

NOAA REPORT



Vol. VII, No. 1

January 1998

1997 Warmest Year of Century: 1997 was the warmest year of this century, based on land and ocean surface temperature data, reports a team of NOAA scientists.

Led by the centers Senior Scientist Tom Karl of NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, the team analyzed temperatures from around the globe during the years 1900 to 1997 and back to 1880 for land areas. For 1997, land and ocean temperatures averaged three-quarters of a degree Fahrenheit above normal. (Normal is defined by the mean temperature, 61.7 degrees F, for the 30-years

News Briefs

1961-90.) The 1997 figure exceeds the previous record warm year, 1990, by 0.15 degrees Fahrenheit.

The record-breaking warm conditions of 1997 continues the pattern of very warm global temperatures. Nine of the past eleven years have been the warmest on record.

"Land temperatures did not break the previous record set in 1990, but 1997 was one of the five warmest years since 1880," said Karl. Including 1997, the top ten warmest years over the land have all occurred since 1981, and the warmest five years all since 1990. Land temperatures for 1997 averaged three-quarters of a degree above normal, falling short of the 1990 record by one-quarter of a degree.

continued on page 8

National Events, Public Awareness Program Planned

NOAA Celebrates 1998: Int'l Year of the Ocean

Nineteen ninety-eight has been declared Year of the Ocean by the United Nations, and NOAA is taking a leading role in the effort to promote public awareness and understanding of this vast resource.

"One out of every six jobs in the United States is marine related," said Commerce Secretary William M. Daley "What's more, 95 percent of U.S. foreign trade passes through U.S. ports and harbors in ships. One-third of our gross domestic product is produced in coastal areas through

fishing, transportation, recreation, and related industries."

The immense impact of the ocean on all nations was particularly strong in 1997—as one of the strongest El

Niños impacted weather all over the globe, and toxic algal blooms poisoned fisheries in many U. S. coastal areas. These and other events have prompted a global wake-up call that lends urgency to the U.N. declaration.

The goal of Year of the Ocean is to raise public awareness about the

continued on page 2



A Chance to Educate

Happy New Year and Happy Year of the Ocean!

As you may know, 1998 has been declared the International Year of the Ocean by the United Nations. This designation provides all of us with an important opportunity to educate the public about the value of the oceans in our daily lives.

D. JAMES BAKER



The Department of Commerce and NOAA are taking a leading role in this public awareness campaign, which also involves several other Federal

agencies. We will be working with Secretary Daley and Deputy Secretary Mallett to ensure that ocean awareness and ocean issues are a central

continued on page 8

Year of the Ocean**Posters, Website Herald Ocean Year Kickoff***continued from page 1*

importance and relevance of the ocean in our lives. It will also be an opportunity for governments, organizations, businesses and individuals to become involved in helping sustain the marine resources on which we depend.

Among the materials available for the public will be:

- a striking full color poster, featuring the artwork of environmental artist Steve Schachter;
- a host of brochures, including a companion guide to the poster;
- a special website dedicated to the Year of the Ocean, www.yoto98.noaa.gov,
- special events in Washington and around the country throughout the year.

NOAA kicked off the Year of the



Black and white doesn't do justice to artist Steven Schachter's work on NOAA's official Year of the Ocean poster.

Ocean in January, with a special event in the Commerce Department headquarters, featuring Commerce

Secretary William Daley and NOAA Administrator D. James Baker, and in Monterey Bay, California, featuring former NOAA Chief Scientist Sylvia Earle taking questions underwater from students through a video Internet link to the Commerce Department event.

NOAA is working with other federal agencies, state governments, the private sector, academia, and other groups to highlight Year of the Ocean activities. Other federal agencies involved include the Departments of Defense, Transportation, State, Interior, Energy, Agriculture, the National Science Foundation, NASA, EPA, FEMA, and the Maritime Administration. NOAA is also supporting the H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment to develop a Year of the Ocean campaign targeted to non-governmental organizations interested in the ocean. ♻️



Outside the Commerce Department headquarters in Washington, a banner proclaims it's Year of the Ocean to all the commuters stuck in traffic on 14th Street.

Focus On...

Gold, Silver, Bronze & NOAA Administrator Awards

Every year, the Commerce Department and NOAA honor employees who have performed exemplary work with Gold, Silver, and Bronze Medals, and the NOAA Administrator's Award. A list of those staffers, and their achievements, follows.

GOLD AWARDS

National Marine Fisheries Service and National Ocean Service

Steven C. Springer, Linda R. Galvin, Joann M. Nault, Brett M. Schneider, Eugene F. Proulx, Scot Y. Yamashita, Frederick D. Kyle, Paul A. Oritz, Watlon B. Campbell: For developing and implementing vessel monitoring system technology which reduces enforcement costs, increases efficiency, and saves lives at sea.

National Marine Fisheries Service and General Counsel

William Stelle, Garth R. Griffin, James H. Lecky, Mary G. Holt, Laurie A. Weitkamp, Thomas C. Wainwright, Michael H. Bancroft, Steven L. Stone, R. Craig Wingert, Gregory J. Bryant: For creativity, teamwork and tenacity resulting in an unprecedented and complex decision regarding the protection and recovery of coho salmon.

National Service Ocean Service, National Weather Service, and National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information

Robert E. Cheney, John M. Kuhn, John L. Lillibridge, Laurence L. Miller, C.K. Tai, Ming Ji, David W. Behringer: For improving long-range El Niño forecasts by creating and implementing the NOAA satellite altimeter operational assimilation system.

Office of National Geodetic Survey

William E. Strange, Neil D. Weston, Paul R. Spofford, Richard A. Snay, Donald E. Haw, James Drosdak, Heeyul Han, Gordon W. Adams: For the design, implementation and operation of the GPA-based Continuously Operating Reference Station (CORS) System.

Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

Michael J. McPhaden: For radically advancing the state of the art in climate observing systems for El Niño predictions.

National Centers for Environmental Prediction

Eugenia Kalnay, Robert E. Kistler, Masao Kanamitsu, Suranjana Saha, Glenn White, Muthuvel Chelliah, John Janowiak, Kingtse Mo, Richard Reynolds: For creating the 40-year NCEP/NCAR Reanalysis, the first comprehensive global data set of atmospheric analysis for weather and climate research.

SILVER AWARDS

Office of NOAA Corps Operations

Frank R. Philippsborn, Richard N. Bennett, Ellen M. Herrburger, James D. DuGranrut, Alan S. Goldstein, Naomi Surgi, Frank D. Marks, Theodore J. Ulinski, Daniel G. Flanagan, Albert B. Spencer: For the design, procurement and deploy-

ment of a high altitude, state-of-the-art reconnaissance aircraft.

National Marine Fisheries Service

Jeffery J. Polovian: For achievement in advancing knowledge of marine resource population dynamics and in improving the scientific basis of fisheries management.

National Marine Fisheries Service

Robin Lee Tuttle: For contributions to and leadership in the development of an International Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Fleet Replacement and Modernization Project Office

Frederick W. Rossman, Bob J. Taylor, Bruce H. Barber, John M. Hotaling, John F. Walter, Tracy B. Moran, James B. Stricker, Warren H. Keenan, Stephen R. Piotrowicz, Calvin S. Hall: For acquiring the research vessel RONALD H. BROWN which will enhance the Nation's ability to understand our oceans and predict climate variations.

National Weather Service: Meteorological Service Division

Gary R. Woodall: For exceptional expertise and stewardship while developing numerous Skywarn spotter training brochures, slide series, and videos.

National Weather Service Forecast Office: Southern Region

For providing timely weather warnings which contributed to the saving of many lives during the severe weather outbreak in Arkansas

Commerce, NOAA Honor Employees

continued from page 3

on March 1, 1997.

National Weather Service

Howard J. Diamond: For leadership of the United States implementation of the international standards for aviation weather information.

National Weather Service Eastern North Dakota Office: North Central River Forecast Center

For showing competence and courage and exceeding National Weather Service expectations in the mission of protecting life and property during the Red River flood of 1997.

Environmental Research Laboratories: Climate Monitoring and Diagnostics Laboratory

James H. Butler, James W. Elkins, Stephen A. Montzka: For determining the long-term trends of ozone-depleting gases in the atmosphere and thereby showing the effectiveness of CFC production regulations.

National Weather Service: International Activities Office

Charles Sprinkle: For establishing and implementing the international satellite communications system—a new plateau in international and regional meteorology.

NESDIS National Geophysical Data Center

Helen E. Coffey, Eric A. Kihn, Daniel C. Wilkinson, Raymond O. Conkright, Leslie D. Morris: For developing the SPIDR system which has revolutionized the management, display and delivery of space and weather data over the Internet.

National Weather Service Forecast Center, NEXRAD Weather Service Office: Eastern Region

For predicting flash flood warnings, river forecast guidance, and hydrologic support throughout the major Ohio Valley Flood in 1997.

BRONZE MEDAL AWARDS

Office of Public and Constituent Affairs

Matthew Stout, Angela Calos, Roger B. Griffis, Arthur E. Paterson: For outstanding service in developing and executing the coral reef awareness campaign.

Systems Acquisition Office, National Weather Service

For organizational excellence resulting in the successful development and deployment of 164 Doppler weather radar systems.

Systems Acquisition Office

Office of Global Programs; Office of NOAA Corps Operations; Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, Aeronomy Laboratory, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory: For achievement in the acquisition, conversion, and deployment of the NOAA Ship *Ka'imimoana*

Office of Finance and Administration, Acquisition Management Divisions (Boulder, Kansas City, Norfolk, Seattle, Silver Spring): For outstanding achievement in documented cost savings of \$35 million dollars in Fiscal Year 1996.

Kenneth M. Annis, Emma J. Avila, Elizabeth E. Nispuruk, Christine J. Plested, Gregory A. Price, Harry L. Sawisch, Heide L. Sickles, Deanna M. Trosper: For development of significant improvements in administrative processes through the Western Administrative Support Center web site on the Internet.

Charles E. Beers, Lillian L. Barnes, Karen L. Evans, Donald H. Holtzer, Stanton K. Lum: For outstanding achievement in the design, development, and operation of the NOAA WebVAS Internet-based vacancy announcement system.

Diane C. Husereau, Mary B. Kreh, Cheryl A. Sivertsen, Mary Paralee Swailes: For commitment and leadership in NOAA-wide contracting.

Edward A. Wolfgang: For outstanding contributions to substantially improving NOAA's financial management.

Office of NOAA Corps Operations

Alexandra B. Heliotis, David A. Benigni, William R. Bradley, William C. Herrmann, Edward E. Jones, Larry A. Loewen, Paul J. Loy, Stephen R. Macri, Dennis P. Shields, Thomas N. Stepka: For innovative and effective application of computer science and technology aboard NOAA ships enabling the acquisition and distribution of invaluable data for NOAA programs.

National Marine Fisheries Service

Howard W. Braham, Jeffrey M. Breiwick, Robert L. Brownell, Kenneth L. Hollingshead, Wayne L. Perryman, David J. Rugh:

For developing and implementing recovery programs that led to removal of the California gray whale from protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Marilyn E. Dahlheim, Douglas P. DeMaster, Stephen B. Reilly, Dale W. Rice, Steven L. Swartz, David E. Withrow: For developing and implementing recovery programs that led to removal of the California gray whale from protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Douglas B. Dey, Randall F. Absolon, Dean A. Brege, Michael H. Gessel, R. Lynn McComas, Bruce H. Monk: For innovative research and development of juvenile salmon bypass systems at Columbia River dams as a member of the NWFSC's Fish Passage Group

Thomas C. Eagle, Robyn P. Angliss, Victoria R. Cornish: For establishing a program to implement the 1994 Amendments to the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Amy B. Gautam: For meritorious editorship and authorship of the NOAA publication, *Our Living Oceans: The Economic Status of U. S. Fisheries*.

Suzanne M. Horn: For significant contributions in enforcement of regulations protecting threatened and endangered sea turtles.

Robert N. Iwamoto, William D. Muir, Steven S. Smith, John G. Williams: For pioneering research to determine and estimate the magnitude of factors that affect survival of juvenile Pacific salmon in the Columbia River Basin.

Herbert William Jaenicke: For contributions to scientific research by collecting and archiving invaluable data and records of Alaska fishery resources.

Thomas R. Loughlin, George A. Antonelis, Jason D. Baker, Robert L. DeLong, Charles W. Fowler, Rolf R. Ream, Bruce W. Robson, Elizabeth S. Sinclair, Anne E. York: For sustained superior performance in the development and implementation of conservation and research programs on northern fur seals in Alaska.

Brian Edward Lynch, Roxie K. Allison-Browne, Casimiro J. S. de Jesus, Joseph E. Green, Jr., Kevin William Heying, Robert Dana Nordstrom: For pioneering work in enforcement and investigation which enabled the Nation to fulfill commitments to the European Union and protect America's export market for seafood.

Carol E. Teraoka: For developing and implementing a national Voluntary Compliance Program

within the NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement.

National Ocean Service

Kathryn T. Bosley, Kurt W.

Hess: For the development, implementation, and testing of a prototype real-time-data-based regional oceanographic nowcast/forecast model system for Chesapeake Bay.

Peter L. Grose: For leadership in developing a "one-stop" service for locating and delivering spatial data from NOAA's National Ocean Service to users over the Internet.

Office of Coastal Resource Management, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary; Office of RCA, Human Activities Assessment Branch; Office of the Assistant General Counsel for Ocean Services: For developing an approach to management and protection of marine resources that embodies leadership, creativity, and innovation.

Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

James L. Franklin, Joseph S. Griffin: For developing the Hurricane Analysis and Processing System for improved hurricane forecasts using NOAA's Gulfstream IV.

Richard N. Grubb: For leadership in conceiving, instigating, and implementing forefront computer revolutions in the Space Environment Center and the Environmental Research Laboratories.

J. T. Johnson, E. DeWayne Mitchell, Phillip L. Spencer, Arthur Witt: For dramatic improvements to NEXRAD severe weather detection algorithms that have improved skill by 50%, leading to reduced personal injuries and economic losses.

Mauna Loa Observatory: For continuous measurements of atmospheric gases that affect global climate and have distinguished the Mauna Loa Observatory over the past 40 years.

Ronald Reed: For pioneering research achievements on oceanographic circulation of the North Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea.

Nancy N. Soreide: For leadership in the advancement and utilization of information technology for wide availability of environmental information and real time data.

James M. Wilczak, David A.

Merritt: For recognizing and solving a major data contamination problem associated with all land-based wind profiling radars.

National Weather Service

Mark Albertelly: For technical excellence and resourceful contributions to the real time support of the worldwide 1988 Doppler Weather Surveillance Radar network.

Bruce H. Bauck: For outstanding meteorological service to the citizens of eastern Idaho from 1995-1997, and for exemplary service during the 1997 record flood event.

Steven G. Cooper: For contributions while coordinating the provision of weather support services for the 1996 Paralympic Games.

Mark DeMaria, John Kaplan: For the development of a model for predicting surface winds from land falling hurricanes.

Jerald J. Dinges, Michael D.

Brittain, Norman H. Courchesne, Heiko E. Crowe, Gregory L. Dalyai, Lawrence D. France, William J. Gery, David M. Glotfelty, Walter T. Jameson, Jr., Frank J. Lucadamo, Michael S. Moss, Victor W. Murphy, Kevin R. Murray, Thomas G. Newman, Timothy L. Ross, Warren E. Sunkel, Jeffrey P. Walker, Floyd V. Williams: For the development and implementation of PACE systems to support the dissemination of aviation weather reports.

continued on page 6

continued from page 5

Larry B. Hubble: For ingenuity in sparking a remarkable improvement in the quality of the Upper Air Program of the National Weather Service Alaska Region.

John Kowaleski: For a precise and timely forecast leading to the safe return of a pilot in imminent danger.

Brian P. Morris: For the creative development of technological resources to improve the Agricultural Weather Section's productivity.

National Weather Service Forecast Office, Baltimore, MD/Washington, DC; Middle Atlantic River Forecast Office, State College, PA; National Weather Service Forecast Office, Raleigh, NC; National Weather Service Office, Newport, NC; National Weather Service Office, Wilmington, NC; Southeast River Forecast Center, Peachtree City, GA:

For early recognition, proactive coordination, issuance of timely and accurate products and services from the disastrous impacts from Hurricane Fran.

National Weather Service Forecast Office, Louisville, KY; National Weather Service Office, Paducah, KY; National Weather Service Office, Jackson, KY: For outstanding performance and exemplary customer service during the historical March 1997 flooding in Kentucky.

National Weather Service, Storm Prediction Center: For their dedication and commitment to serving the public during the transfer of functions to Norman, OK.

Timothy D. O'Bannon: For outstanding improvements to accuracy and performance of precipitation measurements made with the WSR-88 weather radar system.

Bernard L. Palmer, Michael W. Cammarata, Steven J. Naglic: For achieving a superb record in forecasting severe weather in 1996 by successfully exploiting new technologies and aggressively utilizing a comprehensive preparedness program.

Ellie H. Pittman, Jr.: For pioneering work in developing new management concepts necessary for maintaining the Nation's climatological program.

Lans P. Rothfusz, Brian L. Burgess, Louis J. Cano, James T. Johnson, Melvin R. McLaughlin, Ronla K. Meiggs, Stephen K. Rinard, Leon C. Safford, John S. Snook, Mario D. Valverde: For showcasing U. S. technology and making major advances in the field of meteorology while providing weather support to the 1996 Olympic Games.

David P. Ruth, Matthew R. Peroutka, Alan A. Rezek: For major contributions to National Weather Service programs through the development and implementation of the Interactive Computer Worded Forecast.

National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service

Lawrence M. G. Enomoto: For leading the G7 information society pilot project on the Environment and Natural Resources Management on behalf of the United States.

Felix N. Kogan: For development, validation, and demonstration of a method to monitor large-scale drought from operational weather satellite data.

Susan M. Ladenheim, Antonio R. Irving, Curtis W. Holland: For outstanding contributions in implementing and improving GOES-8 and GOES-9 operational satellite products.

William G. Pichel, Timothy S. Stryker, Charles T. Wooldridge: For RADARSAT negotiations, development, and implementation of an operational system to acquire, process and distribute Synthetic Aperture Radar data.

Nickalaus T. Pinkine, John S. Canter, Gordon R. Moiles, William J. Speidel: For engineering excellence in developing new navigation techniques to provide expanded instrument operations during GOES-9 mitigation operations.

Robert F. Summers, Morris H. Cole, Berry K. Coleman, John W. Davis, Jr., Arthur G. DeCotiis, Glenn M. Hyatt, Ernest R. Payne: For effective planning and efficient implementation of a modern digital publication and distribution system at the National Climatic Data Center.

Timothy J. Walsh, Charles J. Fenno, Richard W. Freeman, William Davis Stewart: For outstanding response by the Satellite Operations Control Center operations team in recovery of the GOES-8 spacecraft from a serious failure condition.

NOAA ADMINISTRATOR'S AWARDS

Office of International Affairs

Prudence Ives Fox: For significant contributions in international fisheries conservation and management.

Office of Finance and Administration

Lawrence L. Carter: For leadership in directing the implementation of automated system initiatives which resulted into a benchmark of warehousing and distribution management.

Charles L. Kilgore: For outstanding contributions in the area of administrative/technical support to NOAA in the preparation of financial statements as required by the Chief Financial Officer's Act.

Janette M. Labbee: For leadership in managing a multi-agency bankcard program on behalf of NOAA and the Department.

Paul F. Spizzirri: For significant contributions in procurement negotiations and administration.

Sandra J. Wine: For major contributions in developing a streamlined procurement process for NOAA to purchase personal computers

General Counsel

Nancy T. Briscoe: For significant contributions providing legal counsel, program and administrative guidance in the Pribilof Islands case

Anton P. Giedt: For providing legal counsel and leadership to NOAA's natural resource Damage Assessment Restoration Program.

Allison Val Areias: For contributions in support of the Administration's effort to reauthorize and amend the Endangered Species Act.

National Marine Fisheries Service

Timothy R. Osborn, Richard D. Hartman, Jan L. Koellen, Teresa A. McTigue, Rickey N. Ruebsamen, Erik Zobrist: For the implementation of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act Program.

Tim D. Smith: For scientific leadership and innovative research in enhancing the conservation and management of marine mammal stocks worldwide.

Robert C. Ziobro, Molly Holt: For development of the Joint Secretarial Order-American Indian Tribal Rights, Federal-Tribal Trust Responsibilities, and the Endangered Species Act.

National Ocean Service

Geoffrey W. French: For significant contributions for the design and implementation of the Physical Oceanographic Real Time System.

Thomas F. LaPointe: For leadership, management, and technical expertise in support of the State of the Coast initiative.

Richard B. Mieremet: For outstanding national and international contributions to NOAA's Sustain Healthy Coasts initiative.

Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

Anthony J. Francavilla, David A. Merritt, Kenneth P. Moran, Dr. Madison J. Post, David C. Welsh: For design and deployment of a new "cloud radar" that will provide critical new information on climate variability.

Kenneth P. Jones: For leadership and resourcefulness in delivering high quality services to NOAA and OAR clients.

Barbara S. Moore: For outstanding leadership and management in furthering NOAA's scientific programs in undersea research through the *Aquarius 2000* program.

Dr. Edward P. Myers: For leadership and outstanding personal contributions to the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program.

John A. Robbins: For significant scientific research achievements and contributions in NOAA's aquatic research program in the Great Lakes and Coastal Oceans.

Office of NOAA Corps Operations

James P. Hutton, Allen E. Gary, Larry A. Loewen, Stephen Macri, Matthew N. Ofsthus, Jonathan Shannahoff: For contributions in the construction and deployment of the NOAA ship *Ronald H. Brown*.

Warren K. Taguchi: For outstanding leadership to Marine Centers during a sensitive and critical transition period.

National Weather Service

Betty Dodds, Holly Turri: For exceptional leadership in planning and implementing the NOAA Diversity Workshop: Focus on People with Disabilities.

T. L. Farrow, Hugh M. White: For the development of the Specific Area Message Encoder and the installation and implementation of NWR systems across the Southern Region.

David W. Reynolds: For contributions that have significantly improved the operational products and services for the NWSFO San Francisco Bay area.

Nicholas R. Scheller: For outstanding dedication and guidance in transitioning the NWS of old to a state-of-the-art weather service of tomorrow.

Larry Struble, George Fislar, Alan Rezek, Vladimir Ryshko, Ray Young: For extraordinary leadership in the development and implementation of NWS' NOAA Weather Radio Console Replacement System.

Barbara G. W. Tobe: For outstanding leadership and service in equal employment opportunity, diversity, and community outreach.

Thomas A. Townsend, J. Jack Fey, Alvin H. Gushikuma, Victor W. Murphy, Kevin R. Murray, Tim Ross: For achievement in support of the Automated Surface Observing System program.

Charly L. Wells: For exceptional effort in managing community outreach and equal employment opportunity programs.

National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service

Arthur L. Booth: For leadership and contributions in developing specifications of all NOAA and non-NOAA civil satellite data sources for use in the National Hazards Support System.

Rusty L. Foley: For contributions in support of Workforce Management for NESDIS' Executive Management.

Vicki Horton, Terrinthia Herrion, Linda Hurd, Debra Payne: For outstanding administrative support. ☺

continued from page 1

Federal Science, Advice on N.E. Groundfish Called 'Sound': Federal studies describing recent Northeastern groundfish stock declines are sound, says the National Academy of Science through an independent panel of experts in a report released this month. Further, the panel found no scientific basis to support assertions that the regulations imposed by Amendment 7 of the Northeast Multispecies Management Plan are too severe from a biological perspective. The panel also supports the dramatic actions that have been taken to attempt recovery of these stocks.

"This rigorous peer review should reassure everyone that Northeast groundfish science is solid," said Terry Garcia,

News Briefs

assistant secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA deputy administrator. The panel has confirmed that our scientific work supports strong management measures."

West Coast El Niño Storms Studied: Winter storms in California and Oregon—with the possibility of increased rainfall due to El Niño—are being studied by government and university scientists hoping to improve forecasts of heavy rain, snow and wind along the West Coast.

The study, called CALJET (California Land-Falling Jets Experiment), began on Dec. 1, and includes scientists and forecasters from NOAA, the U.S. Navy, and various universities. It is particularly timely with the onset of the severe storms along the California coast in December. The study will run through March, which is the area's wet season. ☺

Year of the Ocean: A Chance to Educate

continued from page 1

part of public discourse throughout this year and beyond.

The ocean and related issues have already begun to make headlines in this new year and we expect that to continue. NOAA has planned a year long series of events to highlight the ocean, and I would welcome your suggestions and additional ideas. You may e-mail NOAA's Office of Public and Constituent Affairs at: oceanyear@www.rdc.noaa.gov.

In February, I will highlight the Year of the Ocean at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Philadelphia. Throughout the month of February we will focus on ocean science. In March the focus will be on education as we work in partnership with the Jason Foundation to present a Year of the Ocean based curriculum to students worldwide through the Jason Foundation's satellite network. In April the focus will be on ocean conservation as we celebrate Earth Day. In May we will look at the recreation and tourism aspects of the ocean.

NOAA is sponsoring a series of television public service announcements which will run throughout the year. We will also host a website and toll-free information hotline number which will be available shortly. In addition, we have developed a series of informational products, which include a brochure, fact sheets, poster and companion guide. If you have suggestions for how these tools might be distributed, please contact NOAA Public Affairs at oceanyear@www.rdc.noaa.gov.

NOAA is also leading the Federal interagency effort to review the status of ocean related programs. This effort will provide a solid foundation for future goals and

directions that NOAA and other agencies might take with respect to the ocean.

Legislation has been introduced in congress that highlights the importance of the ocean. In addition, this legislation also sets up a commission to review oceans policy for the future. Finally, the ocean will also be featured at EXPO 98, which will take place from May to September in Lisbon, Portugal. NOAA will participate with a visit of the NOAA research vessel *Ronald H. Brown*. An estimated 20 million people will attend the EXPO and have the opportunity to be exposed to the importance of the ocean.

This year is also an important opportunity to highlight the important work that you all do in service to the public each day. I am extremely pleased that NOAA, the only federal agency with ocean in its title, will be such a prominent participant in this important public awareness effort. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and your interest. ☺

NOAA Report is a monthly publication for NOAA employees from the Office of Public Affairs, Washington.

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July 23, 2010