

Western Boundary Current Systems Virtual Poster Session

D. Randolph Watts
Graduate School of Oceanography
University of Rhode Island
South Ferry Road
Narragansett, RI 02882
phone:(401) 874-6507; fax: (401) 874-6728; email: rwatts@gso.uri.edu

Kathleen A. Donohue
Graduate School of Oceanography
University of Rhode Island
Narragansett RI 02882
phone: (401) 874-6615 fax: (401) 874-6728 email: kdonohue@gso.uri.edu

Arlene Guest
Naval Postgraduate School
Department of Oceanography, Code OC
Monterey, CA 93493
phone: (831) 656-2226 fax: (831) 656-2712 email: aguest@nps.navy.mil

Award Numbers: N000140010410 and N0001400WR20280
<http://www.po.gso.uri.edu/wbc/>

LONG-TERM GOALS

To expedite broad exchange of scientific knowledge about Western Boundary Current Systems and their governing dynamical processes.

OBJECTIVES

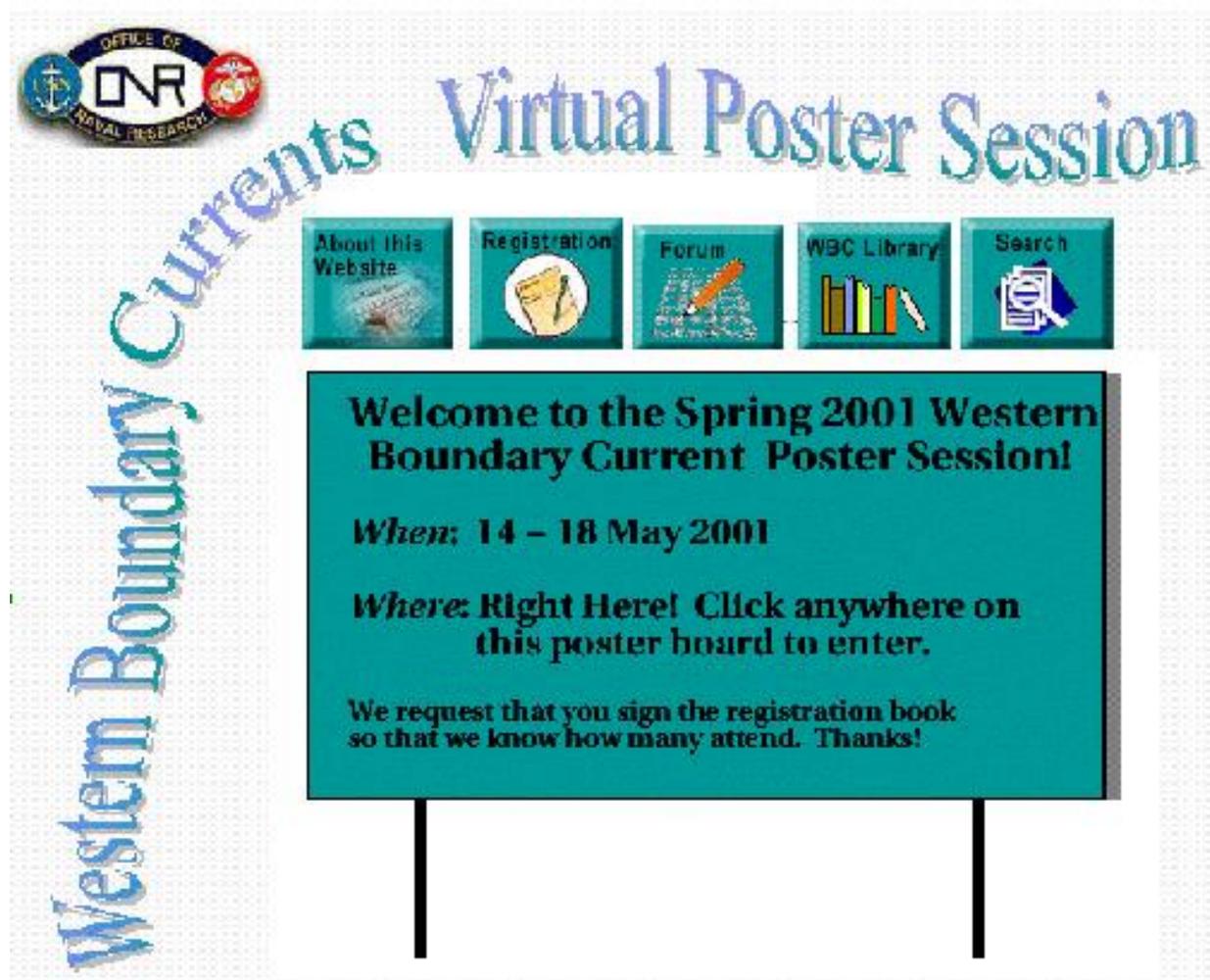
Because an information-exchange gap exists between the initial planning-and-conduct stages and the eventual journal publication of scientific research, our objective is to provide a new mechanism that facilitates the exchange of ideas while they are "hot" and still being refined.

APPROACH

We conduct a series of web-based "Virtual Poster Sessions" individually focussed on themes under the broad topic of Western Boundary Current Systems which provide the opportunity for rapid and broad distribution of research.

The home page (Figure 1; <http://www.po.gso.uri.edu/wbc/>) contains the essential components for the virtual poster session. A "poster" page presents invited and contributed posters treating observational, theoretical, and numerical modeling issues. For a given session we invite expert contributions for a particular theme. Similar to real poster sessions, contributions posted on the Western Boundary

Current web site do not receive prior peer review or significant editorial action. However, coinciding with posting each invited anchor article, we arrange for one or more peers to provide "invited comment" --seeking some degree of cross-fertilization between observationalists, modelers, and theoreticians. Associated with each poster, a "forum" page promotes active participation by site visitors, who are encouraged to register, with "threaded discussions" which include questions, criticisms, and replies. We hope in future to add real-time chat-room discussion to the Forum. A "living bibliography", the Western Boundary Current library, contains a "topical library" with entries from the poster contributors and preregistrants as well as a "cumulative Western Boundary Current bibliography" consisting of a subset of citations to journal articles, which will be built up from session to session.



Sponsored by the Office of Naval Research

Feedback, comments and questions
Last update: 27 April 2001

Figure 1. Home page for Western Boundary Currents Virtual Poster Session.

<http://www.po.gso.uri.edu/wbc/>

Randy Watts and Kathy Donohue serve as co-editors, with responsibility to gather a broad distribution list, announce themes, and recruit contributors for anchor-articles and invited-commentators. Arlene Guest is responsible for the configuration of the web site, including features such as threaded discussion forums, a search engine for the site, and registration; she serves as the technical point of contact.

WORK COMPLETED AND RESULTS

After limited trial-run sessions the previous year, we conducted the first Virtual Poster Session (VPS) in November 2000 and the second in May 2001. They both received warm enthusiastic participation amongst the oceanographic community.

The November-2000 VPS included 13 posters with a Kuroshio and Gulf Stream focus; 66 oceanographic professionals and 6 grad students registered, plus 4 interested public. The visitors represented 10 countries and at least 31 different institutions.

The May-2001 VPS included 10 posters with a focus on the Agulhas and South Atlantic. We received a gratifying set of comments ('rave reviews') from Registrants. The VPS site received during the week of May-14 650 hits from 530 different sites. People from 60 different institutions and countries visited the site that week. The scientific discussion in several of the FORUMS was informative, felt "immediate", and in some ways provided more substantive thoughtful feedback than from "live" interactions. However, some participants offered constructive criticism that both commentors as well as authors should receive notification by email when a reply to a comment is entered.

If one uses the GOOGLE Internet Search engine to search for Western Boundary Current, the top several entries belong to our site!

IMPACT / APPLICATIONS

We hope that the web site will benefit students at the undergraduate and graduate level as well as the public, who would have a glimpse into the scientific process and the state of the art in this area of oceanography.

The virtual poster session provides investigators the opportunity to present their results to a world-wide audience with creative graphics, such as animations or large numbers of color plots, that would be impossible or prohibitively expensive in published journals.

TRANSITIONS and RELATED PROJECTS

Virtual Poster Sessions on other topics are being considered by other ONR PI's. The web templates, Forum, Registration, and Search engine scripts etc. are available to save them development efforts.