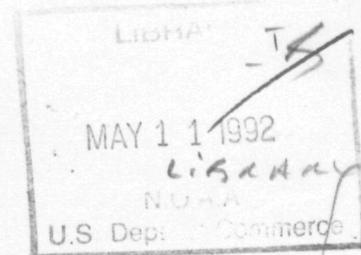
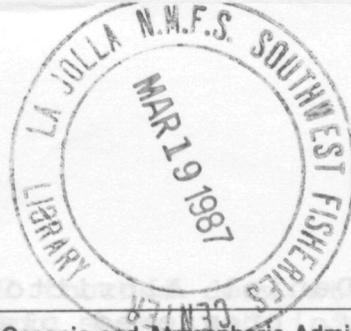




NOAA REPORT



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March 11, 1987

COMING UP

Fourth Conference on Climate Variations: Climate Dynamics Update; Fifth Conference on Applied Climatology; and Sixth Conference on the Dynamics and Chemistry of the Middle Atmosphere, held concurrently in Baltimore, Md., March 9-13.

NOAA Science Seminar Series: "Interdisciplinary Analysis of the Marine Environment:" Dr. Celso S. Barrientos, NESDIS, WSC-5, Room 926, 10:30 a.m., March 13.

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

NOAA Scientists Tell of Ozone Loss:--In testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives March 9 and 10, NOAA scientists summarized preliminary results of the 1986 National Ozone Expedition (NOZE) to observe the Antarctic "ozone hole" and outlined plans for a follow-up expedition later this year.

Dr. Susan Solomon, an atmospheric chemist with the Aeronomy Laboratory within NOAA's Environmental Research Laboratories and leader of the 1986 expedition, testified that preliminary analysis of the observations display evidence for anomalous photochemistry in the Antarctic stratosphere that may be related to the ozone change, but that a great deal of further research is required to understand the Antarctic stratosphere in sufficient detail to establish definitively the cause of the ozone hole.

The August-to-November 1986 National Ozone Expedition to McMurdo Station in the Antarctic was jointly sponsored by NOAA, the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Chemical Manufacturers Association to observe and research the dramatic seasonal drop in ozone levels in the Antarctic.

Dr. Solomon testified that the 1986 NOZE data indicate that there are perturbations of atmospheric nitrogen and chlorine compounds in the Antarctic atmosphere, but that the data cannot be construed as full proof of the chemical theory.

Dr. Daniel Albritton, director of NOAA's Aeronomy Laboratory, previewed plans for more comprehensive return expeditions to Antarctica this summer. These expeditions, sponsored jointly by government agencies, industry, and universities, will include expanded land-based observations, complemented for the first time by airborne measurements directly in the region of the stratosphere where the ozone losses are occurring. The goal of the expeditions is to make a much more definitive statement of the role of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in the formation of the Antarctic ozone hole.

NOAA scientists have tried to explain the annual springtime loss in Antarctic ozone through two theories: man-made chemical perturbations and natural climate change. The chemical theory predicts that releases of CFCs into the atmosphere, while harmless at the earth's surface, could reach the stratosphere and significantly deplete the ozone layer that shields the earth from the harmful effects of ultraviolet solar radiation. The climate change theory suggests naturally occurring causes for the stratospheric ozone loss.

GOES-7 Checkout Progresses:--So far, so good with NOAA's latest environmental satellite launched February 26. GOES 7 satellite has been "stopped" at its checkout position of 81.6 degrees west, above the equator. Its first picture was transmitted successfully to earth March 7. NASA's checkout of the satellite's subsystems will continue until March 20, when GOES-7 will be moved towards its operational station at 75 degrees west, arriving on March 25. At that time, NOAA's second geostationary satellite, GOES-6, will begin its journey to 135 degrees west, arriving around April 24.

Natural Resources Damage Case Settled:--The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and NOAA have agreed to a \$2 million settlement with AVX Corporation of Great Neck, N.Y., to resolve any liability for damages to the coastal resources and damage assessment costs in New Bedford, Mass., caused by the company's alleged disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The settlement, filed March 4 in Boston's U.S. District Court, must receive judicial approval. If approved, it would be the first federal monetary recovery for damages to natural resources under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, better known as the Superfund Law. NOAA and Massachusetts would use the funds to restore damaged resources for public use and recoup assessment costs. A 30-day comment period will be provided before the settlement is approved.

Tornado Dangers Cited:--The threat to human life from tornadoes is as great as ever in 1987, despite the fact that last year's U.S. death toll of 15 people was the lowest on record, NOAA meteorologists say.

The first major tornado of 1987 touched down at 9:15 a.m. February 28 in Laurel, Miss., killing seven and injuring 145. The area was under a Weather Service watch, and a tornado warning was issued 15 minutes before the storm struck.

Based on the 30-year average, 90 people die in 771 tornadoes each year in this county. Last year, 762 tornadoes were recorded across the United States. In a news release issued March 9, Ed Ferguson of the Weather Service's National Severe Storms Forecast Center in Kansas city, Mo., noted that the low number of tornado fatalities last year can be attributed in part to the absence of a concentration of these violent wind storms. Ferguson added that years of severe weather training efforts also are paying off because the public is becoming more knowledgable of tornado dangers and safety rules. Annually, the Weather Service conducts severe weather awareness programs in conjunction with local, state, and county agencies, the news media, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

And While We're On the Subject:--Thirty-two TV weathercasters from 11 states participated in the Office of Public Affairs' severe storms workshop at Kansas City, Mo., March 6 and 7. More than forty taped interviews were made with the National Severe Storms Forecast Center's head Fred Ostby and other tornado experts. Three stations are planning half-hour specials based on the workshop.

SWIS Spells Improved Forecasts:--SWIS, for Satellite Weather Information System, is being installed in Weather Service Forecast Offices and National Centers to help forecasters relate conventional weather observations to satellite data. The system could spell improved warning and forecast services as forecasters get to manipulate various data sets, comparing computer-generated material with satellite observations. SWIS, built by Alden Electronics, is used to receive, store, display, and animate imagery from NOAA's GOES environmental satellites. It provides for color enhancement of the standard monochrome satellite depictions and can overlay graphics guidance products (for example, radar and upper air charts) onto the satellite imagery. By the end of February, 12 of these systems had been installed and accepted. Nationwide implementation will be completed by the end of 1987.

Blood Test Screenings Offered In D.C. Area:--The Commerce Health Unit in conjunction with the National Health Lab will be offering a series of blood tests to employees in the Washington metropolitan area during March. Testing will be for high cholesterol, diabetes, anemia, and other problems for which blood can offer diagnostic clues. As the screening is being done through an outside lab, there is a \$15 fee. Those requesting the screening are asked to fast after midnight the day of the test. The screenings will be held at HCHB on March 24, Universal South

on March 17, Gramax on March 18, Camp Springs on March 19, and NBOC #1 on March 25. For times, locations, and other information, contact the Health Unit on 377-4088.

Spring Snowmelt Outlook Good:--The potential for spring snowmelt flooding is low for most parts of the country, the Weather Service reports. Only Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and northeastern New York face normal to above-normal threats of spring flooding from snowmelt and seasonal rains. Only minor flooding from snowmelt is expected in other areas where mountain snowpack and snowcover are well below normal this year. Hydrologists cautioned, however, that since snow can still be expected in some areas people should keep their guard up for possible flooding.

UFOs Weather Related?--In the news: a Unidentified Flying Object was sighted by a Japan Air Lines flight crew over Alaska between Anchorage and Fairbanks on Nov. 15-16, 1986. Leaving nothing to chance, a consulting meteorologist called the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C., requesting weather data in that area to see if any unusual weather conditions could be linked to the UFO event.

NESDIS Man To Aid U.S. Yachting Team:--Robert Mairs, chief of NOAA Satellite Services Division, will serve as weather advisor for the U.S. Yachting Team at the 1988 Olympics in Pusan, Korea. Mairs is no newcomer to the sport having been selected meteorologist for the team during the past three Olympics. He provided weather support for the 1976 team; sat out the 1980 event when the U.S. withdrew from the Olympics; and again supplied wind and sea forecasts when the U.S. team won seven out of seven races in 1984, the best record by any team in the history of the races.

Monitor is National Historic Landmark:--The sunken wreck of the Civil War ironclad USS Monitor was officially designated a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior during a March 9 ceremony at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va. The National Historic Landmark designation topped off 4 days of events in the Tidewater Virginia area commemorating the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Hampton Roads. Monitor's historic encounter with the Confederate ironclad Virginia (formerly the Merrimack) during the March 9, 1862, battle ended the era of wooden warships. Dr. Nancy Foster, former chief of the Marine and Estuarine Management Division that manages the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, accepted the historic designation plaque on behalf of NOAA. The wreck of the Monitor lies in 230 feet of water 16 miles off Cape Hatteras. The Mariners' Museum has been selected by NOAA to be the principal museum to curate the existing collection of Monitor artifacts and memorabilia. Other museums and groups will also participate in helping to tell the story of the Monitor.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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