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# **This Week In NOAA**

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**Activities for the week ending**

**February 7, 1986**

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

THIS WEEK IN NOAA

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\*An asterisk indicates no items this week.

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NOAA Budget Briefing:--NOAA's annual budget briefing for media was given by John Carey, Director of the budget and finance office, Wednesday, Feb. 5 in NOAA Public Affairs headquarters. Among those attending: representatives of AP, Nautilus Press, Sea Technology, environmental publications, the Coastal States Organization, and the Office of Management and Budget.

Radiosonde Return Campaign:--Latest media to give a boost to NOAA's campaign for the return to the National Weather Service of radiosondes found by citizens were the New York Times (Feb. 4) and meteorologist Joe Witte on NBC's Today show (Feb. 5). Aim of the drive is to increase savings accomplished by repair of the returned weather instruments.

NOAA Magazine Issued:--The Winter 1986 issue of NOAA Magazine is out. Highlights: articles on the scientific support coordinators of the Hazardous Materials Response Branch; NESDIS's Wallops Island facility; and the Genesis of Atlantic Lows Experiment (GALE).

Environmental Data Publicized:--Press releases have been issued on three NOAA catalogs for environmental data on the North American continent, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Pacific coast.

Rescue Meeting Coming Up:--NOAA will host a meeting of the interagency COSPAS/SARSAT public affairs working group Tuesday, Feb. 18 at 1 p.m. in Suitland Federal Center. Objective: to continue planning for a statewide safety campaign among Alaskan pilots and sailors, designed to slash the number of false alarms sent to NOAA satellites by instruments triggered by crash landings or sinkings.

Publication Printed:--"Winter Storms," a NOAA safety reprint, has arrived for distribution.

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NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Snowmelt Flood Potential Outlooks Scheduled - Spring snowmelt flood potential outlooks will be issued on February 7 and 21 and on March 7 and 21. Additional outlooks will be issued if the situation warrants. The first interagency briefing for spring flood potential for the Nation is scheduled Monday, February 24, 1986, at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Headquarters. Future briefings are also scheduled for March 10 and 24, with alternate meeting locations between FEMA and the Corps of Engineers Headquarters. In the event of an early or late snowmelt season, February 10 or April 14 will be the optional dates for the first and final briefings, respectively. (Jose Marrero 427-7624)

Winter Rains Hit Southern California - Winter rains spread into Southern California late Wednesday night, January 29, 1986. Heavy amounts fell in mountainous terrain of Ventura County, areas of which had been denuded by wildfires during the summer of 1985. One to five inches were measured during a 10-hour period ending Thursday morning. The Los Angeles forecast office provided quantitative precipitation forecasts for a number of locations in the county, which are instrumented with automated local evaluations in real time (ALERT) event reporting gauges. Monitoring of precipitation rates in real time via microcomputer displays of the ALERT data allowed for timely flood watches, statements, and direct support to county emergency services. (Mark Fair 8-588-4000)

Tropical Ocean Global Atmospheric (TOGA) Program - To support the second year of the TOGA Program, deployment of 40 drifting buoys has been initiated in the oceans of the Southern Hemisphere. The National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) will support the TOGA Project Office in maintaining a grid pattern of 40 buoys in the southern oceans for the next 8 years. Additionally, a 3-meter discus buoy was moored approximately 1,000 nautical miles due west of the northern tip of Chile. The deployment and operation of this buoy is a mutual effort of the United States and Chile. (Ron Kozak 8-494-1711)

Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) Data Collection Program (DCP) Data Distribution System - The National Weather Service completed all major milestones for the GOES DCP Data Distribution System to satisfy the needs of the enhanced Colorado River network as well as the national data collection program. The system is operating, and evaluation of the system will take place over the next few months to verify that it will meet reasonable operational performance criteria. (John Schaake 427-7624)

Interagency Hydrometeorological Study Team Meeting - The quarterly meeting of the Interagency Hydrometeorological Study Team was held at National Weather Service (NWS) Headquarters on January 28-30, 1986. Twenty technical experts from the Bureau of Reclamation, Corps of Engineers, Soil Conservation Service, and the NWS met to discuss common problems associated with probable maximum precipitation estimates between the Continental Divide and the 103rd meridian. The team also reviewed progress on the revised report of probable maximum precipitation for the Pacific northwest. The estimates are used to design water resources projects. (Gene Stallings 427-7660)

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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE, DATA, AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Shuttle Tragedy. The cloud resulting from the explosion of the Shuttle Challenger was visible on GOES-6 images taken at five-minute intervals. The images and film loops were picked up and used by numerous news media including the Washington Post, local weather shows, network news programs, etc. (J. Hawkins, 763-8051)

NOAA-G Launch. The NOAA-G launch has been rescheduled from March 13, 1986, to March 17, 1986, at approximately 15:52 GMT. This time is the beginning of a 10 minute window. Planned orbital altitude is 450 NMI with a descending 7:30 AM local nodal crossing time. The Educators' Launch Conference, scheduled for March 16, has been cancelled. (D. Miller, 763-8078)

Chasing Halley's Comet. A comet chaser called NCDC recently requesting historical cloud cover information for the Hawaiian Islands. He is looking for optimum viewing conditions to view Halley's Comet in April of this year. (T. Ross, 672-0682)

Marine Pollution Data and Information Sources. The National Oceanographic Data Center (NODC), in cooperation with the National Marine Pollution Program Office (NMPPPO), has issued a flier/order form describing major marine pollution data and information products and services available from NOAA. The flier lists the principal publications produced as part of the National Marine Pollution Program, as well as marine pollution information sources and services within NOAA. Copies of the flier are available on request from NODC and NMPPPO. (R. Abram, 634-7394)

Satellite Images Used in National Geographic Society Atlas. The National Geographic Society (NGS) recently published an Atlas of North America containing many satellite images provided by Dennis Clark and Richard Legeckis of NESDIS. Specially prepared Coastal Zone Color Scanner (CZCS) images of the Caribbean Sea and Baja California were provided by Dennis Clark; enhanced AVHRR infrared images of the Loop Current and Gulf Stream were supplied by Richard Legeckis. The atlas was introduced at NGS's Explorers Hall in Washington, D.C., where selected images have been on display since last November. (R. Legeckis, 763-4244)

NESDIS Scientist Honored at AMS Conference. Dr. Arnold Gruber, Atmospheric Sciences Branch, Satellite Research Laboratory, was officially recognized as a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society at a business meeting during the National Conference on Scientific Results of the First GARP Global Experiment (FGGE) held in Miami, January 13-17, 1986. (H. Yates, 763-8127)

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OFFICE OF OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH

Pre-Storm Comparison Between the LFM and NGM in Predicting Mesoscale Convective Storm Developments --A general comparison of performance of the NMC LFM model and the recently implemented NGM model indicates that the NGM generally produced slightly better forecasts than did the LFM in setting the stage of the large scale environment prior to mesoscale convective system development. Although both models tend to make similar large scale forecasts, weather systems and the associated model predicted dynamics tend to be more intense in the NGM than the LFM. However, the explicit forecast of precipitation from the NGM was inferior to that of the LFM, implying that a problem exists in NGM precipitation physics. (B. Schwartz, FTS: 320-6481).

Visitor - Dr. David Randall, Goddard Laboratory for Atmospheres, NASA, will be at AOML/HRD on February 3, 1986, to present a seminar entitled "Simulation of the Tropical Boundary Layer and Convection Using a General Circulation Model." (S. Rosenthal, FTS: 350-1400)

Seminars on Hurricane Structure - "Recent Observations on Mesoscale Hurricane Structure" will be the subject of seminars by Dr. Peter G. Black (AOML/HRD) at the Department of Meteorology, St. Louis University, and the Argonne National Laboratory, Chicago, on January 30, 1986. (S. Rosenthal, FTS: 350-1400)

Challenger Explosion Follow-Up -- The Florida Sea Grant Extension Program has been playing a role in the follow-up activities of the space shuttle explosion. When the space shuttle recovery mission began, the Florida Sea Grant Program was involved in informing commercial and recreational fishing vessels regarding their help in picking up the shuttle material that was abundant in a concentrated area. The Florida Sea Grant Extension Program continues to provide instructions on handling and relaying material to NASA for all boaters who happen upon shuttle debris. In addition, as new search zones are cordoned off and restricted to recovery vessels, the Sea Grant Extension Program keeps the public informed. No specific date was given for the end of the recovery mission but NASA officials do not anticipate it lasting much longer.

Anticipating concern from commercial and recreational fishermen, Florida Sea Grant contacted NASA regarding the possibility of environmental contamination resulting from the explosion. The NASA Public Relations office said their Bio-Medical office had concluded that there were not sufficient amounts of contaminants on board the Challenger to produce a hazard in the marine environment. NASA indicated that any hazardous materials on board the shuttle would have been dissipated in the explosion. (B. Griswold, FTS 443-8886)

# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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