



# NOAA REPORT

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April 9, 1986

## COMING UP

National Hurricane Conference in Houston, Tex.,  
April 15-18.

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Marine Data Systems MDS '86 international  
symposium by Gulf Sections, Marine Technology  
Society in New Orleans, La., Apr. 30 - May 2.

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GOES-G launch, May 1 from Cape Canaveral AFB, Fla.

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NOAA-G launch, June 3 from Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

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**Hot and Cold:**--Weather Service fire weather forces went into action to combat the "Tucker Fire" in Virginia's Jefferson National Forest as the blaze grew to 1,300 acres on April 2. As the Forest Service called on the National Interagency Fire Coordination Center in Boise, Idaho for help, a NWS fire weather meteorologist and mobile weather support unit were dispatched from Redding, Calif., the first for a wildfire east of the Mississippi. Rapid support for fires anywhere in the country has been made possible through NOAA's provision of satellite communications of data and a modularized weather equipment package. All California fire weather mobile units have been converted to this rapid response system and the NWS will convert fire weather mobile units in the remainder of the country this year.

At the other end of the temperature spectrum, Weather Service Watches and Warnings were issued hours before a strong late-season winter storm April 3 produced a foot of snow at Denver, Colo., 8 inches at Cheyenne, Wyo., and another 8 inches in the Nebraska Panhandle. Two to four feet of snow were recorded in the Colorado mountains. Fifty to sixty mile-an-hour winds caused blizzard conditions in northeast Colorado and southeast Wyoming. There were widespread power outages and damaged roofs in Pueblo, Colo.

**Statue of Liberty Charts Issued:**--NOAA has issued three special editions of nautical charts of New York harbor to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty and the July 4 Op Sail '86 celebration. The charts are standard NOS nautical charts embellished with photos of modern New York harbor, etchings showing the Statue of Liberty in various stages of construction, and a reproduction of a letter from President Reagan to the President of Op Sail '86 with his best wishes for the event.

**SWIS Testing Underway:**--Weather Service engineers are testing a preproduction unit of a Satellite Weather Information System (SWIS). SWIS provides new capabilities for forecasters by permitting them to acquire weather satellite imagery and integrate it with the Automation of Field Operations and Services (AFOS) system. The forecaster may use AFOS graphics capabilities such as animation to make the SWIS data even more useful. The SWIS system was delivered to NWS headquarters for acceptance testing on March 18. By March 21, the SWIS and AFOS systems had been successfully interfaced and were exchanging data with one another. Testing will continue through April.

**GLERL Groundbreaking:**--The groundbreaking for the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory Consolidated Facility was held in Ann Arbor on April 4. Deputy Administrator J. Curtis Mack and OAR Assistant Administrator Dr. Joseph Fletcher represented NOAA at the ceremony. The new building, scheduled to be completed by early 1987, will replace the four buildings which have housed GLERL since its establishment in 1974.

**NOAA Hosts Chart Agent Meeting:**--The Ocean Service is hosting its second nautical and aeronautical chart agent's workshop in Seattle April 10-11. Attendees learn about innovations in charting technology in the 1980s and how they will affect the chart sales business in the 1990s. The workshop also will include overviews of other government map and chart products and chart-related publications and a review of NOAA chart pricing policies.

**COSPAS/SARSAT Broadcast Planned:**--Administrator Calio and U.S. Rep. Don Young (R. AK) will conduct a 30-minute TV presentation to be taped this week at the House recording facility, on the problems of false alarms to the COSPAS/SARSAT search-and-rescue satellite service. It will be broadcast throughout Alaska, where the problem is most acute. The broadcast is part of a campaign to

remind aviators, mariners, and others with Emergency Locator Transmitters, that approximately 99 percent of all distress signals received through the system are costly false alarms.

Fish Consumption Up:--American fish fanciers each consumed nearly a pound more fish last year than the year before, as per capita fish consumption increased from 1984's 13.7 pounds to 14.5 pounds in 1985, fisheries experts say. Most of the .8 pound increase was in fresh and frozen fish which increased a half-pound during the period.

Volcano Affects Air Traffic:--The Weather Service issued aviation advisories immediately after the Augustine Island volcano erupted March 27 forcing steady plumes of volcanic ash into the atmosphere. NWS Anchorage informed pilots and air traffic controllers of the height and horizontal extent of the volcanic debris. The volcano, located on an uninhabited island about 150 miles southwest of Anchorage, generated dozens of small earthquakes in the immediate area, and the NWS Alaska Tsunami Warning Center and the Alaska State Department of Emergency Services have been monitoring the situation closely. If an eruption causes a major avalanche of debris into Cook Inlet, the threat of local tsunami exists.

On the Moon and Mars:--Dr. William P. Bishop is a member of a White House team formed to review the soon-to-be-released report of the National Commission on Space. Advanced executive summaries of the report describe an ambitious \$700 billion program through the year 2035, designed to put a permanent space station on Mars and the Moon.

Dr. Hunter Takes Fishery Post:--Dr. John Hunter, a fishery biologist at the NMFS Southwest Center in La Jolla, Calif., has been elected president of the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists. He takes office this September. Dr. Hunter's field is fish behavior and physiology.

Data Atlas Show-and-Tell:--A press briefing on the public uses of NOAA's new Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas will be held May 6 in conjunction with the Offshore Technology Conference slated for May 5-8 in Houston, Tex. The atlas contains thematic maps of a wide range of subjects of interest to scientists, engineers, and other who need sound baseline information to make decisions affecting the environment of the Gulf of Mexico. NOS will feature the atlas in an exhibit, along with point-

of-sales literature provided by the Government Printing Office.

**Women-In-Science Recruiting:**--As part of a national program to inspire young women in high school to choose careers in science and mathematics, Carol H. Pease and Judith Gray-Wilson of NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in Seattle, recently participated in the "Expanding Your Horizons" program with the King County School Systems of Washington. Ms. Pease, an oceanographer, spoke about career opportunities in oceanography and sea-ice research. Ms. Gray-Wilson, a meteorologist, discussed opportunities in weather research over the ocean and in coastal regions. Both women were members of panels that answered questions on preparing for a scientific career and what life is like for women in science.

**NOAA Offers Tides Software Program:**--The Office of Oceanography and Marine Assessment has developed a new software program which will be sold to the public enabling users direct telephone access to NOS tide gauges located around the country. Users will be able to generate video displays and hard copy print-outs depicting actual water levels as compared to predicted water levels for the same locations. Real-time water level data are of great economic value to pilots' associations, cargo carriers, and shippers, making possible safer and more efficient shipping.

**Sea Lion Population Decline:**--Fishery Service analysis on 1984-85 survey data on northern sea lions from the Gulf of Alaska to the western Aleutian Islands confirms a population decline of 52 percent over the past 20 years, from 140,000 to 68,000 animals. The causes of the decline are unknown, but appear to be a result of high juvenile mortality at sea (similar to fur seals).

**Radiosonde Recovery Program:**-- Public Affairs reports that media interest remains high in the drive to recover (for repair and reuse) grounded radiosondes. Radiosondes are balloon-borne instrument packages that radio information back to earth as they rise through the atmosphere. At a certain altitude, the balloons burst and the radiosondes parachute to the ground. Taped interviews have been conducted with radio stations in Virginia and Michigan; "Cobblestone" magazine and "The Science Teacher" magazine ran major articles on the program; and numerous teachers have inquired about it with a view to using the project in their classrooms.

# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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July 23, 2010