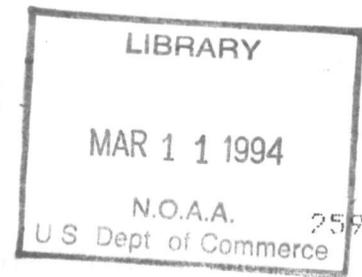




NOAA REPORT

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COMING UP

International Whaling Commission meeting in Bournemouth, England, June 14-28.

17th Conference on Broadcast Meteorology of the American Meteorological Society in Reno, Nev., June 26-27.

U.S. Air Force Air Weather Service 50th anniversary at Scott AFB, Ill., June 30 - July 2.

DOC Sea Grant Review Panel for Sea Grant 1987 in Washington, D.C., July 19-22.

Turtle Saving Measures Announced:--NOAA has issued regulations requiring shrimp fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico and parts of the Atlantic Ocean to begin reducing the number of sea turtles caught inadvertently in their nets. The turtles, whose populations have fallen substantially in recent years, are protected by federal law.

The regulations, culminating a series of discussions and public hearings with environmental groups and shrimp fishing organizations that began last fall, will become effective beginning, in some cases, next October. They will require some shrimp boats to install turtle excluder devices, known as TEDs, in their nets. The TED is designed to allow turtles to escape while retaining shrimp in the nets.

The National Marine Fisheries Service estimates that almost 48,000 turtles are caught each year in shrimp nets and more than 11,000 of them drown.

The Fisheries Service expects these new regulations to reduce significantly the accidental killing of all five endangered and threatened sea turtles -- the loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, green, leatherback and hawksbill -- found from Texas to North Carolina.

The regulations will not require TEDs to be carried by shrimp boats of less than 25 feet fishing in offshore waters or shrimp boats of any length fishing in inshore waters provided they limit the time they tow their nets to 90 minutes. There will be no tow-time restrictions for these boats if they install TEDs.

Starting Oct. 1, shrimp boats 25 feet and longer fishing offshore in the Canaveral, Fla., area must use TEDs. The TED requirement for other offshore boats 25 feet and longer will be phased in next year. Beginning Jan. 1, boats in the southwest Florida area will have to carry TEDs when they are within 15 miles of shore. From March through November, shrimpers in the Gulf will be required to use TEDs within 15 miles of shore. Shrimp boats in all Atlantic waters must use TEDs from May through August.

Copies of the regulations can be obtained from Charles Karnella; National Marine Fisheries Service; Room 805, 1825 Connecticut Ave., N.W.; Washington, DC 20235.

New Storm Warning System Uses Cable TV:--June 3, the seventh anniversary of the Grand Island tornado which killed 5 and injured 200 people, this year marked the formal announcement of a new home warning device which may offer life-saving information on such storms in the future. The National Weather Service helped to demonstrate a commercially produced system which operates through cable television systems. An encoder was installed at the Grand Island Weather Service Office which sends a signal to a small unit that connects to an existing CATV system. Pressing a monitor button allows the subscriber to listen to the latest NOAA Weather Radio broadcast. When a dangerous storm threatens, the Weather Service can send an electronic signal which turns on the home unit regardless of whether the television is on or not. The manufacturer plans to market the system nationwide, providing local Weather Service stations with the encoders.

Cooperative Institute Building Completed:--Construction of a new building for the Environmental Research Laboratories Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere at Colorado State University has been completed. The Center for Geosciences Research was dedicated June 5. Funds for the new building were provided as part of a U.S. Army grant to establish the center to study atmospheric and geoscientific conditions to improve understanding of the hydrology and meteorology of the battlefield environment through basic research. Results of investigations carried out at the facility, however, will benefit science in general, according to NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. Drs. Freeman Hall and Mike Hardesty, ERL scientists, will conduct remote sensing research as part of the Army program.

1986 Lightning Deaths Below Average:--Lightning killed 68 people in 26 states and Puerto Rico last year, 30 percent below the annual average of 97 deaths, according to the National Weather Service. NWS says the relatively low figure is due to the occurrence of fewer-than-usual thunderstorms in 1986, particularly in the (then) drought-stricken southeast United States.

"A below-average death toll should not diminish the danger of lightning in anyone's mind," Richard E. Hallgren, NWS Director said. "It is the second highest weather killer in the country, and it strikes anywhere."

Florida recorded 10 lightning deaths last year, the highest for any state. Others reported include: five each in Alabama, Maryland, and Michigan; four each in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee; three each in Oklahoma and Mississippi; and two each in Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah. Single lightning deaths occurred in Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Virginia, and Puerto Rico.

Rhode Island Coastal Management Program Evaluated:--NOAA is holding public hearings with citizens of Rhode Island this week to evaluate the state's Coastal Management Program. Areas of interest for the evaluation team, which is headed by Ed Lindelof, include permitting procedures by the Coastal Resources Management Council, federal consistency procedures, enforcement of regulations and the resolution of violations, and the status of public access rights of way.

Associated Press Hails NWS Accuracy:--In a comprehensive article on the computerization of the National Weather Service, now appearing in major papers across the nation, the Associated Press's Randy Schmid points out that forecasts are becoming increasingly accurate and detailed, and that today's three-day forecasts are as good as those of one-and-a-half days a dozen years ago, with five-day forecasts as accurate as former two-day predictions. "The future looks even more promising," Schmid writes, "with the impending arrival of NEXRAD, the next-generation radar which will give an even better picture of sky and wind conditions."

Seagrass Restoration In Tampa Bay:--The National Marine Fisheries Service and the Florida Department of Natural Resources have started a cooperative study in the waters of Tampa Bay, Fla., to see if experimental transplants of shoalgrass will "take" where natural seagrass beds have failed. Transplants of shoalgrass will be made at five sites and its growth and use by fish and shellfish will be compared with natural stands of seagrass. Catastrophic declines of over 80 percent of the seagrass coverage in the Tampa Bay area have emphasized the need

for this study to determine if artificially propagated seagrass meadows will provide habitat equivalent to that of natural meadows.

Supercell Thunderstorms Cause Floods:-- Stationary "supercell" thunderstorms, stalled in the atmosphere by a previously unrecognized interaction of weather conditions, pose a threat to the front range of the Rocky Mountains during the summer flash flood season, ERL scientists believe. A detailed analysis of the catastrophic 1985 Cheyenne, Wyo., flash flood has revealed that under certain wind, temperature, and moisture conditions, extremely intense thunderstorms can develop and stall, dropping as much as eight inches or more of rain on an area and causing flash floods.

Dr. Charles F. Chappell, Director of the Weather Research Program at the Environmental Research Laboratories, said this is what happened over Cheyenne on August 1, 1985, leading to the loss of a dozen lives. Possibly, he added, a similar type of storm system caused an intense hail storm in Arvada, Colo., several years ago, resulting in many millions of dollars in property damage.

With proper training, Chappell said, forecasters should be able to use available wind, temperature, and moisture data to compute whether stationary supercells are likely on a given day, and to recognize when such conditions are threatening.

Discoverer Supports Navy Survey:--The NOAA ship Discoverer left its home port of Seattle June 12 to support U.S. Navy geophysical survey requirements in the eastern Pacific Ocean. This sailing inaugurates an agreement between the Navy and the National Ocean Service to conduct multiproduct surveys benefiting both agencies.

Bond Drive Extended:--The 1987 U.S. Savings Bond Campaign has been extended through June 26. Employees are reminded that buying Bonds on the Payroll Savings Plan is an easy and convenient way of saving regularly that offers tax advantages and market-based interest on small sums of money.

NOAA Weather Radio At The Zoo:--A recent user survey conducted by the Minneapolis Weather Service office brought an interesting response from Ross Taylor, the city's zoo keeper. At the zoo, a forecast of severe storms on the NOAA Weather Radio activates a plan to move some animals (especially lions and tigers) from outdoor exhibits to secure quarters inside. In addition to protecting the animals from the wind and rain, Taylor reported, there's the matter of protecting the people from the animals if a storm-downed tree should damage the fence of an enclosure.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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