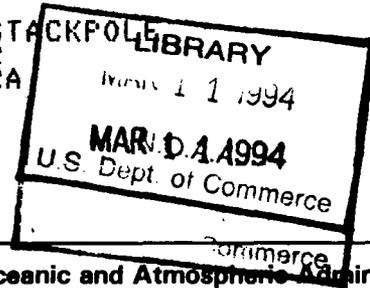




NOAA REPORT

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NOAA-E/A12
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February 8, 1988

COMING UP

World Meteorological Organization Bureau Meeting
in London, U.K., Feb. 8-11.

Annual Meeting of the American Association for the
Advancement of Science in Boston, Mass., Feb. 11-15.

National Fish and Seafood Promotional Council
Second Meeting in San Diego, Calif., Feb. 14-20.

North American Commission of the North Atlantic
Salmon Conservation Organization meeting in Montreal,
Canada, Feb. 17-18.

American Meteorological Society meeting in
Baltimore, Md., Feb. 22.

News on "The Move:"--NOAA Washington-area consolidation plans moved ahead with the establishment of a Headquarters Consolidation Project Staff, Feb. 1 in the Office of Administration under the direction of James A. Watkins. The office, presently consisting of four employees, plans to move into the new Silver Spring building on March 28 along with representatives of the National Capital Administrative Support Center building services group. Work is now underway by the developer to complete interior construction of the first and lower floors of the structure to meet this occupancy date.

US-USSR World Ocean Agreement Meeting Set:--A three-person Soviet delegation will meet with federal agency representatives on a variety of potential ocean research projects March 2-3 in Washington, D.C. The meeting is a result of the one-year extension of the US-USSR World Ocean Agreement announced during the recent Reagan-Gorbachev summit meeting. The extension will allow the two nations time to consider mutually beneficial oceanic research projects. Dr. Ned Ostenso, Director of OAR's Office of Sea Grant and Extramural Programs and executive secretary for the Agreement, will head the U.S. delegation at the meeting which will be held at the Commerce Department's Herbert C. Hoover Building.

NOAA Satellites Go To School:--This spring, in conjunction with the launch of NOAA's newest polar-orbiting satellite, the first national weather satellite workshop for teachers will be held at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. Several hundred educators will participate in the two-day program. The satellites have been adopted as a teaching tool, with a goal of creating a global student satellite weather watch, in an effort sparked by Robert Popham, of the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service. The program will be extended into a worldwide network of student weather-watchers who will exchange information by computers and mail.

It all began at Unionville, Pa., High School, when science teacher Helen Martin, with the help of local merchants and radio amateurs, interested her students in designing, building, and operating a tracking station to receive images from NOAA satellites. It was so successful that in 1987 the Pennsylvania State Board of Education awarded West Chester a grant to duplicate it through a teacher training program.

Tornado Safety:--Many tornado-related deaths and injuries can be avoided by quick action and knowledge of safety precautions, says a NOAA news release issued late last week. Noting that an average of 100 Americans are killed annually by tornadoes, the Weather Service urged alertness and quick obedience to warnings. Recommended shelters include basements, or interior hallways at home, and hallways in schools. Also recommended when tornadoes threaten: a quick exit from mobile homes or automobiles.

In related action, National Weather Service offices in the southern portion of the United States are preparing for the 1988 spring tornado season with plans for severe weather awareness weeks. Many states conduct statewide tornado drills in which schools, emergency management agencies, manufacturing plants, and others exercise tornado safety plans. The week of February 22 will see awareness weeks in Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Florida. Tennessee, Texas, and Oklahoma will conduct awareness weeks beginning Feb. 29, and Arkansas is planning one the week of March 7. During these weeks, the Weather Service draws public attention to the dangers of approaching spring weather - especially tornadoes, thunderstorms, and lightning. In media campaigns, the NWS provides radio and television broadcasters and newspaper editors with information about severe storms and appropriate safety rules.

Washington Helicopter Route Chart Completed:--The NOS Office of Charting and Geodetic Services has completed the Washington, D.C., Helicopter Route Chart, the second of a series of charts designed to facilitate safe navigation in areas of concentrated helicopter activity. The first chart covers the New York City metropolitan area. The Washington chart, at a scale of 1:125,000, features pictorial symbols of significant visual reference points such as the Capitol Building, Washington Monument, and Mount Vernon.

Visiting Scientist Program At NCDC:--The National Climatic Data Center has begun a visiting scientist program in cooperation with the National Science Foundation. Dr. D.A. Robinson, a research scientist at Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory, was recently awarded an NSF grant to study the role of snowfall in the climate system. Dr. Robinson will spend the first nine months of this study at NCDC in order to construct a snowfall data base. The second part of the study will involve an analysis of the data base in cooperation with climate modelers. Dr. Robinson will begin his tenure at NCDC in March.

Satellite Users Conference Slated:--The third International Direct Readout Weather Satellite Users Conference, co-sponsored by NOAA and NASA will be held June 20-24 at Baltimore/Washington International Airport. Conference organizers are soliciting abstracts for the technical programs and poster sessions on oceanography, water resource applications, ground instruments and engineering developments, meteorology, land use, environmental monitoring, data processing, educational and amateur monitoring applications, agriculture, forestry, and geology. The last such conference in 1985 drew more than 500 participants from 28 countries. Over 1,000 direct broadcast receiving facilities in more than 100 countries which require no U.S. licensing or approval are known to be collecting free data and imagery from NOAA's polar orbiting weather satellites.

Winter Snows A Mixed Blessing:--Recent winter precipitation - rain and snow - in the West and Northwest has helped alleviate the low water resources in the area, according to National Weather Service hydrologists. On the other hand, parts of the Southwest, after several years of above-normal precipitation and recent winter snows, pose the threat of spring snowmelt flooding, the only significant potential foreseen by the Weather Service at this time.

NOAA Corps Awards:--Cdr. Lawrence E. Keister and Lt. Frank J. Migaiolo have been awarded NOAA Special Achievement Award Medals for contributions as members of a team that developed an Emergency Operations program for the NOS Office of Oceanography and Marine Assessment. Capt. Leonard Bachman, U.S. Public Health Service, has been awarded the NOAA Corps Commendation Medal in recognition of the significant professional services he provided as the NOAA Fleet Medical Director.

A Quarter-Century of Charting Cooperation:--On January 21, signing ceremonies to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Cooperative Charting Agreement between the U.S. Power Squadron and the National Ocean Service were held in Miami, Fla., aboard the NOAA Ship Mt Mitchell.

Whale "Rescue" Investigated:--NMFS Special Agents from Terminal Island, Calif., are investigating a whale "rescue" involving an immature grey whale off the Palos Verde Peninsula, undertaken by the Sea Shepherd Organization. NMFS and local officials monitored the whale for three days and determined that

it was not entangled in a surrounding kelp bed. The Sea Shepherd group mounted a rescue effort on the third day. They drove the whale from its refuge in the kelp bed to the open ocean with divers, inflatable boats, and media helicopters. The case is being investigated as a harassment violation.

Shellfish Quality Report:--Most waters in the Gulf of Mexico do not meet standards for approved waters at all times, according to a recently released report by the NOS Ocean Assessment Division. The report, "The Quality of Shellfish Growing Waters in the Gulf of Mexico," identifies eight types of pollution sources. The predominant ones affecting shellfish health in the Gulf region seem to be failing sewage treatment/collection systems, improperly functioning septic systems, and stormwater runoff from urban areas.

Chinese Satellite Plans:--Meeting with a delegation from the People's Republic of China at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., Jan. 28, NOAA scientists were told of PRC plans to launch two meteorological satellites over the next 12 years. The Chinese are planning to launch a polar-orbiting satellite, FY-1, "before 1990" which will circle the earth at 900 kilometers and carry a five-channel, 1-km resolution imager similar to the one flown on the NOAA polar-orbiting satellites today. The PRC delegation also told of plans to launch a geostationary satellite, FY-2, "sometime in the 1990s," to be located at 105° east (on the Equator between Borneo and Sumatra). They requested visits this spring by NOAA personnel to review the FY-1 spacecraft, sensor, ground and data processing systems, as well as to give lectures on soundings retrieval methodology and remote sensing applications. The Chinese also have requested that NESDIS participate in the post-launch FY-1 satellite checkout.

Grounded Ship A Problem To Navy:--The U.S. Navy is pondering what to do with the USS Tortuga, a 475-foot vessel being used for target practice, before it ran aground on San Miguel Island in the Channel Island, Calif., National Marine Sanctuary during a storm Dec. 20. The ship was empty of pollutants so there was no immediate major threat to marine life, but then another storm on Jan. 17 drove the derelict ship further onto the beach and broke it in two. The Navy, reluctant to spend an estimated \$1 million for a work crew to break up the vessel and remove the pieces from the beach, is working with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Sanctuary to look at alternatives other than removal. The Navy is preparing an environmental impact statement on this project.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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July 23, 2010