



NOAA REPORT

MAY 1 1 1992

U.S. Dept. of Commerce



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December 14, 1987

COMING UP

Seminar on economic and social implications of climate change at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Calif., Dec. 15

International Workshop on Remote Sensing Retrieval Methods in Williamsburg, Va., Dec. 15-18.

NOAA Officer Training Class Graduation at Kings Point, N.Y., Dec. 16.

Pacific Marine Center Command Seminar in Seattle, Wash., Jan. 5-8.

Atlantic Marine Center Command Seminar in Norfolk, Va., Jan. 10-14.

SARSAT Report:--Among the agreements cemented at the recent Soviet-U.S. Summit was one to continue indefinitely the COSPAS/SARSAT satellite search and rescue system.

NESDIS manages the United States portion of the highly successful program which is operated jointly by Canada, France, the United States, and the U.S.S.R. Sister U.S. agencies include NASA, the U.S. Air Force and its auxiliary the Civil Air Patrol, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Federal Communications Commission.

NOAA's Office of Public Affairs has distributed a print and broadcast news kit in conjunction with the Summit hailing the system as a shining example of East-West cooperation in space.

Coincidentally, on the same day - last Sept. 10 - COSPAS/SARSAT marked the fifth anniversary of its first "save" (two fliers in a British Columbia forest) and its 1000th "save" (a merchant seaman in the North Sea off Norway).

Meanwhile, the role of NOAA polar-orbiting weather satellites in worldwide search and rescue was demonstrated last year to 137,000 people in the United States and Canada who

inspected the "SARSAT van," a mobile exhibit which is managed by NASA's Langley Research Center, Hampton, Va.

Last year the van travelled to 38 locations - boat shows, fish expos, air shows - to raise the consciousness of pilots, boaters, and their passengers about the need for proper maintenance and operation of portable radio distress beacons. Improper use of these beacons has caused a high false alarm rate which delays rescuers.

The van is part of an educational campaign for COSPAS/SARSAT, the international satellite search and rescue system. The system's distress locator instruments piggy back on Soviet navigation satellites and NOAA weather satellites. The portable radio beacons enable the satellites to pinpoint the location of a crash or sinking.

Ocean Storms Experiment Completed:--After the Thanksgiving holiday, a southward shift of the jet stream brought violent weather to the north Pacific, and Project Ocean Storms, becalmed by fair weather, was back in business and able to wrap up its flight observations the week of Dec. 7. (See NOAA Report, Nov. 23.) The NOAA WP-3 research team responded with sequential flights into an extensive region of 60-70 knot surface winds in the vicinity of the experiment's array of drifting data buoys. One buoy measured a 12 meter ocean swell caused by the storm. Atmospheric profiles, flight level data, and oceanographic data were collected on all flights.

The shift in the weather pattern also affected sea-ice research in Alaska. Air temperature at Nome dropped from near freezing to -30°F. over a five-day period. The harbor quickly froze, terminating boat operations.

NOS To Produce Helicopter Charts:--Extensive helicopter traffic in major metropolitan areas has prompted the FAA to direct NOAA to publish a new series of 3-color charts specifically for helicopter use. The first of these newly designed charts has been issued this month for the New York City area. Special recognizable depictions of prominent landmarks (such as the twin towers of the World Trade Center) have been added to aid helicopter pilots in following portrayed routes. In addition to the New York chart, NOS this year will produce others for the District of Columbia, Chicago, and Los Angeles metropolitan areas. These charts will be revised approximately every two years and have been printed on durable paper to withstand this relatively long use.

Hurricane Season Wrap-up:--U.S. coastal areas experienced a mild hurricane season that caused no deaths and a minimum amount of property damage, this year, according to the National Weather Service.

Overall, the U.S. coastline had three hurricanes and four tropical storms in 1987 with only Hurricane Floyd and one unnamed tropical storm striking the continental United States, causing a total of \$8 million in damage. Ordinarily, an average of six hurricanes and four tropical storms develop annually from June thorough November, with two striking the continental United States, causing \$1 billion in damage.

Stronger than normal westerly winds in the upper atmosphere over the hurricane breeding grounds were partly responsible for the mild season, explained Robert Sheets, Acting Director of the National Hurricane Center.

"About the time most of the systems began to strengthen, these stronger than normal westerly, high level winds would disrupt the storm tops and eliminate further chances for the storms to become hurricanes," he said.

Hurricane Emily was the only major hurricane of the season, killing three people in the Dominican Republic and causing \$30 million in crop damage. As the hurricane raced across the north Atlantic, it caused an additional \$35 million in damage to Bermuda. Floyd developed hurricane force in the lower Florida Straits in October. In August, an unnamed tropical storm moved inland along the Texas coast, causing \$7.5 million in damages, and produced severe flooding as it turned eastward across the southeast gulf states. Arlene was the only other cyclone to gain hurricane strength. Other tropical storms were Bret, Cindy and Dennis.

New Director for NOS Marine Operations:--Captain Sigmund R. Peterson has been selected as Director of the National Ocean Service's Office of Maine Operations, effective Jan. 1. Capt. Peterson has also been granted a temporary promotion to the grade of rear admiral.

Poachers Beware:--From time to time we carry news of NOAA Special Agents and their involvement with fishery law-breakers. The story usually ends with an arrest. Following is an enforcement action update - the rest of the story.

David Dowie, was convicted of a felony Lacey Act violation in U.S. District Court in Anchorage, Alaska, Nov. 24. Dowie, master of the long-line fishing vessel Minnow, seized for poaching halibut in the Gulf of Alaska in May of this year, was sentenced to one year in prison with all but 60 days suspended. He also was placed on probation for two years and ordered to perform 150 hours of community service work. In an earlier civil action against the vessel, the owner, Cruzan Fisheries, Inc., agreed to pay a \$50,000 fine and forfeit proceeds from the sale of 83,925 pounds of halibut valued at \$99,404. The sentencing judge commented that monetary penalties for fishing infractions were not an effective deterrent and that future violators sentenced in his court could expect jail time rather than fines.

NOAA Corps Awards:--Cdr. Donald L. Suloff has been awarded the NOAA Corps Commendation Medal for his outstanding service and significant contributions to NOAA's mission while assigned as the National Ocean Service Liaison Officer to the Defense Mapping Agency. NOAA Special Achievement Award Medals were presented Lt. Cdr. Michael C. Meyer, NOS, Anchorage, Alaska; Lt. Richard R. Behn, ERL, Seattle, Wash.; Lt. (jg) David M. Mattens, ERL Seattle, Wash.; Ens. William B. Kearse, NOS, NOAA Ship Discoverer; and Ens. Michele G. Bullock, NOS, NOAA Ship Discoverer.

NOAA Vessels Bring Holiday Cheer:--The NOAA Ship John N. Cobb participated in the Seattle Seafair Special Peoples Christmas Cruise again this year. The 93-foot fishery research vessel hosted 17 disabled persons and their seven chaperons at the Dec. 6 event. On the other coast, the NOAA ship Ferrel, decked out in holiday lights, carried approximately 60 guests on a short cruise along the Norfolk waterfront the evening of Nov. 28 as a major feature of the city's second annual Holiday Lighted Boat Parade. The 133-foot Ferrel, the largest vessel involved in the parade, showed NOAA's colors to a crowd of over 10,000.

Frozen Fish and Shellfish Supply Gains:--The October supply of fish and shellfish held in warehouses across the United States rose 4 percent from the previous month to 436.5 million pounds, NOAA fisheries statisticians report. Among the most important products in storage were 73.5 million pounds of frozen blocks and slabs (mostly cod, flounder, haddock, and pollock), down 5 percent from September, and 93.6 million pounds of frozen fillets and steaks (mostly cod, flounder, and ocean perch), up 14 percent from the same period. October's total warehouse supplies of frozen fish and shellfish were up 22 percent from the same period in 1986.

Dr. Miller and the Kids Network:--Dr. John Miller, Deputy Director of NOAA's Air Resources Laboratory, has been working with the National Geographic Society Kids Network, a unique effort to interest fourth to sixth grade students in science and introduce them to the use of personal computers for data analysis much like scientists do in the "grown-up" world. The project is supported by a \$6-million grant from the National Science Foundation. Dr. Miller has acted as the scientific advisor for the Kids Network's first pilot project about acid rain. Other subjects, such as weather and biology, will be developed later. The pilot study took place last May, involving 30 schools across the United States. The next phase will take place in April-May 1988 and will include over 300 schools. The National Geographic Society has developed software that will link the participating schools to a central location where the data will be collected and reviewed.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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12200 Kiln Court
Beltsville, MD 20704-1387
July 23, 2010