



**It Never Rains in California?:** The West Coast, parts of the Southeast and the upper Midwest are primary areas of concern for spring flooding, according to the 1995 National Hydrologic Outlook. Conditions in the rest of the country make flooding less likely than normal at this time. Water supplies should be adequate throughout the Nation, except for limited areas in Montana, Idaho, Colorado and Wyoming where problems may arise later in the summer.

**Environmental Satellite Begins Operation This Month:** The Nation's newest environmental satellite used for weather forecasting and atmospheric research is expected to be in operation by mid-April. The satellite, NOAA-14, was launched

## News Briefs

from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., on Dec. 30, 1994. Since then, it has been in polar orbit, circling the Earth from pole to pole every 102 minutes.

**Internet Guide Released:** A new guide, *Internet Activities Using Scientific Data*, from NOAA's Space Environment Laboratory in Boulder, Colo., and it should make using the Internet a lot easier. Designed for teachers, but useful for anyone, the booklet contains nine activities that outline Internet basics.

A limited number of the booklets are available for the public from NOAA Public Affairs, Correspondence Unit, SSMC4, Station 8624, 1305 East West Highway, Silver Spring, Md. 20910. Booklets may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15250-7954, stock #003-017-00545-3, for \$9 a copy. ☺

## Plan Would Protect, Restore Snake River Salmon

**T**he proposed plan to protect and restore endangered stocks of Snake River salmon, part of a population acknowledged at one time to be the largest in the world, emphasizes improving migration conditions for juvenile and adult salmon, increasing stream- and river-side protection for these fish and raising the chances for adult salmon to return to their home streams to spawn.

Snowy plover were listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 1991. Snake River spring/summer chinook and fall chinook were listed as threatened in 1992 and reclassified as endangered in 1994 because of the very low number of adults that returned to their spawning grounds. The plan was proposed last month.

"This recovery plan," said William Stelle, director of the fisheries service's Northwest region in Seattle, "proposes

a range of comprehensive and fundamental conservation strategies for salmon recovery, instead of relying on uncertain, piece-meal mitigation schemes that have been tried, without much success, in the past."

### Immediate Benefits

"It offers immediate benefits through steps that can be taken as early as this spring. And it holds out the promise of long-term salmon protection by allowing us to change and refine our plans as important scientific information becomes available in the future," Stelle added.

Stelle also said that the fisheries service would create two special groups to keep track of the recovery plan's progress and make recommendations to the agency: a recovery implementation team comprised of state, tribal and Federal policy makers, and a scientific advisory panel to provide scientific advice to the implementation team. ☺

## Earth Day Events Scheduled

**N**OAA and Earth Day both turn 25 years old this year, and we're celebrating both with a number of special events. Here's a list of some of the events scheduled for this month:

April 19: NOAA Administrator D. James Baker speaks to the Oceanography Society, Washington.

April 19: NWS Wakefield, Va. field office holds grand opening and open house.

April 19: Breakfast talk by noted oceanographer Jean-Michel Cousteau at the National Press Club, Washington, followed by workshops and breakout sessions.

April 21: Dr. Baker speaks to NOAA Silver Spring employees and constituents.

April 21-22: NWS open house at Pueblo, Colo. for media and emergency managers (21st); April 22 -

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## Large NOAA Involvement

# Ocean Planet Exhibit to Travel Nation

**O**cean Planet," a major exhibition exploring the magnificence, diversity, and fragility of the Earth's oceans, will open at the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History on April 22.

The 7,000-square-foot exhibition will combine state-of-the-art computer animation, sculpture, videos, computer interactives, artifacts, specimens, models, and its own theater for live performances.

"In 'Ocean Planet,'" says Judith Gradwohl, the curator of the exhibition and director of the Smithsonian's Environmental Awareness Program, "we will examine the environmental threats to the world's oceans and show

promising responses through actions at home, in communities, governments, and the international arena."

NOAA is making significant contributions to the exhibition in three areas: resource room printed and CD-ROM materials, audiovisual resources, and adjunct events.

Working with Gradwohl and Beth Nalker, Gradwohl's assistant, NOAA's NMFS, NOS, NWS, Office of Global Programs, National Sea Grant College Program, and Office of Public and Constituent Affairs are contributing printed material and interactive CD-  
*continued on page 3*

## Hazmat Rapid Response Expert Uses Skills to Save a Life While Flying to Alaska

**R**apidly assessing crises and taking appropriate remedial action is all in a day's work for Jerry Galt.

An internationally known expert on oil and hazardous materials spill trajectory modeling and analysis, Galt is chief of the Modeling and Simulation Studies Branch (MASS) of the National Ocean Service's Hazardous Materials Response and Assessment Division (commonly known as Hazmat). He heads up the Seattle-based "home" and "away" teams of scientists who deal with oil- and other pollutant-related catastrophes. After being notified of the spill of a hazardous material, the hands-on "away" team (which includes Galt) rushes to the site to predict where the spilled pollutant will flow, how quickly it will flow there, and the impact it will have when it gets there. The "away" team's findings are later analyzed by the "home" team.

Recently, however, Galt resolved a crisis that had nothing to do with pollutants. During a plane trip last November, he saved a life.

Galt and representatives of several U.S. government agencies were flying from Seattle to Anchorage to meet with Alaska Governor Wally Hickel. Galt was going to present the "away" team's comments and recommendations following its observations of the oil pipeline spills in northwestern Russia's Komi region.



Jerry Galt

Enroute, airline attendants asked that those onboard with medical experience help a woman who was suffering from respiratory distress. Galt, whose cross-training in specialized response preparedness includes certification as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and a military firefighter offered their assistance.

### Life-Threatening Shock

After initially assessing the woman's condition, Galt and the military firefighter simply offered the woman verbal support. However, in a short time, the woman went into a life-threatening form of shock caused by an allergic reaction. While the firefighter maintained contact with a physician over the airplane's cockpit radio, Galt monitored the woman's vital signs, administered oxygen, and continued offering her verbal comfort.

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## Earth Day Events

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open house for the public

April 22: Two NOAA research vessels, the FARRELL and the WHITING, will dock off the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, in Georgia. The ships will also take local officials on a sample cruise for Earth Day.

April 22: Discover Wild Day, Great Bay NERR, New Hampshire.

April 22-23: NOAA participates in national Earth Day celebration on the Mall, Washington.

April 22: Earth Day/Whale Day, a celebration of whales, and Earth Day, Maui, Hawaii.

April 22: Kauai Earth Day. Various local environmental groups will participate. The Marine Sanctuary will have a display booth, its first on Kauai.

April 22: Elkhorn Slough NERR; An outreach booth at Monterey County's Toro Park (California); reserve will also feature Earth Day in regularly scheduled walks.

April 22: Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary will participate in Earth Day event at Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara, Ca. ☺

## We've Come A Long Way Since Earth Day 1970

**T**his year we celebrate the silver anniversary of several important events. In 1970, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency were formed to deal with scientific and environmental issues. That same year, popular support and concern for the environment led to the celebration of the first Earth Day.

We have come a long way since that first Earth Day in understanding how

the Earth works. NOAA has played an important role in providing scientific information to policy makers, managers, and the public. For example, NOAA's National Weather Service provides short-term weather forecasts on a daily basis. The modernization of the NWS, a new generation of satel-

### D. JAMES BAKER



lites, and more powerful computers are already making it possible to issue more accurate forecasts, with longer lead-times. These improvements in weather

forecasting are a key in helping communities protect their built and natural environments. They are also essential in preventing the loss of lives and property due to natural hazards.

Over the past 25 years, we have also made dramatic advances in understanding longer-term changes in the Earth's climate. Seasonal to interannual variations in U.S. climate have been linked to the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon in the tropical Pacific Ocean. The effects of ENSO can be felt around the world as droughts, regional flooding, and changes in oceanic and atmospheric temperatures. NOAA has recently begun

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## 'Ocean Planet' Opens in D.C. Before National Tour

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ROMs to the resource room; videos as audiovisual resources; and symposia and panel discussions as adjunct events.

In the resource room, NOAA literature will be presented in binders provided by the Smithsonian. Visitors will be given instructions for ordering copies of the bound literature directly from NOAA. The resource room will also feature a CD-ROM-based version of the NOAA Home Page and an interactive CD-ROM dealing with coastal issues.

The exhibition's audiovisual resources will include such NOAA videos as the Office of Global Programs' "TOGA COARE: Unlocking the Mysteries of El Niño" and the National Marine Fisheries Service's "Trashing the Oceans" and "Fishing for a Future."

Visitors to the exhibition will begin their journey in a gallery filled with the sounds of the sea. They will be given information about oceanography, marine biology, and other marine sciences, and will learn how oceans function, how they are studied, and the significance of scientific research.

In the next gallery, "Sea People," visitors will be introduced to the lives

of people who work on or near the seas. This gallery will describe common characteristics of seafarers and their communities around the world.

In the "Sea Store" gallery, visitors will examine products and services provided by the seas that are essential to daily life.

In the "Oceans in Peril" gallery, huge

photo murals will introduce visitors to threatened marine ecosystems, such as coral reefs and mangrove forests. Text, photos, and interactives presented on oversize buoys will help visitors wend their way through the sources of, effects of, and potential responses to marine conservation problems. Issues such as marine pollution, habitat destruction, overfishing, and global change will be addressed.

The last gallery, "Reflections," will examine what individuals can do to save and manage the ocean's valuable resources. A globe structure will encourage visitors to reflect on what they can do to conserve and protect the oceans. As they leave, visitors will answer the question, "What will you do?" by leaving a message in a bottle.

NOAA is preparing for a variety of "Ocean Planet" adjunct events. NOAA staff will distribute educational packets at the Teacher Preview Nights, on April 27 and September 14, when K-12 teachers from the Washington metropolitan area will be

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# Focus On...

## NOAA Celebrates Its 25th Birthday: A Look Back at its History

**T**he creation of NOAA on October 3, 1970, was the result of a series of decisions that recognized the importance of the oceans and atmosphere to the Nation's welfare and economy.

The proposal to create NOAA was part of an effort designed to unify the Nation's widely scattered, piecemeal environmental activities and provide a rational and systematic approach to understanding, protecting, developing, and enhancing the environment.

Although NOAA was officially created in 1970, its forerunners were created long before. The three principal NOAA forerunners of maritime charting, weather, and fisheries were all created in the 19th century. Maritime charting began as the Survey of the Coast in 1807 and U.S. Army Lake Survey in 1841; the first national weather warning service was created in the Department of the Army in 1870; and the U.S. Fish Commission was created in 1871. These were the precursors of the National Ocean Service, the National Weather Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service, respectively.

The beginnings of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service on the data side can be traced back to the Coast and Geodetic Survey magnetic investigations in the 19th century, and later, with the establishment of the National Weather Records Center in Asheville, North Carolina (now the National Climatic Data Center). On the satellite side, Weather Bureau scientists in the early 1950s began to press for the development of satellites for weather studies; the launch of TIROS-I in April 1960 by NASA was the most significant development.

The concept of an earth science agency predates NOAA. In 1965, President Johnson directed the consolidation of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Weather Bureau, and the Central Radio Propagation Laboratory into a single Commerce bureau known as the Environmental Science Services Administration (ESSA).

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During this time, and building on the capabilities of the Central Radio Propagation Laboratory, the Institutes for Environmental Research were established in Boulder, Colorado, a forerunner of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. This was a significant organizational concept that has continued through today: that unified mission support for the agency's program objectives would be achieved through environmental science and technology development.

In 1966, Congress passed the Marine Resources and Engineering Development Act (P.L. 89-454), which created a Commission (known as the Stratton Commission after its Chairman, Julius Stratton) to review and assess U.S. marine science activities and make recommendations.

In 1969, the Commission submitted *Our Nation and the Sea: A Plan for National Action*. Although the Commission's task was to ensure the full and wise use of the marine environment, it recognized the

scientific need to study both the oceans and atmosphere interactively to fully understand either. The principal recommendation called for the creation of a new National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency that would administer the Nation's principal marine and atmospheric programs.

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### THE 1970S

Deliberations within the Executive Branch resulted in Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970. President Nixon proposed that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration be created within the Department of Commerce.

A description of the agency was included in the President's plan:

"NOAA would make possible a balanced Federal program to improve our understanding of the resources of the sea, and permit their development and use while guarding against the sort of thoughtless exploitation that in the past laid waste to so many of our precious natural assets. It would make possible an understanding of oceanic and atmospheric phenomena, which so greatly affect our lives and activities. It would facilitate the cooperation between public and private interests that can best serve the interests of all.

"I expect that NOAA would exercise leadership in developing a national

oceanic and atmospheric program of research and development. It would coordinate its own scientific and technical resources with the technical and operational capabilities of other government agencies and private institutions.

“As important, NOAA would continue to provide those services to other agencies of government, industry, and to private individuals which have become essential to the efficient operation of our transportation systems, our agriculture, and our national security.”

The Reorganization Plan No. 4 also included the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This move was intended to unify Federal environmental activities. NOAA would provide the scientific monitoring, assessment and prediction for Federal environmental action, and the EPA would regulate and enforce the actions which were determined to be necessary to protect the environment.

However, as the EPA began to develop a scientific program in the 1970s, NOAA was also thrust into a regulatory role. Dr. Robert White, NOAA's first Administrator, helped shape the future of the agency by pushing preservation and conservation measures to the top of NOAA's agenda. With the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act, and the Coastal Zone Management Act (1972); the Endangered Species Act (1973); the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (1976); and the Deep Seabed Hard Minerals Resources Act (1980), NOAA became the custodian of the Nation's ocean and coastal resources.

The first 10 years of NOAA's existence was a period of substantial growth and expansion—a period which confirmed

both the need for and benefits of an agency designed to improve our understanding of the earth system and its ocean and coastal resources. The 70's saw the addition of numerous new programmatic responsibilities, largely the result of new legislation, which identified NOAA's role in

would undergo several reorganizations during its formative years.

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## THE 1980S

By 1980, NOAA's organizational chart reflected many of the changes in responsibility and programmatic

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national efforts to protect and conserve our environmental resources. These were years of intense environmental activity.

The primary task for NOAA's first Administrator was, of course, to design a management structure which would effectively coalesce the numerous, disparate programs and offices which were to make up this new agency. By January 1971, an interim organization had been established around the following six major programmatic components: the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Environmental Research Laboratories, the National Weather Service, the Environmental Data Center, the National Ocean Survey; and the National Environmental Satellite Service.

In addition, the Administrator was supported by five line offices responsible for: the NOAA Corps, the National Sea Grant College Program, Environmental Systems, program planning, and administration and technical services.

Thus organized, NOAA was ready to begin the challenges facing a new agency. The new agency, with its numerous specific responsibilities,

responsibilities created during the 1970s. Five principal line offices had been created to address major elements of the agency's responsibilities: the Office of Fisheries; the Office of Coastal Zone Management; the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Services; the Office of Research and Development; and the Office of Satellites. In 1980, a new Office of Ocean Minerals and Energy, charged with implementing new statutory responsibilities for the regulation of deep seabed mining and ocean thermal energy conversion systems, was established.

NOAA entered the 1980s with a number of unique physical assets, including the Nation's largest civil oceanographic research and hydrographic survey fleet as well as a fleet of research and weather reconnaissance aircraft; the Nation's only civilian operational satellite system; an extensive computing capability across the country with the principal, large-scale, advanced computing facility located in Suitland, Maryland, in support of meteorological and satellite programs; and a major national asset in the form of a network of research

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# NOAA's History: The First 25 Years

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laboratories across the country. This network included the Environmental Research Laboratory (ERL) system (headquartered in Boulder) which managed four atmospheric, two oceanographic, and five multi-disciplinary laboratories; 20 National Marine Fisheries Service laboratories supporting biological and ecological research; and 10 other laboratories and facilities for applied research and development focused on the need for new technology applications to improve NOAA services.

In the 1980s, NOAA's National Weather Service embarked on a billion-dollar modernization effort, which is still ongoing. The modernization effort is largely founded on the implementation of three new technologies referred to as NEXRAD, AWIPS, and ASOS. These programs will provide tomorrow's forecasters with advanced tools for observing and forecasting small-scale, fast-breaking weather events which annually claim an average of 60 lives and hundreds of millions of dollars in damage in this country alone.

In the 1980s, NOAA also made considerable progress in the area of climate research and prediction. Probably the most visible, and most significant, effort in this area is the international Tropical Ocean-Global Atmosphere (TOGA) program, which officially began in fiscal year 1984. This program was designed to provide an understanding of the role that the tropical Pacific Ocean plays in determining climate changes over North America. The principal focus of the program is the El Niño, an unusually strong warming of equatorial Pacific waters which, when coupled with an atmospheric phenomenon known as the Southern Oscillation (a global-scale see-saw in

atmospheric pressure between Indonesia-North Australia and the Southeast Pacific), can cause dramatic changes in the Earth's climate patterns. The 1982/1983 El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) event, the strongest in history, was responsible for nearly \$20 billion in economic losses worldwide—from flooding in coastal California to droughts in Africa and Australia. NOAA's scientific foresight and planning enabled the agency to track and document the 1982/83 event in greater detail than ever before and establish the foundation for a

NOAA is responsible for Environmental Impact Statements associated with the issuing of such licenses and permits, and, with the State Department, the negotiation of reciprocal agreements with other nations likely to conduct commercial mining of manganese nodules from the seabed.

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## THE 1990S

Today, the bottom line of NOAA's goals and of the new approach to achieving them is the concept of sustainable development: the links

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*Today, the bottom line of NOAA's goals and of the new approach to achieving them is the concept of sustainable development: the links between a healthy economy and a healthy environment.... NOAA's vision is embodied by its Strategic Plan for 1995-2005.*

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monitoring network and computer modeling capability which will allow scientists to recognize the signals of and eventually predict the phenomenon. High on NOAA's scientific priority list, the development of such a predictive capability will not only produce considerable economic savings, but will also be one of the most significant scientific achievements of modern times.

The 1980s also brought significant opportunities for growth and progress in oceanic science and services. In 1980, Congress enacted legislation which added new regulatory responsibilities to NOAA's ocean programs. P.L. 96-283, the Deep Seabed Hard Mineral Resources Act, gave NOAA responsibility for licensing exploration for, and eventually permitting commercial recovery of, manganese nodules from the deep seabed. In addition to the development of associated rules and regulations and the actual processing of applications,

between a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

NOAA's vision is embodied by its Strategic Plan for 1995-2005. The Strategic Plan focuses on the programmatic goals NOAA plans to achieve in the next 10 years, and shows how the traditional organizational structure contributes to the implementation of the plan.

The Strategic Plan is divided into two main portfolios that reflect NOAA's mission of protection and prediction: Environmental Assessment and Prediction and Environmental Stewardship.

Environmental assessment and prediction includes three main goals: Advancing Short Term Warnings, Implementing Seasonal to Interannual Climate Forecasts, and Predicting and Assessing Decadal to Centennial Change. Environmental Stewardship

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includes four main goals: building sustainable fisheries, recovering protected species, sustaining healthy coastal ecosystems, and modernizing navigation and positioning services.

In order to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan, NOAA is focusing on:

- implementing integrated approaches

- to environmental management;
- developing reliable assessments and predictions;
- investing in research and development, and in new technologies;
- developing new partnerships between the public and private sectors; and
- building and using new information services.

The 25-year old agency is fulfilling the expectations with which it was created. NOAA's ability to adapt its mission to the country's ever-changing environmental needs will help it maintain a vital national presence into the 21st century.

—Janet Amber ☺

## Baker: Embracing the Challenges to Come

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issuing seasonal climate outlooks based on ENSO research. Twenty-five years ago, it was not clear that this would be possible today. These forecasts will improve agricultural planning, fisheries and water resource management, and other social and economic response planning.

NOAA has also played a key role in monitoring and assessing changes in the concentration of ozone in the upper atmosphere. Our scientists showed the workings of chemical reactions involving chlorofluorocarbons and halons that lead to ozone depletion. Ozone depletion is a concern because it allows more ultraviolet (UV) radiation to reach the Earth. This increase in UV radiation can lead to a higher incidence of skin cancers, cataracts, immune deficiencies, and ecosystem changes. CFCs are gradually being phased out and replaced by other compounds. There had been some concern about whether one class of substitutes, known as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), were safe. NOAA scientists responded to this concern by conducting laboratory tests on HFCs. We were then able to report that there was no evidence that HFCs would lead to ozone depletion. This was good news for industry. Again, NOAA's scientific expertise was

applied to a real and pressing problem.

Earth Day highlights the importance of linking sound science with wise resource management and environmental protection. The need to balance the pressures of population growth and economic development with resource conservation is especially evident along the Nation's coasts. Over 54 percent of the U.S. population lives in coastal regions, on only ten percent of the country's land. Between one-third and one-half of U.S. jobs are

located in coastal areas. This has created increasing pressure on coastal resources—resources that are essential to the fishing, transportation, recreation, and tourism industries. Under the Coastal Zone Management Program, NOAA is working closely with other Federal agencies, tribes, and state and local partners to ensure the continued health and vitality of our coasts. This involves scientific monitoring and assessment; conserv-

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## Hazmatter Turns Hero

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At the request of the physician, the woman self-administered epinephrine provided by the flight crew. Her condition improved for a short time before she appeared to go back into shock.

While the firefighter continued to maintain contact with the physician, Galt continued intensive efforts for the duration of the flight—more than two hours—to treat the woman for shock. He monitored her vital signs and shook her to encourage spontaneous breathing. Additional doses of epinephrine provided her only with temporary relief.

### Respiratory Arrest

About thirty minutes from Anchorage,

the woman went into respiratory arrest. In the narrow confines of an airline seat, Galt performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. The woman's breathing resumed, but within minutes she again went into respiratory arrest. Galt twice more performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

After a final dose of epinephrine, the woman resumed unassisted breathing. Galt remained with her until she was removed from the aircraft by emergency personnel in Anchorage.

The flight crew later sent Galt a note, expressing its appreciation for his "knowledge, compassion, and help.... The world would certainly be a better place with more Jerry Galts!"

—Janet Amber ☺

## Ocean Planet Exhibit to Open in D.C., Tour the Nation Through 2000

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given the opportunity to view the exhibition after-hours. The packets will include copies of the popular booklet produced by the Office of Global Programs and the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, *El Niño and Climate Prediction*. Exhibition symposia featuring NOAA speakers discussing the El Niño phenomenon, ocean policy, coastal science and coastal management, and fisheries issues are being planned. Integrating the celebrations of the Oceans Day holiday on June 8, and the CoastWeeks Festival on September 23 into Ocean Planet is also being planned.

Other adjunct events, such as having interpreting NOAA scientists on-site during NOAA's Birthday Week (October 2-6), and having exhibition

visitors visit the NOAA ships, are under consideration.

The exhibition is funded by many public and private organizations, such as NMFS, National Science Foundation; Times Mirror Magazines Inc., the Pew Charitable Trust, among others.

Times Mirror Magazines, the official national corporate sponsor of "Ocean Planet," is producing a multimedia package, including a special-edition magazine; special "Ocean Planet" sections in many of its magazines, including Popular Science; television programs on cable's Discovery Channel; an "Ocean Planet" magazine for children; a CD-ROM; radio vignettes; and exhibit-related merchandise.

After its eight-month Washington premiere, "Ocean Planet" will travel to 11 cities in the United States, from January 2, 1996, until the year 2000. ☺



*Shipyard worker helps NOAA deputy under secretary Diana Josephson (left) weld a section of the RESEARCHER's keel.*

### First New Ship in 15 Years

**Construction has begun on the first NOAA Corps research ship to be built in nearly 15 years. The keel for the 274-foot RESEARCHER was laid recently in a ceremony at the Halter Marine shipyard at Moss Point, Miss.**

"Our current fleet of 18 active ships is, on average, 30 years old and was built in the 1960s," said Diana H. Josephson, NOAA's deputy under secretary. "This event represents a major step in our efforts to modernize our fleet." ☺

## The True Meaning of Earth Day

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ing and restoring coastal resources; and developing new approaches and technologies that meet the needs of coastal populations, while conserving coastal resources.

On Earth Day, we not only celebrate our accomplishments, but we also look toward the challenges ahead. A major challenge is the urgent need to build sustainable fisheries—both in this country and abroad.

Around the world, 13 of the 15 most important fishing grounds are seriously threatened. And in the United States, almost 75 percent of our fisheries are in danger—43 percent are over-utilized and 39 percent are fully utilized. Billions of dollars in economic growth, thousands of jobs, and numerous recreational fishing opportunities are at stake due to overfishing and overcapitalization. Last year, we witnessed the collapse of New England groundfish stocks. The only option was to close the fishery. Our challenge is to manage our

fisheries wisely today, with a clear view to the future. In the coming years, NOAA scientists will be developing more accurate stock assessments and advanced fishery predictions—the foundation for management and policy decisions. NOAA will also continue to work with regional Fishery Management Councils, state and local partners, and other countries to implement plans and policies that support the long-term health of our fisheries.

NOAA exemplifies the true meaning of Earth Day: We assess and predict changes in the Earth's environment—due to both natural and human forces; provide sound scientific information to policy makers, managers, and the public; and work in partnership with others to manage the Nation's resources for current and future generations. On this 25th anniversary of Earth Day, I hope you will join me in celebrating NOAA's accomplishments and in embracing the challenges in the years to come. ☺

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# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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