



# NOAA in the North Atlantic



NOAA's North Atlantic region spans from the mountains of Maine to the beaches of Virginia and includes all or part of 12 states and the District of Columbia. This newsletter includes highlights of recent activities in our region brought to you by your North Atlantic Regional Team.

## NOAA Playing a Key Role in New Chesapeake Bay Restoration Strategy

Restoring oysters in 20 tributaries by 2025 is one of the major NOAA commitments in a new federal strategy for the Chesapeake Bay. One year after President Obama issued an Executive Order to the federal government to lead a renewed effort to restore the nation's largest estuary, the Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Final Strategy was released on May 12 by NOAA and its partners.

The strategy outlines broad partnerships across major issues like water quality, habitat restoration, and climate adaptation. NOAA is a leader for two of the four major goals under the Strategy, namely "Sustain Fish and Wildlife" and "Recover Habitats," and a primary partner for the supporting strategies to "Strengthen Science" and "Respond to Climate Change."

"This is about fundamentally integrating the work of the Federal community to have a meaningful impact on the protection and restoration of Chesapeake Bay," said Peyton Robertson, Director of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office in Annapolis, Maryland. "I'm excited to be a part of it, and know NOAA is really going to shine in carrying out the actions we've signed up for as a result of this effort."

NOAA will receive \$5 million under the President's FY11 budget to support their priorities. \$2.2 million will go to support NOAA's commitment to a Bay-wide oyster restoration strategy, \$2.3 million will enhance scientific and laboratory applications, and \$500,000 will help operate and maintain NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System (pictured above left), which provides real-time monitoring of the Bay's conditions.

NOAA will also be supporting the expansion of commercial shellfish aquaculture in the Bay and restoring priority Chesapeake tidal marshes and living shorelines that are under pressure from development and climate change. We will also work to improve environmental literacy through the Bay Watershed Education and Training grant program and related efforts.

To view the final strategy, go to <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net>. For more information, contact [Peyton.Robertson@noaa.gov](mailto:Peyton.Robertson@noaa.gov).





NOAA employees in Virginia work to restore dune grasses at First Landing State Park.

## NOAA Restoration Days in the Region

On June 15, over 150 NOAA employees and partners from the Washington, D.C. area participated in the 7th annual NOAA Restoration Day event. This was the first event held at a NOAA facility, the NOAA Cooperative Oxford Lab in Oxford, Maryland. Volunteers planted marsh grass and deployed oyster reef balls.

On May 20, over 50 NOAA employees and partners from the Hampton Roads, Virginia area participated in a dune restoration event at First Landing State Park, near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. The volunteers planted grasses and installed “Do Not Cross the Dunes” signs. This was the Virginia group’s second year spent restoring dunes at the most visited state park in the Commonwealth.

NOAA Restoration Day, organized by the National Ocean Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, is one of the largest voluntary federal employee-sponsored environmental stewardship events in the Chesapeake Bay watershed region. This event has grown every year as NOAA employees in Maryland and Virginia work to restore habitat at two sites in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

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## NOAA-Sea Grant Climate Literacy Workshops Held in Rhode Island

On April 12-14, NOAA’s North Atlantic Regional Team, partnering with the National Sea Grant Office, sponsored a workshop for select NOAA employees and Sea Grant extension agents to build regional capacity for communicating the latest climate information in the North Atlantic.

Thirteen Sea Grant and 11 NOAA representatives attended and heard from NOAA experts on the state of climate science, expressing uncertainty, climate models and regional downscaling, and tools available to stakeholders. Communications guru Bud Ward also discussed the challenges of communicating climate science to the public.

Participants are now planning subsequent workshops for their colleagues to distribute this information further and bring the most current information to NOAA stakeholders. Half and full-day workshops are being planned this summer on July 28 (Greenland, NH), August 3-4 (Ithaca, NY), and August 12 (Woods Hole, MA). Dates have yet to be finalized for Gloucester, MA, Narragansett, RI, State College, PA, Dover, DE, Sandy Hook, NJ, Annapolis, MD, Avery Point, CT, and Gloucester Point, VA. Those interested in NOAA’s climate service delivery are encouraged to attend. Contact: Nicole. [Bartlett@noaa.gov](mailto:Bartlett@noaa.gov)

## DID YOU KNOW?

**NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center has forecasted an “active to extremely active” 2010 Atlantic hurricane season.** NOAA is projecting a 70 percent probability of fourteen to twenty-three named storms (top winds of 39 mph or higher), including eight to fourteen hurricanes (top winds of 74 mph or higher), of which three to seven could be major hurricanes (Category 3, 4 or 5; winds of at least 111 mph).

The NOAA Climate Prediction Center is located in Camp Springs, MD and is a division of the National Weather Service. For more information visit [www.cpc.noaa.gov](http://www.cpc.noaa.gov)



NOAA Deepwater Horizon/BP marine mammal aerial survey team.

## Regional Personnel Assist with Gulf Oil Spill Response

NOAA assets and people from across the nation have been deployed to assist with the Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill, including dozens of employees from the North Atlantic.

One office in the North Atlantic that has had a diversified involvement in the response is the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) located in Woods Hole, MA. NEFSC Director Nancy Thompson was deployed in early May to lead a rapid response contamination testing system. Other NEFSC employees have also answered the call to help.

One such example is the NEFSC aerial survey team, who are unique in their requirement to have had both ditch and open water survival training. This allowed team leader Tim Cole, and team members Peter Duley and Jennifer Gatzke to supplement the staff of only three such observers employed in the Gulf region to increase aerial surveys in the affected area. Duley completed his second deployment in mid-June. Cole and Gatzke have completed one each, with additional deployments planned for later this summer.

One of the aerial team's planes, Twin Otter NOAA 57, is also in the Gulf to support operations.

"It was a real education being involved in such a high profile, multi-agency response effort, and getting to see it for myself," said Gatzke. Gatzke added that the local community is very engaged in the response and everyone from restaurant patrons to NOAA colleagues reminded them to go home and tell people what they saw there.

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## Cape Wind Energy Project & NOAA

On April 28, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced the approval of the Cape Wind project in Nantucket Sound off the coast of Massachusetts. The project consists of 130 turbines located in federal waters.

NOAA has been involved with this project since its inception in 2001. NOAA Fisheries Northeast Regional Office has worked closely with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (formerly Minerals Management Service) to protect trust resources. The Habitat Conservation Division has worked to evaluate effects to fish habitat resulting from this project, while the Protected Resources Division has worked to assess the effects of the proposed project on listed marine mammals and turtles.

NOAA Ocean Service's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management provided guidance to Massachusetts on ensuring federal consistency with their state coastal zone management plan.

NOAA is involved in a range of related projects in the North Atlantic including navigational dredging, offshore energy infrastructure, and the development of regional coastal and marine spatial plans as directed by the President's Ocean Policy Task Force. Contact: [Christopher.Boelke@noaa.gov](mailto:Christopher.Boelke@noaa.gov)

## NOAA People in the North Atlantic Region

### NART Member

**Ellen L. Mecray is the new Regional Climate Service Director for the Northeast Region, based in Bohemia, New York.** For the last four years, she has been the lead for strategic planning for NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. Ellen is regionally based to facilitate inter- and intra-agency dialog and collaboration on climate science.



She is a founding member of the North Atlantic Regional Team (NART) and the NART Climate sub-team lead. The sub-team consists of twenty people representing all of NOAA's line offices and key regional partners.

Prior to joining NOAA, Ellen served as Oceanographer with the US Geological Survey in Woods Hole, MA. Ellen holds a B.A. in Geology from Colgate University and a M.S. in Geological Oceanography from the University of Rhode Island. Her research interests include geochemistry and coastal contaminants, and paleo-climatic reconstructions.

In her spare time, Ellen is an avid runner, coaches middle school girl's lacrosse and enjoys hitting Cape Cod's beaches with her husband Steve and their two golden retrievers.

### NART Background

The NART is one of eight regional teams created by NOAA's Regional Collaboration effort. It is composed of 19 members from five line offices and is currently led by Peyton Robertson. Nicole Bartlett is the NART Regional Coordinator. For more information on team members and activities visit: [http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI\\_Capabilities/north\\_atlantic.html](http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI_Capabilities/north_atlantic.html)

## NOAA Places in the North Atlantic Region

### NOAA Marine Operations Center Atlantic

**The NOAA Marine Operations Center-Atlantic (MOC-A) is located in Norfolk, Virginia.** MOC-A serves as homeport to NOAA ship *Thomas Jefferson*, which is currently supporting NOAA's Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill response efforts in the Gulf of Mexico.

In addition to the *Jefferson*, MOC-A also provides managerial, logistical, and operational support to the eight other active NOAA ships in the Atlantic including *Ronald H. Brown* and *Nancy Foster* in Charleston, South Carolina; *Delaware II* and *Henry B. Bigelow* in Woods Hole, Massachusetts; *Oregon II*, *Pisces* and *Gordon Gunter* in Pascagoula, Mississippi; and *Okeanos Explorer* in Davisville, Rhode Island.

These NOAA vessels conduct hydrographic surveys, and perform oceanographic and fisheries research that supports the work of the NOAA line offices. MOC-A vessels primarily operate in the North Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean Sea. The *Ronald H. Brown* and *Okeanos Explorer* operate worldwide.

The Office of Coast Survey's Atlantic Hydrographic Branch is co-located with the marine center and processes hydrographic survey data acquired by NOAA vessels and Navigation Response Teams. These data are then used to compile cartographic revisions to NOAA nautical charts.

Captain Michael S. Devany is the commanding officer of MOC-A. For more information about this facility visit <http://www.moc.noaa.gov/moa.htm>



The NOAA Marine Operations Center - Atlantic in Norfolk, VA.