June, they will rendezvous with Jim and Nancy Lethcoe, the leading cruising and geographical experts on Prince William Sound before heading further west to Kodiak. After exploring from Seward to Homer, *Baidarka* will visit parts of Shelikof Strait and the remote, but potentially useful, shelter afforded by the Barren Islands. Last will be the east side of Prince William Sound and uncharted areas south of Cordova and the outlet of the Copper River and flats around historic Kayak Island.

Don and Réanne will return to Anacortes in September after calling on a number of old friends in Southeast Alaska and upper British Columbia. Limited updates on their progress during the summer will be posted on the FineEdge.com website.

FineEdge.com, the leading nautical publisher in the Western U.S., publishing over 40 books and maps for the recreational industry including the popular, six-book "Exploring..." series of nautical cruising guides written by Don Douglass and Réanne Hemingway-Douglass which cover the area from Ensenada, Mexico to Glacier Bay, Alaska. A 7<sup>th</sup> book, *Exploring the Gulf of Alaska* is in the research and expedition stage and will extend the series coverage to extend to Kodiak, Alaska. FineEdge.com's additional titles cover nautical techniques, non-fiction nautical titles, and guidebooks and maps for kayaking and mountain biking.