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August 6, 1986

COMING UP

NOAA-G polar-orbiting satellite launch from Vandenberg AFB, Calif., Aug.22.

NOAA Regional Users Conference in New Orleans Sept. 10-11.

Oceans '86 in Washington, D.C., September 23-25.

New Director For NOAA Corps:--The nomination of RADM Francis D. Moran as Director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps was confirmed by the Senate on July 24. Adm. Moran will be sworn into office on Sept. 8. He succeeds Adm. Kelly Taggart, recently retired after a distinguished career in the Corps. Moran, the only Corps officer qualified to fly all NOAA aircraft, helicopters included, is a 25-year veteran of NOAA and its predecessor agencies. He joined the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey on July 6, 1961, has served on five NOAA ships and in a variety of other positions, and most recently has headed the Office of Aircraft Operations. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi.

President Defers Action on Norway:--President Reagan sent a message Aug. 4 to Congress announcing a decision to defer action on whaling activities by Norway which were found to have diminished the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission. On June 9, Secretary Baldrige certified that Norway has defied IWC regulations by excessive harvesting. After receiving certification (under the Pelly Amendment to the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967), the President may direct that the offending country's fishery products may be embargoed. Since the Norwegian government announced on July 1 that it will suspend commercial whaling after the 1987 coastal season and will reduce the 1987 domestic quota from a total quota of 400 animals planned in 1986, the President said "I am not imposing sanctions upon Norway at this time." However, he said, Secretary Baldrige will continue his certification until the Norwegian government

withdraws its objection to IWC decisions or until IWC authorizes the resumption of commercial whaling on stocks of interest to Norway. He directed that Norwegian whaling developments be "monitored carefully".

Arctic Haze Flights:--ERL scientists who flew aboard NOAA's WP-3D research aircraft during recent Arctic haze investigations report that they observed a 50-mile wide plume that was more dense than anything observed during similar flights in 1983. Dr. Russell Schnell, principal investigator for NOAA, said that the plume first was discovered by the researchers over the Arctic Sea. As the plume moved southward over Alaska, investigators detected soot carbon concentration within the plume of up to 99 nanograms per cubic meter. Aircraft and surface sites tracked the pollution for nearly a week as it moved to the south. The effort resulted in the first well-documented study of Arctic haze transiting Alaska in the eastern Pacific. Dr. Schnell said that, based on the evidence resulting from this study of such a "mega haze" event, scientists will have to revise their estimates upward on the effects of haze on Arctic climate.

Comment Time Extended:--The public comment period for a major review of U.S. fishery management has been extended 30 days to Sept. 8, according to Administrator Anthony J. Calio. The 63-page study is part of an overall assessment of the fishery management system created by the 10-year-old Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Calio said public and industry comments are vital to the effective management of the nation's fishery resources, since the study will be part of NOAA's discussions with Congress on improving fish management. Copies of the report, "NOAA Fishery Management Study," are available from NMFS (PAF), Washington, DC 20235.

South Pole Bound:--Dr. Susan Solomon, of NOAA's Aeronomy Laboratory, will lead a 13-scientist National Ozone Experiment team to Antarctica to evaluate the causes of a potentially threatening decrease in ozone there. Team members include NOAA's Dr. George A. Mount and Dr. Ryan Sanders. They will try to determine whether the cause of the celebrated "ozone hole" may be chemical rather than dynamical. In the process, they will observe scattered sunlight absorption with a ground-based instrument and, weather permitting, also take measurements by moonlight. This is designed to provide data not only on ozone concentrations but on nitrogen dioxide, whose abundance would provide an indication of whether the ozone depletion is the product of man-made chemicals.

Pollock Forecast On The Nose:--Last year, Fisheries Service scientists predicted a continuing decline in the spawning rate of Alaska pollock (three years and older). Results from a recent acoustic trawl survey in Alaska's Shelikoff Strait, a major center for pollock, bear out the prediction. However, they expect an increasing trend in spawning biomass next year. A new research program is zeroing in on the factors contributing to the

variability in recruitment and spawning abundance of pollock in that area.

NOAA's Fleet M.D. Honored:--Dr. Leonard Bachman, a captain in the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) and medical advisor to NOAA's Office of Marine Operations, was awarded the USPHS Outstanding Services Medal July 30. The award was presented to Dr. Bachman by the Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. C. Everett Koop, in recognition of dedicated service as a USPHS physician and officer and in the development of the NOAA Medical Policy Manual.

NOAA Volunteers To Guide Voyager:--Under the direction of Leonard Snellman, Weather Service retiree, a team of volunteer experts has been assembled to provide constant weather guidance for the mid-September attempt by the experimental aircraft Voyager to circle the globe without refueling. Snellman and a group of NOAA meteorologists, who are taking leave to participate, will be stationed at the Voyager's base camp in Mojave, Calif. Weather - in particular maximum assist from tail winds - will play a crucial role in the low-altitude flight, much of it over ocean areas. The craft is scheduled to head out over the Pacific September 14, a date selected, among other reasons, to take maximum advantage of prevailing moonlight. The flight will rely heavily on NOAA's GOES and polar orbiting satellites, plus a worldwide meteorological network set up by Snellman, who was a silver medalist at last year's weather satellite 25th anniversary jubilee in Washington, D.C.

Page Building Relocation Completed:--Think again before sending any correspondence to the Page 2 Building in Washington, D.C. The National Capital Administrative Support Center reports that the 6th and final move of personnel took place July 31. NOAA now has vacated the Page Building.

NOAA Windshear Research Gets Media Play:--Research designed to give pilots a lifesaving two-minute warning of airport downbursts is receiving wide exposure through a feature story by the Associated Press's Randolph Schmid, and a prime-time segment on the NBC Nightly News July 30. The Office of Public Affairs brought together Schmid and Alfred J. Bedard, the NOAA scientist who is working on a system to warn of downbursts at takeoff and landing. Downbursts -- violent, powerful plunges of air to earth -- have been identified as the cause of 167 aircraft accidents involving 577 deaths over the past 15 years. Bedard's ERL team is seeking to confirm earlier findings that conditions leading to microbursts can be recognized in advance.

Coming: More Norwegian Salmon?--Live, Norwegian-farmed salmon may be transported in tankers to this country, the Fisheries Service says. This year's production of farmed Norwegian salmon is expected to reach about 40,000 tons, worth \$266 million U.S. dollars--and the U.S. is Norway's largest market. The Foundation of Scientific and Industrial Research at Trondheim is carrying

out a project, in cooperation with shippers, that could bring the first live salmon here in a Norwegian tanker as early as next year.

OAR Studies Stratosphere Watch:--How to keep up with changes in the stratosphere as quickly as possible? An Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research workshop has come up with the following recommendations: the most important areas to be monitored, in order, are column ozone, temperature, chlorine oxide and water vapor. Other important species: aerosols, nitrogen dioxide, hydrogen chloride, methane, and nitrous oxide. A minimum network of six monitoring stations was recommended, with a polar, equatorial and mid-latitude station in each hemisphere, all at altitudes above 2000 meters. Daily observations would be taken at all sites, using passive ground-based measurements at visible, ultraviolet, infrared and microwave wavelengths. This assumes that measurements currently being taken will continue.

Flood Data From Mexico:--NOAA is presently working with the International Boundary and Water Commission to promote the placing of satellite data collection platforms in the Rio Grande valley south of the border. According to Eugene Stallings of the National Weather Service's Office of Hydrology, the plan tentatively calls for the placement of two of the remote sensors in Mexican drainages of the Rio Grande which will provide some advance notice of flood flows from Mexico that will directly affect the mainstem Rio Grande where it forms the international boundary. Downstream of El Paso, Tex., most of the river's drainage areas lie south of the border and are capable of presenting boundary residents with infrequent but quite severe floods.

Red Flag On Porpoise:-- Porpoise mortality jumped about 1400 last week, raising the deaths to date for the year to 17,754. The yearly quota of 20,500 is projected to be reached (at the current rate) by Aug. 23, give or take a few days.

Superfund Conference Agrees on Reauthorization:--The EPA Superfund being close to NOAA's interests, we can report that on July 31 Superfund conferees agreed to a partial reauthorization package, including provisions on natural resource damages, which 1) authorize the EPA administrator to determine annually the sufficiency of Fund money to pay natural resource damage claims; 2) allow municipalities to act as trustees in certain circumstances; and 3) establish discovery as the sole trigger for the statutory filing period for claims. More on this later.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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