



# NOAA REPORT

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December 21, 1987

COMING UP

American Water Resources Association 23rd Annual Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, Jan. 1.  
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Pacific Marine Center Command Seminar in Seattle, Wash., Jan. 5-8.  
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Atlantic Marine Center Command Seminar in Norfolk, Va., Jan. 10-14.  
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3rd Ocean Sciences Meeting of the American Geophysical Union in New Orleans, La., Jan. 18-22.  
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68th Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society in Anaheim, Calif., Jan. 31 - Feb. 5.  
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**Red Drum In Trouble Again:**--The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has requested that the Secretary of Commerce take emergency action to close the red drum fishery in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Gulf. This would reduce the current total annual recreational and commercial catch allowance from 625,000 pounds to zero. The request is based on scientific information provided in a recent status of stocks assessment prepared by the NMFS Southeast Fisheries Center and recommendations by the Council's Scientific Red Drum Study Group. Red drum in the near-shore areas are under the management authority of the States. The Council intends to provide emergency protection to the red drum spawning stock in the EEZ until a Fishery Management Plan amendment can be put in place. The Council has further asked the NMFS to request that the States institute a similar fishery closure in their waters. Trouble in the Gulf of Mexico's red drum fishery began last year when scientists noted alarmingly high harvests of the fish brought on by the popularity of a gourmet dish known as "blackened redfish."

**NOAA Report Hiatus:**--NOAA Report will not be published Dec. 28 or Jan. 4. The next issue will appear Jan. 11, 1988.

**Workshop Held on Coral Bleaching:**--NOAA's Undersea Research Program (NURP) sponsored a workshop Dec. 9 to look into coral bleaching in the Caribbean, a phenomenon potentially fatal to coral. The cause of the problem is unknown, although high water temperatures, excessive ultraviolet radiation, and pathogens have been suggested. Coral bleaching, first reported in the Florida Keys and Columbia and then in Jamaica, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, has been the topic of a recent Senate hearing and several articles in major scientific journals such as Science, Nature, and Sea Frontiers. Directors from seven marine laboratories from the Caribbean region and experts from the United States representing federal agencies (NURP, NOAA's Marine Sanctuaries Program, U.S. Geological Survey, National Science Foundation, Smithsonian Institution), state agencies (Florida Department of Natural Resources), eight private and state universities, and state laboratories (Bermuda Biological Station) attended the workshop. Results, to be published, indicate a tractable research effort into the extent and cause of the phenomenon is possible.

**NOAA and ITA Cooperate in Northeast:**--NMFS trade specialists have been working with personnel at the International Trade Administration District Office in Boston to provide better service to fishery exporters. When the Fisheries Service received notice from the American Embassy in Tokyo of a visit to Boston of Narita Gyorui Co., Ltd., a Japanese seafood company, it provided ITA with lists of U.S. firms capable of providing seafood for export to Japan. Paul M. Earl and Robert Ross of the NMFS Northeast Region staff followed up with a visit to the ITA office and briefed the Japanese on the fisheries of the northeastern United States. Using NOAA's lists, ITA contacted the U.S. seafood companies and made arrangements for meeting with the Japanese buyers. The Fisheries Service also provided training on the NMFS Northeast export data base which will allow ITA to generate real-time directories of active U.S. seafood exporters as well as directories of foreign seafood buyers for interested U.S. firms. NMFS is phasing out export market development and industry assistance activities, and the ITA's Boston District Office was quick to assume these new responsibilities.

**Electronic Catalog System Speeds Data:**--The National Climatic Data Center is providing customers a new and efficient access to an inventory of polar orbiting satellite data and products through use of a commercial computer network service. Users determine their data requirements and place orders for data through this commercial service. The system currently provides information pertaining to data from the Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer and the TIROS Operational Vertical Sounder, instruments on the NOAA satellites which produce atmospheric profiles of temperature and humidity. Later the system will offer data from the satellites' Space Sensor Microwave Imagers and Coastal Zone Color Scanners.

**Council Officers Named:**--Kenelm W. Coons, executive director of the New England Fisheries Development Corporation in Boston, has been elected chairperson of the newly formed National Fish and Seafood Promotional Council. Kathryn K. Vanderpool, a fishing vessel owner-operator in Hawaii, was named vice-chairperson, and Bruce C. Morehead of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service as interim executive director. The 15-member council, created by recent legislation, is funded by NOAA. Members were recently appointed to four-year terms by Secretary of Commerce C. William Verity. In its first meeting the council announced an effort to increase fish and shellfish consumption, while strengthening the fishing industry. The council will work with trade associations, state marketing agencies, and seafood foundations "to better educate consumers about the benefits of seafood in the American diet."

**NOAA Employee Is Senior Scientist At Pole:**--Lt. (j.g.) Robert Poston, a NOAA Corp officer and Station Chief of the Geophysical Monitoring for Climatic Change baseline observatory at the South Pole, has been designated by the National Science Foundation as its representative at the Pole in the absence of permanent NSF personnel. The NSF also selected Lt. Poston to be the South Pole Station Science Leader for the next year.

**Robert B. Melby Award:**--The second annual Robert B. Melby Award was presented to the NOAA Ship Fairweather Dec. 3. This Pacific Marine Center award recognizes the highest quality hydrographic survey conducted by a PMC field unit and processed by PMC during the previous field season. The Fairweather won the award this year for a survey accomplished along the southern Alaska Peninsula.

**New NOAA Corps Officers:**--Fifteen scientists and engineers graduated from NOAA's 83rd officer training class at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y., Dec. 15. After a short period of leave, the new ensigns will return to Kings Point for training in hydrography and fisheries technology before beginning 2 to 2-1/2 years of sea duty. The new officers are Jeffrey K. Brown, Jack Gordon Clayton, W. Austin Creswell, Catherine Dorn Deal, Torsten Duffy, Tracy A. Dunn, Timothy S. Halsey, James Meigs, Chris Mobley, Julia A. Nichols, Tom Niichel, Cheryl L. Thacker, Peter C. Stauffer, Shannon Whaley, and Barbara E. Wheeler.

**NCDC Provides Data for North Atlantic Air Route:** The National Climatic Data Center recently provided meteorological data to Boeing Aerospace for selected locations along North Atlantic air routes. Boeing is looking into the possibility of flying the overseas route using two-engine jets which have more stringent alternate airfield requirements than three- or four-engine aircraft.

**Constitutional Vignette:**--This is the final article in a series of vignettes NOAA Report has carried during the Constitutional Bicentennial year. The item is based on an article by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution entitled "Separating Church and State."

We hear a lot about church and state; sometimes what the Constitution says about the role the state plays in religion, and vice versa. When the founding fathers gathered in Philadelphia in 1787 to begin writing what eventually became the Constitution of the United States - today, the oldest written instrument of national government in existence - the question of religion came up more than once.

Most of those at the Constitutional Convention were aware that America's earliest beginnings could be traced to a people seeking religious freedom. More than one person came to America to escape religious oppression in Europe, and more than one person moved from one colony to another for the same reason. No less a person than Benjamin Franklin desired each session of the Convention to begin with a spoken prayer. The idea was voted down, however, for three reasons: the delegates feared an opening prayer might give the impression of dissension within the Convention; they didn't want to offend the Quakers - who believed in silent, personal prayer; and they lacked the funds to pay guest preachers.

An even bigger debate arose over the proposal to require religious qualifications for all public office holders. This may seem unusual today, but it was the rule rather than the exception back in 1787.

At the time of the writing of the Constitution, only two states - New York and Virginia - did not have religious qualifications for state office holders. In New Jersey, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Georgia, a person had to be a Protestant to run for public office. Maryland and Massachusetts stipulated a person had to be of the "Christian religion" to run. Pennsylvania law demanded a person have a "belief in God and the inspiration of the Scriptures," while Delaware mandated that only "Protestants who accepted the Holy Trinity" could serve in the legislature.

Despite these sentiments, a resolution specifying no religious qualifications, offered by South Carolina delegate Charles Pinckney, was adopted by the Convention. There were fears, however, among the delegates that such a resolution would not be accepted by the states when it came time to ratify the Constitution.

Their arguments were overcome, and eventually the Bill of Rights, guaranteeing religious freedom to all, was added to the Constitution in 1791.

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# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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