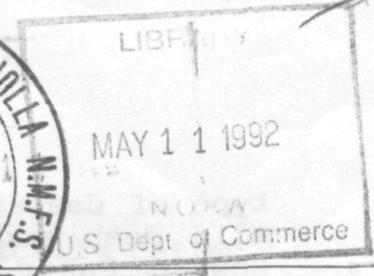




NOAA REPORT



NOAA Report is an administrative document, issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of the Administrator for the information and use of agency personnel.

December 17, 1986

COMING UP

NOAA Undersea Research Symposium in Hilo, Hawaii, Dec. 27-30.

American Meteorological Society annual meeting in New Orleans, La., Jan 12-17.

National Ocean Service's 180th anniversary conference in Rockville, Md., Feb. 3.

National Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Chicago, Ill., Feb. 14-18.

High Tides Pose Coastal Threat:--Extreme tides could increase the threat of coastal flooding and navigational hazards from Dec. 28 to Jan. 4, according to the National Ocean Service. Record worldwide high tides may occur if they coincide with coastal storms. Tides already are beginning to be affected as the sun, moon, and earth move toward a rare alignment, NOS oceanographers say.

Stormy, wet weather has been forecast for the Atlantic and Gulf coasts this winter by the National Weather Service. Highest possibility of flooding, even in normal weather, will be along the northeast and northwest coasts, particularly in the Gulf of Maine and Puget Sound. If there are heavy rains or winds blowing onshore during the critical period, localized flooding may occur in other areas along the east and west coasts.

People who live or work in coastal areas subject to flooding, as well as boaters and fishermen who may be affected by extremely low tides, the release urges, should consult NOAA Tide Tables for the times and heights of high and low tides and be alert to NOAA weather forecasts and warnings.

Huge Warm Water Plume Found In Pacific:--NOAA scientists studying water samples taken from a massive plume of chemically-rich warm water found in the Pacific Ocean off the U.S. west coast believe they may have come upon a previously undetected

type of deep-sea hydrothermal venting. The plume, about half a mile deep and 12 miles in diameter, was discovered by NOAA's Edward Baker in mid-August about 260 miles west of Newport, Oreg., above the Juan de Fuca Ridge. While mapping areas of seafloor venting by identifying hydrothermal plumes near the ocean floor, Baker's instruments indicated water temperature anomalies higher up in the water column, closer to the surface. The waters in this plume were warmer than those found in a typical plume just over a seafloor venting site. Later analysis indicated the plume probably was only several days old, its hotter waters still intermingling with the colder ocean waters in the area. The plume was heavily laden with hydrothermally-derived manganese, iron, anhydrite crystals, and carbon dioxide. Scientists believe that geological activity on the seafloor could have generated numerous short-lived and intense hot-water geysers that coalesced into a single massive plume. The excess heat in the plume represented about 10 billion kilowatt-hours of energy. Assuming the enormous plume was not an isolated incident but is being replicated frequently along oceanic spreading centers, such vent action could be an important generator of carbon dioxide and heat. Oceanic carbon dioxide plays a key role in the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, where it influences climate. The discovery of the warm water plume was reported at the December meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco.

NESDIS' Bailey Receives Soviet Space Award:--During a recent visit to Moscow, James T. Bailey, NOAA's manager of SARSAT, the U.S. arm of the global COSPAS/SARSAT satellite-assisted rescue service, was presented the Uri Gagarin Medal, by the Federation of Cosmonautics of the U.S.S.R. Bailey's was one of five medals bestowed for leadership in space activities at a Moscow news conference heralding advances in the multinational satellite life-saving program. NOAA weather satellites and Soviet spacecraft play a central role in the program. More than 650 people, most of them Americans, have been rescued since it began a little over four years ago. Bailey was in Moscow for a meeting of the COSPAS/SARSAT Steering Committee's Ad Hoc Group of Experts hosted by Glovocosmos, the Soviet space agency.

376th NOAA Weather Radio On The Air:--The nation's 376th NOAA Weather Radio station, located on the outskirts of Fort Collins, Colo., and funded by the local emergency preparedness office, is on the air. The station will share common programs of continuous recorded weather information with weather radio stations at Denver and Longmont. Its opening fills in a hole or shadow created by mountains between the other stations and Fort Collins.

Herschel Is Back:--Herschel, the California sea lion with an untamable appetite for steelhead salmon, has returned to the Ballard Locks in Seattle, creating tremendous interest by the public and equally tremendous dismay among fishermen. Federal, state, and local officials will try again to lure him away.

Herschel's salmon munching was ended during the last steelhead run by seal bombs, underwater firecrackers euphemistically called acoustical harassment devices. NOAA's Hal Alabaster is coordinating public affairs.

NOAA's Deep Water Submersible Program Set:--The Office of Undersea Research will sponsor two missions with the Alvin during 1987. In February, NOAA scientists will continue geochemical and geophysical investigations on Loihi volcano, an undersea volcano that will be the newest Hawaiian island in about 40 years. The Alvin will be used also to support continuing investigation of Axial volcano on the Gorda-Juan de Fuca Ridge in September. The submersible will deploy sophisticated instruments at Axial to gather the first time-series information on vent processes. This information will be used to understand better the global effect of vent processes on the chemical balance and circulation of the ocean.

Saladin Is NOAA's New Air Chief:--NOAA Corps Capt. Gerald C. Saladin is the new Director of the Office of Aircraft Operations in Miami. Capt. Saladin replaces Rear Adm. Francis D. Moran who became Director of the NOAA Corps in September. A Corps officer since 1959, Capt. Saladin has commanded three NOAA research vessels, including its largest, the Oceanographer, and has been commander of NOAA planes flying aerial photography, research, and hurricane reconnaissance missions. He was also chief of field operations for NOAA's National Geodetic Survey.

Surf Clam Closure:--On December 4, NMFS closed the surf clam fishery in the mid-Atlantic area for the remainder of the year to prevent significant over-harvest of the 1986 quota. The fishery will reopen January 4.

NCDC Contract Operations:--The National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C., converted to contractor operation on schedule December 8. RCA Services Corporation will operate what was formerly NCDC's automated data processing, archival, and technical services, with a staff of approximately 81 persons.

Solar Storms Puzzle Peripatetic Pigeons:--NOAA data is helping a researcher at the University of Houston who wonders why homing pigeons, which usually become lost only when overcast conditions hide the sun and when a magnetic storm confuses both their primary (solar) and secondary (geomagnetic) navigation sensors, may become disorientated on clear days. A case in point was the loss of a large number of homing pigeons during races in October. The birds may be valued at as much \$1,000 each. While there were magnetically disturbed conditions during the races, the weather was clear and primary navigation should have served. The researcher has requested a selected list of major magnetic storms from the National Geophysical Data Center, which he will combine with histories of past pigeon races and weather records to try to discover their relationships.

General Counsel Appointments: General Counsel Daniel W. McGovern announced two appointments recently. Pat Travers is the new Assistant General Counsel for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management. Joan Bondareff, who formerly held that post, is Senior Counsel for Legislative and International Affairs.

Climate Forecasting Seminar Proceeding Available:--Proceeding for the seminar on "Policy Aspects of Climate Forecasting" held March 4 at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., are now available. The seminar was co-sponsored by NOAA's National Climate Program Office and the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy at Resources for the Future, a private, not-for-profit research organization which specializes in the analyses of public policy. It was the second of a series of seminars started by NCPO to identify issues that could be incorporated in long range plans for the National Climate Program. Information on the proceedings, published by Resources for the Future, may be had from NCPO, (FTS) 443-8646.

Underwater Sled Aides Fish Surveys:--The Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center has developed and built a maneuverable underwater sled to help it survey salmon spawning sites on the bottom of the Columbia River. The sled, towed behind a boat, gives its crew - diver/pilot and an observer - a unique opportunity to gather firsthand data on chinook salmon spawning sites. For example, fall chinook salmon were known to spawn in relatively shallow waters - to 12 feet. During operations with the new sled, divers observed considerable chinook salmon spawning at depths from 18 to 22 feet.

NOAA Helps Argentine Forest Fire Fighters:--Al Dreumont of the Boise Weather Service Forecast Office has just returned from Argentina where he lectured on fire weather meteorology to forestry personnel and the Argentine weather service. At the request of the Argentina's national forest service, Dreumont provided eight lecture hours on the weather's role in wildfire creation and suppression during a fire management course, and then conducted a seminar on fire weather meteorology with the Argentine Servicio Meteorologico Nacional. The NOAA fire weather expert's trip was sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service's Office of International Forestry, and Office of USAID. Dreumont is scheduled to provide similar training to Venezuela's forest service in February. Spain also has expressed an interest in Dreumont's lecture.

NESDIS and the Ratings Game:--A.C. Nielsen, the firm that provides information on who's watching what, when, to the nation's advertising and television industries, has inquired about the National Climatic Data Center's various data summaries and services. The firm is studying the relationship between the weather and the public's television viewing habits.

NOAA REPORT WILL NOT BE ISSUED DECEMBER 24 AND DECEMBER 31

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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