



NOAA REPORT

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COMING UP

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

Meeting of the Committee for Space Environmental
Forecasting at ERL in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 12.

Toxic Chemicals and Aquatic Life: Research and
Management symposium in Seattle, Wash., Sept. 16-18.

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

11th Annual Climate Diagnostics Workshop at the
University of Illinois, Oct. 14-17.

Working Group for Operational Processing Centers at Air
Force Global Weather Central, Offutt AFB, Nebr., Oct 15-16.

Winter weather media workshop in Chicago, Ill., Oct.
24-25.

Tuna Trouble:--According to NMFS, the United States tuna fleet is fast reaching its annual porpoise quota of 20,500 allowed under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. When the quota is reached - sometime this month, experts believe - further fishing on porpoise and importation of tuna caught on porpoise will be prohibited. NMFS plans to promulgate regulations that will (1) prohibit any catching, possessing, or landing of yellowfin tuna by the United States fishing fleet unless the skipper

carries an NMFS observer who states that no porpoise were set on and (2) prohibit the importation of yellowfin tuna unless the harvesting nation has an observer program and a responsible government official provides information to show that the tuna being imported were not caught on porpoise. Fishermen may locate schools of tuna by watching for porpoise which often leap and splash above the tuna. This method of finding tuna is dangerous to porpoise as they may be injured or killed if they are caught in the tuna nets.

Western Fire Fighters Get Relief:--Fire fighters in the Pacific Northwest finally have gained the upper hand in their effort to control a rash of lightning-caused fires that started early last month. Most fires in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana are either contained or controlled with a major demobilization effort now under way. The National Weather Service still has two fire weather mobile units out, but this is significantly less than the nine units it had out at the height of the emergency when nearly 17,000 fire fighters and support personnel fought to control hundreds of wildfires which raged out of control.

Radio Tape Features Seafloor Geysers:--Radio listeners will learn about the first direct observations of hot seafloor geysers in the Atlantic Ocean made by a team of scientists led by NOAA's Dr. Peter Rona on the latest Sea & Air radio program distributed this week by Public Affairs. Dr. Rona discusses how these hot springs play a significant part in cooling earth and controlling the ocean's chemical composition, the recent discoveries of a new type of shrimp and a fossil form that lived millions of years ago, and how concentrations of metallic deposits on the seafloor may become a major mineral resource centuries from now. The Sea & Air is a monthly 12-minute program distributed to about 650 radio stations nationwide. The programs' content varies and may include NOAA experts providing important severe weather safety information or explanations of the latest NOAA research.

Guidelines Set for Display of Monitor Artifacts:--NOAA is looking for a Monitor Museum. Guidelines have been issued for the submission of proposals for the display and interpretation of artifacts recovered from the wreck of the Civil War ironclad USS Monitor. The Monitor, a National Marine Sanctuary managed by NOAA, lies in 230 feet of water 16 miles off Cape Hatteras.

According to the guidelines, the museum selected to handle material from the Monitor will be responsible for the long-term curation, preservation, interpretation, and management of the artifacts, and should establish and maintain a Monitor research library, project archives, and a conservation facility. Factors that will be considered by NOAA in its evaluation include a proposed museum's repository capability, its accessibility, and its location in relation to the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. The guidelines are published in the Sept. 4 edition of the Federal Register. Deadline for receipt of proposals is December 22. NOAA will hold a public meeting for those interested in submitting proposals October 9 in Washington, D.C.

Conservators from East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C., and the South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology in Columbia, recently completed conservation work on the Monitor's unique four-fluked anchor recovered in 1983. The anchor currently is on six-month display in the National Visitors Center in Washington.

NOAA is working with the U.S. Navy, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the National Park Service to map and document the underwater resting place of the Monitor next summer. At that time, they will assess whether all or part of the wreck should be raised, and determine the ultimate disposition of Monitor artifacts.

Concern Over Dam Failures:--Weather Service hydrologists have expressed concern over safety of America's dams based on a series of tragic dam failures over the past 15 years. Between 1980 and 1985 there were 82 failures at dams across the nation. It is estimated that 2,900 dams nationwide are faulty and that their repair would require \$1.21 billion. The picture will be even gloomier in the year 2000 when one-third of the nation's 63,340 dams (as of 1980) will be 50 years old or older, and by the year 2020 when 85 percent of those dams will be more than a half century old.

Search and Rescue Promotion Coming:--Oct. 1 has been tentatively set for the California kickoff of a federal-state educational campaign to cut the number of false alarms sent to COSPAS-SARSAT, the international search-and-rescue satellite service for downed pilots and mariners in distress. Planned: participation by ranking NOAA officials, a gubernatorial proclamation, a state legislative resolution for a Year of Air-Maritime Safety, and an opening press conference in the governor's office. Cooperating agencies include NOAA, the Coast Guard, the Air Force, the Federal Aviation Agency, the Federal Communications Commissions, the Civil Air Patrol, and the California Office of Emergency Services.

Maine Coastal Management Review:--NOAA currently is holding a series of public and private meetings in several Maine communities to evaluate the state's coastal management program. A public meeting was held in Portland Sept. 9 and interviews with interested parties will be held throughout the week of Sept. 8-12, according to NOAA's evaluation team leader June Cradick. Areas of interest for the evaluation team include the state's federal consistency review process; state and local administration and enforcement of shoreland zoning laws, including technical assistance provided by the state to local governments; the Maine State Planning Office's activities as lead agency for coastal management, including the state's efforts to coordinate coastal management activities and the responsibilities of other state agencies related to implementation and enforcement of core laws of the coastal program; and state efforts to provide adequate public access to coastal areas.

Research Helps Save Endangered Turtles:--Sea turtle sex can be influenced by the incubation temperature of eggs, according to research conducted by Dr. David Owens of Texas Sea Grant. This fact is very important to the program to rehabilitate the Kemp's Ridley turtle, an endangered species. Dr. Owens found that the holding conditions in the incubation house for the turtles was leading to a preponderance of males rather than the expected 50-50 ratio. The National Park Service, which maintains the turtle egg incubation facility, has modified its techniques by raising the incubation temperature which has led to the resumption of the proper sex ratio in the hatching turtles.

In other research on sea turtles, four turtle excluder devices (TED) recently tested in Florida waters off Cape Canaveral show success in keeping endangered sea turtles from being caught, injured, and killed in shrimp trawls. In a Sea Grant/NMFS effort conducted on Georgia Sea Grant's Bulldog research vessel, the standard net (used as a control on one side of the vessel) caught 68 turtles in 83 drags while the four TED's tested caught only two turtles, thus indicating that the TED's were allowing turtles to escape.

New Journal for Meteorologists:--A new quarterly journal entitled "Weather and Forecasting" is being published by the American Meteorological Society. The journal is the "brainchild" of Richard E. Hallgren, NOAA's Assistant Administrator for Weather Services in an attempt to better serve the operational forecaster. According to Hallgren it was designed as a medium for useful and productive dialogue among operational forecasters and researchers.

Health Screenings:--The Health Unit at the Commerce Department's Herbert C. Hoover Building ("Main Commerce") in Washington is conducting free colorectal screenings this month. Hemoccult kits for easy home use will be provided by the unit (Room 6046) between 2:00 and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday during September. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. It strikes men and women with equal frequency and the risk dramatically increases if one is over 40. If detected early, the survival rate is approximately 75 percent.

Weather Stations Consolidate:--On Aug. 25, the Weather Service Office in Red Bluff, Calif., was closed and the newly-consolidated Weather Service Office at Redding, Calif., began 16-hour daily public weather operations and observations. Redding's hours will expand to 24-hours-a-day on October 1. The Redding WSO is collocated with the U.S. Forest Service Facility for northern California and will serve as a hub for fire and public weather services for the interior of northern California.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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