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This Week In NOAA

Activities for the week ending

February 22, 1985



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

THIS WEEK IN NOAA

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

New SARSAT Responsibility for NOAA'S OPA - As part of the turnover by NASA to NOAA of operational management of the international satellite search and rescue program (SARSAT), NOAA's Office of Public Affairs has been assigned responsibility for directing information services for SARSAT. OPA will chair a support unit composed of representatives of NASA, NOAA, the Air Force and the Coast Guard. In coming months, policies and procedures will be developed for cooperative round-the-clock monitoring and release of information on satellite-assisted rescues. Canada, France and the Soviet Union share responsibility with the U.S. for operation of the system.

1200 Weathercasters Invited - TV weathercasters from all areas of the United States have been invited to attend a joint NWS-NESDIS workshop celebrating the 25th anniversary of the weather satellite, March 29-30 at the World Weather Building.

Hurricane Press Conference To Be Held - The Office of Public Affairs will conduct a press conference opening the 1985 National Hurricane Conference May 1-3 in New Orleans. Major speaker will be Dr. Neil Frank, Director of the National Hurricane Center in Coral Gables, Fla.

FOX Project Promoted: - Information kits on the FOX project in Alaska's Shelikoff Straits have been dispatched to media in the Northwest, and major U.S. science writers, inviting coverage. The study begins Feb. 25.

A NOAA press release announces - NOAA researchers today will launch a month-long probe of the flow of acid rain-producing pollutants from the East Coast over the Atlantic Ocean. A specially-instrumented NOAA aircraft will fly missions from Newport News, Va., north along the coast to Atlantic City and south to Charleston, S.C., taking air samples. The project will include making initial estimates of the movement of trace metals and specific hydrocarbons. Samples will be analyzed at the University of Virginia by Dr. James Galloway, principal investigator. Studies, mainly from shore and shipboard instruments, have estimated that large amounts of sulfur and nitrogen compounds are carried into the Atlantic as far as Bermuda -- perhaps as much as 30 percent of the sulfur compounds and 20 to 60 percent of the nitrogen. Aircraft measurements are needed to confirm the findings and to determine the geographic extent of the transfer of chemicals. The research can also indicate the extent of deposition of the sulfur and nitrogen compounds in the Atlantic, information useful in evaluating their impact on the ocean's chemical structure.

NATIONAL CLIMATE PROGRAM OFFICE

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Strategic Planning Seminars

The NCPO will initiate the first of a series of Strategic Planning Seminars (SPS) designed to address major policy and scientific issues of national and international importance related to climatic effects. The first seminar will be on the Climatology of African Drought - a two hour discussion of the current physical and historical aspects of drought in Africa. Speakers will represent NOAA, NASA, Clark University and the WMO. The Seminar is Monday, March 4, 10:00 to Noon, at the Department of State, Room 2925. Those interested in attending should call Wendy Graham at 443-8646.

The Second Seminar, scheduled for late Spring will be on Policy Implications of Long Range Climate Forecasting.

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National Ocean Service

NOS Employees Win Colbert Medal - Messrs. Bobby J. Taylor and Richard C. Patchen of the NOS Office of Oceanography and Marine Assessment are this year's winners of the Society of American Military Engineers Colbert Medal for their respective efforts as Project Manager and Technical Manager of the Delaware River and Bay Real-Time Modeling Project. The numerical techniques and real-time instrumentation developed for the project offer a capacity for new products and services to serve the maritime communities and coastal waters of this country. The Colbert Medal, named in memory of former Coast and Geodetic Survey Director Rear Admiral Leo O. Colbert, recognizes the most outstanding contribution to military engineering through achievement in design, construction, administration, research, or development. (J. Hayes, 443-8487)

Automated Notice to Mariners Begins Operation - On February 11, 1985, NOS began receiving Notice to Mariners (NM) through a new automated NM system, from the U.S. Coast Guard's Third District (mid-Atlantic) and Seventeenth District (Alaska). The NM automated system will reduce the time lapse in receiving corrections from 7 to 10 days to near real-time. In September 1985, automated corrections from two additional districts, the First (New England) and the Ninth (Great Lakes) will be on line. (N. Banks, 443-8661)

Canadian Ice Center Coordination Meeting - On February 4, NOS representatives met in Ottawa with the Assistant Director of the Atmosphere Environment Service of Canada to foster better working relationships between the NOAA/Navy Joint Ice Center and the Canadian Ice Center. Information exchange, working groups, standardization, a draft Memorandum of Understanding, and proposals to provide training of Ice Observers were discussed. (G. Flittner, 443-6076)

Emergency Drydocking of NOAA Ship DAVID STARR JORDAN - On February 12, 1985, the NOAA Ship DAVID STARR JORDAN went into emergency drydocking at Campbell Industries, San Diego, California, for rudder repairs. The repairs were completed on February 19, 1985. (J. Lund, FTS 399-4484)

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NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

First Spring Flood Outlook for Midwest Issued - The Upper Mississippi Basin has light snow cover, and a normal snowmelt would not cause serious flooding. Frost depth is as great as 20 inches in the far northern states however, and any heavy spring rains would increase the threat of serious flooding. In the Missouri Basin, normal precipitation would cause minor to moderate flooding in many states in the basin. (Al Flanders 427-7660)

Ice Threat - Ice in the Ohio River continues to pose a potential threat to marine structures and to navigation. Small tows were encountering ice clumps up to 4-feet thick on the reach of the River below Cincinnati. The ice is thick enough to damage navigation and lighter structures near the River. (Crystal Watts 427-7624)

"Worst Freeze of the Century" Destroyed Winter Crops in Florida - The "Alberta Clipper," the arctic air mass that invaded Florida from Sunday, January 20, to Wednesday, January 23, 1985, produced the coldest temperatures since 1835 for northern Florida and the coldest temperatures to central and southern Florida since 1977. Minimum temperatures during this 3-day period reached as low as 7-10 degrees in northern Florida, 15 to 25 degrees in central Florida, and in the low to mid-20's in the interior of southern Florida. More than 90 percent of the State's winter vegetable crop has been lost, and the citrus trees that survived the December 1983 freeze in the northern citrus belt north of a Tampa-Orlando line are now feared destroyed. The National Weather Service's forecasts mentioned the possibility of freezing temperatures 4 days before the arctic air mass invaded Florida, and growers reportedly have expressed pleasure with this early warning. (Mel McLaughlin 8-334-2659)

Minnesota Heating Degree Days Program - The National Weather Service (NWS) recently began an energy/need forecast program in cooperation with the State of Minnesota. At the beginning of each week, NWS provides the expected plus or minus temperature departures for the next 7-day and 28-day periods to the Minnesota State Climatologist. A computer program converts these to plus or minus heating degree days for many locales throughout the State. The State Department of Energy then issues advisories to the producers and consumers throughout the State. (Bill Proenza 8-758-5463)

Record Rainfall - The National Weather Service's Cooperative Weather Observer in Odem, Texas, (near Corpus Christi) reported that he gaged 24 inches of rain in less than 5 hours during the October 19, 1984, deluge. This was the most intense rainfall the observer could recall in his 70-plus years in the area. This 5-hour event equaled a year's total normal rainfall. It served as quite a contrast to the south Texas drought of the previous year when water supplies were endangered throughout the Corpus Christi region. (Dave Smith 8-334-2674)

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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE, DATA, AND INFORMATION SERVICE

NESDIS Employee Saves Life. Ms. Kathy Meyers, a programmer at the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) in Asheville, North Carolina, and a Certified Emergency Medical Technician, got to place her training into practice early one morning at the entrance of the Asheville Federal Building. A fellow employee passed out and had no pulse or heartbeat. Ms. Meyers started CPR and maintained it until an ambulance arrived. Her efforts are credited with saving a life. North Carolina Governor Jim Martin sent Kathy a special letter of thanks for "going the second mile." (S. Doty, FTS 672-0475)

North American Snow Cover. NOAA satellite imagery showed that the monthly average snow cover in North America for January 1985 was the highest January snow cover of the 19-year satellite-based record. In January 1985, North America was covered by an average of 18.5 million square kilometers of snow cover, 200,000 square kilometers more than the previous January record established in 1979 and 1.3 million more square kilometers than normally would be expected. Most of the excess snow cover occurred in the western, central, and southern United States. (M. Matson, 763-8142)

South Pole Wind Energy. The National Climatic Data Center is supplying climatic information on the South Pole to a major aerospace firm. This information will be used in support of a project that will use wind energy to supplement power supplies for an installation at the South Pole. The severe climate of the area makes energy efficiency very important to the station operations. (A. Wallis, FTS 672-0682)

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ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH LABORATORIES

Interannual Variability of Monsoons Workshop - Dr. Edward Sarachik, Ocean Climate Research Division, attended a recent Indo-U.S. Workshop on Interannual Variability of Monsoons in New Delhi. The American delegation also included other NOAA scientists and representatives from NASA, NCAR, NSF, JPL, FSU, Universities of Hawaii and Maryland, Penn State, and an observer from MIT. The purpose of the meeting was to review monsoon work by scientists in both countries and to establish cooperative projects involving data exchanges and reciprocal visits. The dominant theme was the direct relationship between monsoon rainfall over India and the Southern Oscillation Index. A major subtheme was intra-seasonal variability of the monsoon. (E. Sarachik, FTS: 392-6741)

Wind Tunnel Operational at PMEL - PMEL now has a wind tunnel to support instrument development and design, instrument calibration, and physical modeling. Originally constructed for the University of Washington's Department of Atmospheric Sciences, the tunnel is of the open circuit variety with a bounded, square test section one meter on a side. A centrifugal fan pushes air through a series of adjustable screens to break up large eddies and produce a uniform field of isotropic turbulence. The tunnel can achieve air velocities approaching 35 m s⁻¹ at the test section. (A. Macklin, FTS: 392-6798)

Soviet Commemorative Medal - Dr. Lester Machta, Director of the Air Resources Laboratory, was given a Soviet commemorative medal honoring "100 years of International Geophysics". The 100 years represents 100 years following the First International Polar Year in 1882-83 which was followed by a Second International Year in 1932-33. A total of 1000 medals were struck of which 100 were given to Americans. (L. Machta, FTS: 427-7684)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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July 23, 2010