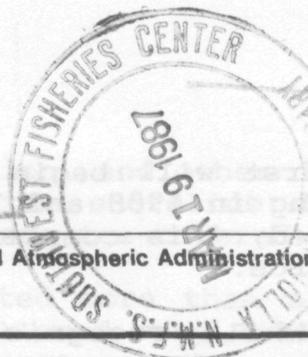




# NOAA REPORT

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February 25, 1987

## COMING UP

GOES-H launch from Cape Canaveral, Fla., Feb. 25 (rescheduled).

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Symposium on 180th anniversary of the founding of the "Survey of the Coast" in Rockville, Md., Feb. 26.

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Symposium on the 1986 Southeastern U.S. Drought in Columbia, S.C., March 4-5.

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National Hurricane Conference in Orlando, Fla., April 1-3

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**Consolidation of Washington Area Facilities:** The following memorandum has been issued by Under Secretary/Administrator Anthony J. Calio:

"Since its creation in 1970, a longtime but elusive NOAA goal has been to consolidate all of the agency's Washington operations in one location. Currently, NOAA's 4,700 employees occupy over a million square feet in 18 different locations. Consolidating our facilities would not only improve operating efficiencies and reduce costs, but create a premier scientific Federal complex dedicated to a better understanding of the oceans and atmosphere.

"For the past three years, the Department of Commerce has been working with the General Services Administration (GSA) to consolidate NOAA's facilities in the National Capital area. GSA [has announced] the purchase of an attractive new building adjacent to the Silver Spring Metro station as phase one of NOAA's consolidation.

"During 1987, this building will become NOAA's new headquarters, housing the office of the Under Secretary/Administrator, the Assistant Secretary/Deputy Administrator and all Assistant Administrators, as well as about 700 line and staff office employees. Construction on a larger building adjacent to

the first will begin within a year, to be followed by ground-breaking in 1988 and 1989 for three more structures. When fully occupied, this complex will house all of NOAA's Washington area workforce.

"While recognizing that no single location will fully satisfy every employee's desires, I believe the Silver Spring site is the most attractive alternative. It is centrally located for our employees, well-served by mass transit, and situated near excellent parking facilities. I will do all I can to make this a place where every NOAA employee is proud to work.

"In the coming months, we will be providing as much timely information and assistance as possible in an effort to reduce any uncertainties that a move of this size can raise.

"I believe that most employees can envision the very real benefits consolidation will bring and share with me the prospect that NOAA will emerge a stronger, more unified agency with a well-defined sense of mission."

GOES On Hold:--As NOAA Report went to press, the launch of NOAA's new Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES-7) was postponed to March 25 due to problems with the launch vehicle. When the satellite is orbited, it will bring the United States back to a fully operational two-GOES system for the first time since the loss of GOES-5 in July 1984.

Great Lakes' Problem Won't Go Away:--Record high water levels in the Great Lakes coupled with a warm winter in the area could result in further severe flooding of the kind Chicago's Lake Michigan shoreline experienced last week. And "the problem will not go away at the end of the stormy season in April or May," according to Frank H. Quinn, head of NOAA's Lake Hydrology Group at the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Mich.

"Water levels, generally, in the Great Lakes are setting records, and will through the summer," Quinn said. Lakes Michigan, Huron, St. Clair, and Erie are at record levels, while Ontario looks as if it will reach a record height this spring. Only Superior is below its record level.

Thus, such lakefront cities as Chicago, Milwaukee, Traverse City, Toledo, Cleveland, and Buffalo face possible flooding under certain weather conditions.

"The potential for problems is much greater than it ever has been during the years we have been keeping water levels records," Quinn said. "This is partly because there isn't much ice on the lakes this winter."

He said that most of the flooding, erosion, and other damage occurs when lake water is driven against the shoreline during storms, and effect minimized when the lakes are ice-covered.

A high water level possibility was noted more than a year ago by the GLERL scientists, and this has allowed many lakefront communities to activate flooding preparedness plans, some assisted by the Army Corps of Engineers.

"Our research indicated we are likely to have high lake levels for at least the next several years," Quinn said as he noted the problem was not likely to be over at the end of this year's stormy season. The Great Lakes system, he said, would take 6 to 10 years to return to normal levels even if precipitation, runoff, and other factors during that time were normal.

"Even if we had a drought it would take Huron and Michigan 3-1/2 years to return to the usual levels, and Lake Erie would take 4 years."

**NOAA Patent:**--A NOAA employee and his office may be the first to benefit from a new law entitling government inventors to royalties. The Department of Commerce Patent Attorney has filed an application for a Government-owned patent on an invention by Douglas Racey, of the NESDIS Office of Satellite Data Processing and Distribution, which converts satellite data into a computer-acceptable form. This is the first patent applied for under the newly-enacted P.L. 99-502. The new law entitles the government inventor to 15 percent of any royalties that may result from licensing of his invention and the "laboratory" where the invention was made a majority share of the remaining royalties.

**King Mackerel Closure:**--NOAA has issued a notice that closes the commercial purse seine fishery for king mackerel from the Gulf of Mexico migratory group. The action was necessary because the commercial allocation of .93 million pounds during the current fishing year has been exceeded.

**Discoverer Gets New CO:**--Captain Edward M. Gelb took over command of the NOAA ship Discover from Captain Sigmund R. Petersen during shipboard ceremonies February 13 in Tacoma, Wash. Capt. Petersen has been reassigned as deputy director of NOAA's Pacific Marine Center in Seattle.

Capt. Gelb's last assignment was with NOAA's Office of Marine Operations in Washington, D.C. He formerly commanded the NOAA ships Miller Freeman in Seattle and the Townsend Cromwell in Hawaii.

The Discoverer, a 20-year-old, 303 foot research and survey vessel, currently is undergoing a \$3 million upgrade of its oceanographic laboratory, galley, and mechanical systems. After

the refit is complete in April, Capt. Gelb will take the ship to sea on missions to map the Exclusive Economic Zone and study geothermal vents.

**Salt Barge Owners Fined:**--NOAA has assessed \$417,000 in civil penalties against the owners of a salt barge that ran aground in the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary near San Francisco, Calif, a year ago. The Notice of Violation and Assessment alleges that Marine Logistics Corp. violated sanctuary regulations when it negligently allowed its barge to run aground in the sanctuary and discharge its 11,000 ton load of rock salt.

**Weather A Factor In Murder Investigation:**--The National Climatic Data Center recently provided hourly weather observations taken at Guadalajara, Mexico, to the U.S. Attorney in San Diego, Calif. to be used in the investigation of the murder of a Drug Enforcement Agency officer.

**India Interested In SARSAT:**--Professor U.R. Rao, Secretary, India Department of Space, and Chairman, India Space Commission, met with NESDIS Director Thomas N. Pike last week to discuss India's interest in becoming a full partner, along with the United States, Canada, France, and the U.S.S.R., in the COSPAS-SARSAT Satellite-Aided Search and Rescue Cooperative Project in which planes and ships in distress are located by satellite technology. Professor Rao also gave an update on India's land remote sensing satellite (IRS-1A), which is scheduled to be launched in September.

**Severe Storms Laboratory Group Honored:**--The Storm Electricity Group of the National Severe Storms Laboratory has been recognized for its studies of lightning by the national Interagency Coordinating Group of the Atmospheric Electricity Hazards Protection Program. The award is presented for significant scientific or technological contributions concerning hazards to aircraft or ground facilities from lightning or static electricity. The NICG awarded the ERL laboratory a plaque, citing its contributions in developing and evaluating techniques for detecting lightning, in providing real-time strike data from aircraft, and in improving understanding of lightning characteristics relating to storm structure and evolution.

**Western Pacific Fisheries Plan:**--The Fishery Management Plan for the Western Pacific Pelagic Fisheries was approved by the Secretary of Commerce and became effective Feb. 15. The FMP establishes criteria for the Regional Director in deciding to institute area closures for foreign longline vessels in the exclusive economic zone, eliminates existing quotas on foreign longline catch in the EEZ, requires foreign longline vessels to submit effort plans and report catch data and fishing interaction with protected species in the EEZ, prohibits use of gillnets in the EEZ, and establishes a process to obtain data on incidental catch of pelagic fishes in the EEZ by pole-and-line and purse seine vessels.

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# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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