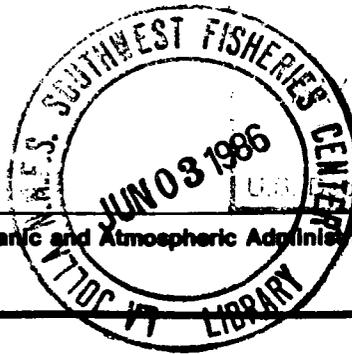




# NOAA REPORT



1 1 1982

U.S. Department of Commerce

**NOAA Report** is an administrative document, issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of the Administrator for the information and use of agency personnel.

May 21, 1986

## COMING UP

NOAA Corps 59th anniversary, May 22.  
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NOAA Science Seminar Series: "Environmental Consequences of Nuclear War--Update, Spring 1986;" Joseph B. Knox, WSC-5, Room 926, 10:30 a.m., May 23.  
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International Whaling Commission 38th Annual Meeting and associated meetings in Malmo, Sweden, June 2-13.  
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Remote Sensing Applications, Commercial Issues and Opportunities for Space Station Conference in Denver, Colo. June 3-5.  
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World Meteorological Organization Executive Council meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, June 2-16.  
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NOAA-G launch from Vandenberg AFB, Calif., June 20.  
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**Honour Brown Judgement Set Aside:**--In a unanimous decision, on May 13, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit Court set aside the \$1.2 million award against the National Weather Service in the case of Honour Brown v. United States. The decision by the appellate court overturned the ruling last August by a U.S. District Court Judge in Boston which held the Government liable in the deaths of three lobstermen who drowned during a severe storm on the Georges Bank. The appellate court said the Government is protected from liability because of the discretionary or policy-related exception under the Federal Tort Claims Act. The court stated that "A weather forecast is a classic example of a prediction of indeterminate reliability, and a place peculiarly open to debatable decisions, including the desirable degree of investment of government funds and other resources."

**Hurricane Hotline Pays Off:**--On May 16, television viewers of NBC's "Today Show" saw NOAA Administrator Anthony J. Calio participate in a ceremony during which Willard Scott on behalf of NBC News presented a check for \$58,388 to the American Red Cross. The check resulted from promotional compensation paid to NBC News by AT&T for underwriting the Public Tropical Storm and Hurricane Information System. AT&T was represented by Dan Wiedemeier, the American Red Cross, by its president, Richard Schubert.

Under an agreement between the National Weather Service, AT&T and NBC News, last year Dr. Neil Frank and the staff at the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables, Fla., produced audio taped reports whenever a named tropical storm or hurricane threatened the eastern United States and Gulf States for use on the AT&T's 900 service. The 900 service allowed the public multiple access to the Hurricane Center for the latest up-to-date information 24 hours a day when the "hurricane hotline" was in operation. The service can handle 7,200 simultaneous calls and 216,000 calls per day.

Each call cost the public \$.50 for the first minute and \$.35 for each additional minute. On the average, calls cost \$.85 each. Besides providing unrestricted contact with the Hurricane Center, the hotline helped to satisfy nationwide public inquiries concerning life-threatening tropical storms and hurricanes in an efficient manner as well as satisfying a number of media inquiries. By having Dr. Frank and the hurricane forecasters tape the messages, radio stations across the county could put these recordings directly on the air.

This unique cooperation between NOAA, AT&T, and NBC met Presidential guidelines as a "Private Sector Initiative" project and on June 7, 1985, the hotline was announced on the Today Show by Dr. Frank, Wil Anderson of AT&T, and weatherman Willard Scott.

The system proved to be tremendous success. The 900 service was activated on July 16 with Tropical Storm Anna. Only 51 calls were received that first day, but during the 54 days the 900 service was activated last year there were 743 connections and 1,340,205 call minutes. A total of 587,406 calls were made for information on Hurricane Gloria alone.

The promotion compensation paid to NBC (and passed on to the American Red Cross) was a result of an FCC tariff which paid the television company compensation for assuming liabilities for any short-falls. NBC donated the compensation to the Red Cross in recognition of the important role it plays during hurricane and tropical storm disasters.

Negotiations to conduct the program again this year for the Atlantic and Gulf storms are underway between NOAA, AT&T, NBC News, and a new underwriter, USA Today.

A similar "hotline" service is planned to begin this summer in Honolulu for Pacific tropical storms and hurricanes which threaten the Hawaiian Islands. The number in Hawaii is 900-410-CANE.

Winter River Flow Measurements Completed:--A scientific team headed by Dr. Frank Quinn at NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory has successfully completed a winter current measurement program in the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers. The program is part of an extended experiment to investigate the winter flow characteristics of the two rivers and to provide flow data for the International Upper Great Lakes Connecting Channels Study, a U.S.-Canada multi-year project to study water quality and dynamics in the region. Four current meters were retrieved, refurbished, and re-deployed during April, and an acoustic doppler flow meter also was pulled for refurbishment and re-deployment later this spring.

Fishery Agents Uncover Malefactions:--Northeast Region agents are investigating the shooting and killing of a Beluga whale near New Haven, Conn. The body, which is being necropsied, was shot four times with a small caliber weapon. In the Southeast Region, fishery agents, acting upon information provided by the Florida Marine Patrol, served a search warrant on a rural residence and uncovered the remains of 47 or more sea turtles in what had been a very large poaching operation.

ASOS Evaluation In Kansas:--The Weather Service is evaluating the utility of an Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) through an operational demonstration at five sites in Kansas, including Topeka, Wichita, Dodge City, Concordia, and Goodland. As part of the evaluation, the ASOS sites recently were visited by an NWS team headed by Richard McNulty of the NWS Central Regional Office. The staff at each location was asked to evaluate the performance and acceptance of the system. Reactions, according to McNulty, generally were favorable. The consensus was that if some sensor problems could be eliminated, the equipment could be used operationally at selected stations.

New Home for Hydrolab:--NOAA Hydrolab, the newest exhibit in the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History, opened to the public May 15. Divers logged more hours working underwater out of the Hydrolab habitat than all other underwater habitats combined. Built in 1966 by Perry Oceanographics,

Hydrolab for years was operated in an underwater canyon off St. Croix by the West Indies Laboratory of Fairleigh Dickinson University. The Hydrolab exhibit sits under the tail of the great whale in the Hall of Life in the Sea. The exhibit features a short history of underwater research and a roll call of aquanauts who worked out of Hydrolab. In the exhibit, one side of Hydrolab has been cut away to show a recreated scene of three divers at work within the habitat.

**Hurricane Names:**--The Weather Service's annual list of names assigned to hurricanes and tropical storms in the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, or Gulf of Mexico includes Andrew, Bonnie, Charley, Danielle, Earl, Frances, Georges, Hermine, Ivan, Jeanne, Karl, Lisa, Mitch, Nicole, Otto, Paula, Richard, Shary, Tomas, Virginie, and Walter. In the eastern Pacific storms will be named Agatha, Blas, Celia, Darby, Estelle, Frank, Georgette, Howard, Isis, Javier, Kay, Lester, Madeline, Newton, Orlene, Paine, Roslyn, Seymour, Tina, Virgil, and Winifred. Tropical disturbances are named when they intensify into tropical storms--those with circular rotations and wind speeds ranging from 39 to 74 mph. Storms exceeding 74 mph are hurricanes. The names, recycled every six years are selected by the World Meteorological Organization. English, French, and Hispanic names are included to reflect cultures and languages of the Atlantic and Caribbean regions.

**Clearance of Legislation:**--NOAA Administrator has issued the following memorandum on clearances: The Office of the General Counsel must clear all draft testimony, legislation, and NOAA views before they are submitted to the Office of the Administrator for subsequent transmittal to the Department of Commerce Office of General Counsel. Such clearance must be received from the NOAA General Counsel. In addition, the Assistant General Counsels or Senior Counsellors with responsibility for specific substantive areas must be involved at an early state in the drafting of such materials.

**Flash Floods in Puerto Rico:**--Heavy rains May 12-14 triggered urban and highway flooding across Puerto Rico affecting about 600 to 800 persons, according to Curtis Barrett of the Weather Service's Office of Hydrology. The northeastern portion of the island was hardest hit with unofficial reports of two storm-related deaths. The Weather Service issued a flash flood watch early May 12 alerting citizens to the possibility of flooding. The watch, which was extended through May 14, was followed by site-specific warnings.

# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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