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NOAA WEEK

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Instrumented Plane Aids In Snowmelt Predictions

An instrument-equipped plane provided by the Atomic Energy Commission and operated by EG&G, Inc., under contract with NOAA, has been flying selected courses over the snowy countryside of Minnesota and Wisconsin picking up invisible gamma rays emanating from the frozen earth. Strength and character of the radiation are then interpreted by computer to arrive at actual water equivalent of the snow. Similar tests were made in 1970. This year, the data collected is being used to help predict the flood threat from melting snow in the upper Midwest, where snowpack and soil moisture have been two to three times normal in some portions. Severe or near-record flooding has been forecast for parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin. The technique is based on the fact that water--liquid or frozen--blocks some of the earth's natural background radiation. A drop-off in gamma-ray output from what is normal without snow cover thus gives an index of potential snowmelt flooding to come.

Flights in late March were made in the vicinity of Luverne, Minn., and La Crosse, Wis. The twin-engine test plane made a series of 8 to 10-mile samplings. In each such run, the radiation was picked up from a swathe 1200 to 1500 feet wide at 1-second (500-foot) intervals. Findings were later converted to snowpack equivalents.

William E. Hiatt, the National Weather Service's Associate Director for Hydrology, says: "We believe this sophisticated system will provide us with a wholly new capability in flood forecasting."

U.S. Whaling Activities To Terminate in December

Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans has reaffirmed his decision to halt whaling from the United States, and fixed a final termination date of December 31, 1971 on such activities. This date conforms to the action of the Secretary of Interior under the Endangered Species Act, whereby he terminated importation of whale products after the end of the year.

At the same time, Secretary Stans said, "As Secretary of Commerce, I will do everything possible to soften the impact of this decision on the Nation's one remaining whaling company and its employees I am directing agencies within the Department of Commerce, specifically the Economic Development Administration and the National Marine Fisheries Service, to see what can be done to alleviate hardships which may result from this action."

On March 1, 1971, Secretary Stans announced his intention to ban the taking of all whales on the endangered species list of the Department of Interior. At that time, he directed the NMFS to publish a proposal in the Federal Register terminating the commercial hunting of such endangered species. A public hearing was then held in San Francisco, March 29, at which the affected whaler, Del Monte Company, Richmond, California, and other interested parties were heard.

Whales on the endangered species list include sei, finback and spern whales--the only species sought by U.S. whalers plus bowhead, blue, humpback, right and gray whales.

$207,500 in Sea Grants Given To Three Northern Institutions

NOAA has awarded Sea Grants totaling $207,500 for coastal zone planning, for research, and for training.

$139,200 went to Nassau-Suffolk Regional Planning Board, Hauppauge, New York, for methods development in planning optimum use of coastal zone marine resources. The Board will complete its two-year project to identify, classify, and analyze problems confronting decision makers dealing with marine resources.

A grant of $50,000 was awarded to Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory of Columbia University for continuation of an artificial upwelling project in the Virgin Islands. The Observatory is pumping relatively cold, high-nutrient water from 600 to 1,000 meters deep into surface ponds where it is used as raw material for a series of studies of its possible use. Among these are as nutrient source for the culture of a marine food chain, for air conditioning, and for production of electrical power. The major emphasis of the project during the next year will be on the "food from the sea" aspects of the project, involving the growth of plankton and selected commercially valuable organisms. Principal investigator for the project is Dr. Oswald Roels.

The University of New Hampshire, Durham, N. H., received $18,300 for a project to give undergraduate engineering students experience in components and systems used in ocean-oriented projects. A university team will, under NOAA sponsorship, continue an ocean-oriented engineering course in which students work on such projects as underwater life support systems, shallow water coring, and underwater tools.

New Weather Radar Dedicated in Oregon

A new weather surveillance radar was dedicated in a ceremony held at Medford, Oreg., April 9. The radar is located on the summit of Mt. Ashland to aid in predicting precipitation for the flood-prone state. The speakers at the dedication ceremony were Dr. Karl R. Johannessen, NWS Associate Director, and H. H. Bedke, Director of the NWS Western Region. Heading the new station is Tony Lentini.

About Seals: For the Record

Many of the NOAA family may have seen the advertisement, "Battered Babies," showing a photograph of a mother seal crying in anguish over the body of her slain pup.

Although it is not so stated, the inference could be drawn from the advertisement that baby fur seals are taken in the National Marine Fisheries Service Pribilof Islands operation. This is not so. Only bachelor seals are taken, and those well within the limits of a conservation program which will assure perpetuation of the Pribilof herd. They are taken by the most humane methods available under the eyes of observers from humane societies. "Battered Babies" do not apply to NMFS.

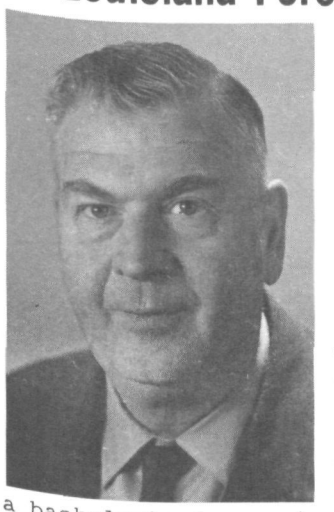
Dr. Orlin To Attend Tokyo Symposium

Dr. Hyman Orlin, Special Assistant to the Director of the National Ocean Survey for Earth Science Activities, will represent NOAA at the International Astronomical Union Symposium to be held in Tokyo in May. During his stay in Japan, Dr. Orlin will confer with Dr. Shigeru Sato, Director, Geology Department, Geological Survey of Japan, and Dr. Kiyoshi Kawakami, Chief Engineer, Hydrographic Division of Maritime Safety.

Dr. Ruhnke Leads Lightning Seminar

Dr. Lothar H. Ruhnke, superisory physicist in ERL's Atmospheric Physics and Chemistry Laboratory, led a seminar and discussion on the measurement and prediction of lightning potential at the Las Vegas Air Resources Laboratory, April 15. Dr. Ruhnke advised the Laboratory on its plans for establishing a lightning warning system at the Atomic Energy Commission's Nevada Test Site. Potential gradient measurements have been made at the Test Site for a number of years, but now it is planned to make data available to the Laboratory, which will then provide warnings routinely, and extrapolate the motions of clouds having a potential for lightning.

Vicroy Accepts HIC Position At Louisiana Forecast Center



Clarence E. Vicroy, Chief of the Operations Branch of the NWS Office of Hydrology since 1967, has been selected to fill the hydrologist in charge position at the River Forecast Center in Slidell, La. Mr. Vicroy entered the weather service at Fort Worth in 1964, following retirement from the U.S. Air Force. He has a bachelor's degree in meteorology from Florida State University and has done graduate work in physics and programming at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth. He has also work at American University for a master's degree in physics. Mr. Vicroy is recognized for his experience in the digital computer field.

Second Gulf of Maine Map Published By NOS in Continental Shelf Series

A large-scale bathymetric map, published by the National Ocean Survey, depicts major sea floor features of the continental shelf beneath the western Gulf of Maine. Among the major topographic features presented, in the greatest detail ever published, are numerous complex ledges and basins, including Jeffreys Lodge and Basin and the Bigalow Bight. This second map to be published of the western Gulf of Maine shows the complex glaciated topography of approximately 1300 square miles of the sea floor between Scantum Basin and Casco Bay. The first, issued last year, covered the seabed generally off the coast of Massachusetts, while this map covers the seabed generally off the Maine coast, but including portions of New Hampshire and Massachusetts. It is one of a continental shelf series planned by NOS as an essential prerequisite to the orderly exploration and development of the marine resources of the submerged land areas off the United States coast. Copies may be purchased for $2 each from the National Ocean Survey, Distribution Division, Washington, D.C. 20235.

Marine Publications Inventory Issued under NOAA Sea Grant

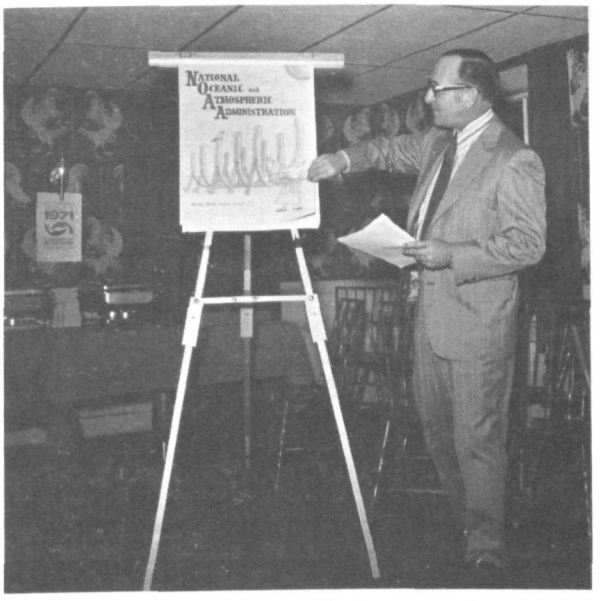
The first Pacific coast guide to general publications and films about the ocean has been published by the Pacific Sea Grant Advisory Program.

Entitled Inventory of Marine Resources Publications and Films, the guide is intended to serve marine science teachers, advisory staffs, librarians, and other general and non-scientific users. It was compiled by Oregon State University's Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program, a part of NOAA's National Sea Grant Program.

The Pacific Sea Grant Advisory Program is composed of participants from the University of Alaska, University of British Columbia, University of California, University of Hawaii, Oregon State University, University of Washington, and NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service. The U.S. university members are all participants in NOAA's National Sea Grant Program.

Each entry in the Pacific marine information guide is described briefly, and its source indicated. The inventory is categorized by subject matter.

Oyster Industry/NMFS Hold Joint Press Party



The domestic oyster industry, in cooperation with the National Marine Fisheries Service, held a press party in Peabody, Mass., April 6. Twenty-nine food editors, industry members, and service representatives attended. Bob Finley (above), Chief of the NMFS Marketing Services Office in Chicago, addressed the group.

NOAA and the President's Reorganization Plan

President Nixon, in his State of the Union Address on January 22, 1971, proposed a sweeping reorganization of the Executive Branch to enable the Federal Government to carry out its responsibilities in meeting the changing needs and concerns of the American people. The President's reorganization proposal is largely based on the findings and recommendations of a detailed study conducted by the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization (Ash Council).

The present structure of the Executive Branch has evolved over a long period of time and is based, in most instances, on narrow constituencies and fragmented functions. While the original rationale for creating existing departments and agencies may have been valid, the changes that have occurred in the Nation create a need for substantial revamping of this structure. The President is recommending that many of the domestic programs of government be rearranged and assigned to four new departments. Dr. Robert M. White, NOAA Administrator, and Maurice H. Stans, Secretary of Commerce, wholeheartedly endorse the President's proposal. The four new departments would be:

--Human Resources Department - dealing with the concerns of people as individuals, as members of a family -- a department focused on human needs. Its core would be the existing Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

--Community Development Department - concerned with the community -- rural communities and urban communities -- with the need to create and preserve a safe and wholesome living environment for every person. Its core would be the existing Department of Housing and Urban Development.

--Economic Development Department - concerned with the growth and health of our economy -- with our jobs, our businesses, our farms, and those many activities that maintain and strengthen the American economy. Its core would be the Departments of Commerce, Labor, and Transportation.

--Natural Resources Department - concerned with our physical environment and the preservation and balanced use of those natural resources on which this Nation depends. It would provide for balanced use and conservation of the land and other natural resources of the Nation. The Department of Natural Resources would include five administrations: Land and Recreational Administration, Water Resources Administration, Oceanic, Atmospheric, and Earth Sciences Administration (of which NOAA and Geological Survey would be a part), and the Indian and Territorial Affairs Administration. The core of the Department of Natural Resources would be the Department of Interior.

The respective Administrators would be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate and will be accountable for the programs under their purview. Secretarial representation in the field will be provided by Regional Directors who will coordinate related departmental activities within their areas, and evaluate performance.

Current plans ensure that the interests of employees affected by the reorganization are protected. No employee will be separated. Efficiencies resulting from the reorganization will be achieved through normal attrition.

Total FY '71 outlays for the proposed Department of Natural Resources, based on the President's Budget, would be approximately $5.1 billion. Permanent employment would total approximately 111,000. Of the $5.1 billion, the Oceanic, Atmospheric and Earth Sciences Administration (comprising NOAA and Geological Survey) would be approximately $375 million with permanent employment of 20,600 persons.

EDS Atlas To Be Reprinted by Naval Office

The Naval Oceanographic Office--as part of its new program on Sailing Directions Planning Guides--will reprint "Climatological and Oceanographic Atlas for Mariners" (vol. 2, North Pacific Ocean), prepared by the Environmental Data Service. The Sailing Directions are similar to the National Ocean Survey's "Coast Pilots," and are widely distributed throughout the marine community.

Graham Gets Award for Classification System

Richard L. Graham, classification officer at ERL, has received a special service award from the Civil Service Commission for his work as a member of a Denver Federal Personnel Council Task Force that developed a comprehensive position classification-position management system and pay policy system to fit the needs of Denver Opportunity Inc.

Salmon-Counting Sonar Device Developed With NMFS Support

A salmon-counting sonar device has been developed under the fisheries grant-in-aid program administered by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The counter was developed by the Electrodynamics Division of the Bendix Corporation under contract to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for enumerating salmon in glacially turbid Bristol Bay and Cook Inlet streams where visual counts are impossible. The device can also be used to replace weirs and counting towers where such stations are not practical or desirable. The counter uses an array of 30 transducers secured to a plastic frame that resembles a ladder. The frame is submerged, perpendicular to the shore, along the route of salmon migration. The transducers "illuminate" a 50-foot path with sound from the bottom upward. As fish swim through this path, sound bounces off them and triggers a counter that resembles the odometer of an automobile. Echoes returning from surface air and surface-floated debris are electrically disregarded. A 12-volt battery will power the system for about three weeks. The entire unit weighs little more than 300 pounds, and can be loaded into a small bush plane for transportation. It can be installed by two or three men in about half a day. Development of automatic nonvisual counting methods is an important step in the proper management of the salmon resource because many major runs are now largely unenumerated due to glacially turbid rivers, remoteness of area, and cost requirements. At present the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has nine counting units in operation; others are being operated by the Canadian Department of Fisheries and the Washington State Department of Fisheries, and one has been delivered in England.

Weathermen Cited for Frost Warning Service

The Wisconsin State Cranberry Grower's Association honored six members of the Madison Weather Service Office for "outstanding service" to Wisconsin's cranberry industry. The special commendations were made at the association's annual meeting. Accurate frost warnings continued to the growers without interruption when the administration of the Wisconsin Cranberry Frost Warning Service was moved from the Madison Weather Service Office to the Milwaukee Weather Service Office in the middle of the 1970 cranberry growing season. Receiving the citations were: Gerald English, Marvin E. Hasse, James Kaplan, Eino V. Kinunen, Carl J. Schilling, and Robert O. Werlein.

Future Farmers of America To Gather Rainfall Data for Climatic Analysis

According to NOAA Climatologist Earl L. Kuehnast, data gathering centered on local rainfall patterns will move into high gear next May in Minnesota, with the help of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of youthful members of the State's 12,000 Future Farmers of America. Following a successful experiment last summer around the Twin Cities, called the "Backyard Rain Gage Project"--in which 300 amateur data collectors from 20 counties used their own rain gages and time to measure variations in rainfall -- an expanded version of the same project has been planned by the University of Minnesota for 1971. Mr. Kuehnast will act as advisor to the project and will analyze the data retrieved statewide.

Pollution Monitoring Stations To Operate in Ten U.S. Cities

Weather stations at ten U.S. cities have been designated "regional air pollution monitoring stations" in a network that eventually will keep tabs on global air quality. The National Weather Service and the Air Pollution Control Office of the Environmental Protection Agency will cooperate in the measurement and analysis of atmospheric turbidity (particles in the air) and precipitation chemistry (atmospheric impurities in rain or snow). The Environmental Data Service will store the information and disseminate it in this country and abroad. The stations in the project are in or near Caribou, Maine; Atlantic City, New Jersey; Raleigh, North Carolina; Salem, Illinois; Meridian, Mississippi; Huron, South Dakota; Alamosa, Colorado· Victoria, Texas; Pendleton, Oregon; and Bishop, California. Air monitoring at the ten U.S. sites is part of an effort by the World Meteorological Organization. Several specially trained and equipped teams have been established to provide expert weather advice to pollution control agencies on the local level. Nine additional teams will be established in pollution-prone areas by this summer.

Summer Water Levels Predicted

According to the Lake Survey Center's Monthly Bulletin of Lake Levels, Great Lakes water levels for the coming summer are expected to be about the same or slightly higher than they were in 1970, except for Lakes Michigan and Huron. Those two lakes will be in the neighborhood of nine and a half inches higher than they were last year. Lake Superior is expected to be about the same as 1970 Lake St. Clair up about three and a half inches; Lake Erie up about two and a half inches; and Lake Ontario about the same or down slightly. The Monthly Bulletin of Lake Levels (free on request from the Lake Survey Center, Federal Bldg., Detroit, Mich., 48226) shows in graph form present lake levels, highs and lows of record, ten-year and long-term average levels, a six-month forecast of levels, and the low-water or chart datum line for easy reference by those using Lake Survey Great Lakes charts. Higher lake levels normally benefit commercial shipping and hydroelectric power production, but are detrimental to shoreline property.

Palmer Is Named To Head Fort Worth Weather Office

Cecil M. Palmer, service operations dissemination meteorologist, Southern Region headquarters, Fort Worth, has become meteorologist in charge of the Brownsville, Tex., Weather Service Office. A native of Georgia, Mr. Palmer entered the weather service in 1947 after two years in the U.S. Navy. He transferred to Wilmington, N.C., in 1952 and was radar meteorologist prior to moving to Memphis, Tenn., as an aviation forecaster in 1961. He was selected as meteorologist in charge at Baton Rouge, La., in 1966, and moved to the Fort Worth Regional headquarters in 1967. Mr. Palmer has a bachelor's degree in geography from Memphis State University and a master's degree in public administration from Texas Christian University, Fort Worth.

Health Benefits Open Season Dates To Change

The U.S. Civil Service Commission will soon announce a policy change concerning the scheduling of health benefits "Open Season." Under current legislation, Federal employees have had an opportunity to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program or to change their enrollments at least once every three years. Under the new regulation, an "Open Season" will be held November 15-30, 1971, and every November 15-30 of each succeeding year. The most important advantage gained under the new regulation is that it permits more frequent adjustment of plans or options because of premium and benefit changes in the 40 plans that participate in the program. During an open season, employees not enrolled in a health benefits program will be able to enroll. Both employees and annuitants who are enrolled will be able to change from one plan to another and to change from self-only to a family type enrollment.

Thirty-Eight Supervisors Attend NOS Field Planning Conference

Field office supervisors from NOS's Office of Seismology and Geomagnetism held their first Field Planning Conference at Easton, Md., April 4-9. The conference was designed to acquaint the supervisors with the processes involved in formulating seismology and geomagnetism plans and goals to improve the effectiveness and usefulness of overall operations. Thirty-eight representatives attended the week-long conference. The participants were divided into four task groups to study collection and analysis of data, a design plan of execution for the Observatories Subprogram Plan, the quality observatory and the user community, and management and organization. Dr. Gordon Lill, Deputy Director of the National Ocean Survey, gave the principal address on the opening day of the conference. Other guest speakers were: Professor C. Martin Duke, President, Earthquake Engineering Research Institute, University of California; Charles L. Drake, Professor of Geology, Dartmouth College; Professor J. Eugene Hass, Professor of Sociology, University of Colorado; and Dr. Masahisa Sugiura, NASA-Goddard Space Flight Center. Other participants shown, front row, left to right: Wilbur A. Rinehart, Wendell V. Mickey, Richard Kuberry, Ernest E. Pasquale, Kenneth W. King, Gene E. Phillips, James E.ODDonnell, Lanny R. Wilson, and Allen H. Travis. Second row, left to right: Lawrence H. Jaksha, Harry S. Whitcomb, Raino Kangas, Kendall L. Svendsen, Eugene Fabiano, Mrs. Nora E. Terrill, John B. Townshend, William N. Green, Leonard M. Murphy, Dr. S. T. Algermissen, James N. Jordan, Rutlage J. Brazee. Third row, left to right: Herman J. Wirz, Willis S. Jacobs, Kendrick Cravens, Robert J. Main, Ronny A. Martin, John D. Wood, Carl A. Von Hake, Howell M. Butler, William K. Cloud, Merril L. Clevan, Moises Vazquez, Robert Eppley, and James F. O'Neil. Fourth row, left to right: Jon R. Peterson , Leonard E. Kerry, Ardo X. Meyer, and Leroy W. Pankratz.

Three New EEO Officers Appointed at NCC

Raymond Lyles and Thomas Modgling have replaced Vernon Wiggins and William Nash as members of the National Climatic Center's Equal Employment Opportunity Committee. Wanda Ross, the Asheville facility's Federal Women's Program Coordinator, was appointed to the Committee as an additional member specifically to represent Federal women in the Asheville EEO area.

Palmer Consults with OEP on Texas Drought

Wayne C. Palmer, Chief of the Environmental Data Service's Bioclimatology Project, has been called into consultation with members of the Office of Emergency Preparedness concerning the abnormally dry conditions in Texas. Mr. Palmer has supplied the OEP with both up-to-date analyses of the extent and severity of the present drought and indexes of past droughts in the State, for comparison purposes.

Great Lakes Subcommittee Meets at Lake Survey Center

The Vertical Control and Lake Levels Subcommittee met recently at the Lake Survey Center in Detroit. The Subcommittee is part of the Coordinating Committee on Great Lakes Basic Hydraulic and Hydrologic Data, which provides close coordination between Lake Survey and its Canadian counterparts and others engaged in water level gaging and precise leveling operations. Projects presently being coordinated include the re-evaluation of the International Great Lakes Datum (1955), the vertical control datum for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence System; and the preparation of histories of the water level gages.

Carl B. Feldscher, Chief of the Hydrographic Branch, represented Lake Survey at the meeting. Others attending were: G. C. Dohler, Head, Tides and Water Levels, Marine Science Branch, and B. E. Russell, District Engineer, Water Survey of Canada--both of the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Forestry; L. P. Robertson, Chief, Precise Leveling of the Geodetic Survey of Canada; and B. G. DeCooke of the Detroit District, Corps of Engineers.

Rites Held for Helwig, EXPLORER Seaman

With ceremonies aboard the NOAA Ship PATHFINDER on April 2, the ashes of Raymond O. Helwig were scattered on the waters at the mouth of Kasaan Bay in Southeast Alaska. The ceremony marked the fulfillment of Chief Radio Technician Helwig's desire to return to the area where he spent much of his life surveying uncharted waters. Wire drag surveys in Twelve Mile Arm and Kasaan Bay were completed in 1924 by the Steamer EXPLORER. These surveys made a large contribution to the successful laying of the Alaska Cable. A native of Perris, California, Chief Helwig's career with the Coast Survey began in 1919. On the Steamer EXPLORER from 1922 to 1939, the majority of Chief Helwig's time was spent throughout Southeast Alaska. Chief Helwig, who retired in 1954, died last January.

Retirement Annuity Increase For Federal Employees Possible

The Civil Service Retirement Law provides for the automatic increase of civil service annuities whenever the cost of living, nationwide, goes up by at least three percent over the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the month used as the base for the most recent cost-of-living annuity increase and stays up by at least three percent for three consecutive months. The effective date of such an increase is the first day of the third month which begins after the CPI has had a rise of at least three percent for three consecutive months. If the cost-of-living increase stayed up by at least three percent during February and March of this year, conditions will be ripe for an annuity increase effective June 1, 1971,for employees retiring before that date. Although the increase is not definite as yet, there is a strong possibility that the increase will occur. This means that all employees retired on or before May 31, 1971,will be able to take advantage of the increased annuity.

Crooker, Houston Meteorologist, Has Retired

Clayton B. Crooker, meteorologist at the Houston, Tex., Weather Service Office, retired April 3 after completing more than 40 years of service with NWS. He entered the service in 1929 as a Junior Observer at Wichita, Kansas, moved to Omaha, Nebraska in 1937 and to Fort Worth in 1940, where he served as supervisor of the Hydrologic Unit at the Fort Worth Regional Office. Mr. Crooker later transferred to Houston as principal assistant in 1947. Mr. Crooker has accepted a position as research hydrologist with the Institute of Storm Research at Houston.

Hester, NOS Employee, Dies

Everett M. Hester, inventory management specialist in the Distribution Division, Office of Aeronautical Charting and Cartography, died March 15. Mr. Hester had completed more than 29 years of service with the National Ocean Survey.

Items to be considered for publication in NOAA WEEK should be submitted to: Office of Public Affairs, NOAA, Room 804, Bldg. 5, Rockville, Md. 20852. Phone (301) 496-8243.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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