



News from

Fall 2009

NOAA in the North Atlantic

NART Newsletter

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Fall 2009



NOAA Provides Emergency Funding to Aid New England Red Tide Response

In July and August 2009, New England experienced an unprecedented red tide or harmful algal bloom event, which resulted in the near-complete closure of shellfish harvesting in the coastal waters of Maine, New Hampshire, and northern Massachusetts. NOAA's Center for Sponsored Coastal Ocean Research responded by providing emergency funding to Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), in partnership with the University of Maine, to support sampling, mapping, and forecasting of red tide location and intensity in the Gulf of Maine. By mid September, many of the shellfish harvesting closures remained in effect.

This year's red tide event was consistent with the seasonal forecast issued in the spring by WHOI and North Carolina State University. The forecast was based on a predictive model developed with support by NOAA.

For more information contact John Ewald at John.Ewald@noaa.gov

Welcome to the Fall 2009 NOAA North Atlantic Region e-newsletter.

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. Here are highlights of recent activities in our region brought to you by your NOAA North Atlantic Regional Team (NART).

NOAA Moves to Implement Chesapeake Bay Executive Order

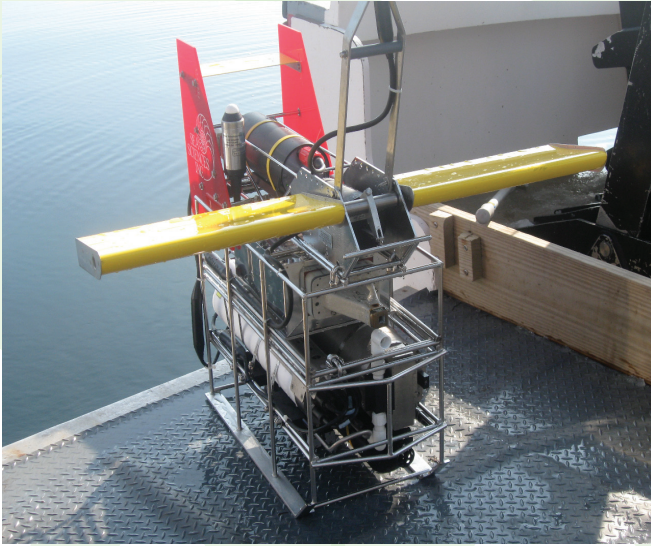
On May 12, 2009, President Obama issued Executive Order 13508 to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. The Executive Order called the Bay a "national treasure" and directed the federal government to exercise greater leadership and action to restore the estuary.

The Executive Order established a Federal Leadership Committee which includes NOAA as a representative of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Executive Order directed the Department of Commerce to submit reports to the Committee that describe key challenges in the Bay watershed and recommend actions.

On September 9, the Committee released the draft reports. NOAA co-led report drafting teams for the following:

- assessing the impacts of climate change on the Bay watershed
- strengthening scientific support for decision-making
- developing focused and coordinated habitat and research activities

The draft reports can be viewed at <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net>.



The "Mariner Shuttle" is able to measure ocean productivity — from water chemistry to zooplankton and light penetration.

President's Ocean Policy Task Force Holds Listening Session in Region

The East Coast regional listening session of the **President's Ocean Policy Task Force** was held in **Providence, Rhode Island**, on **September 24**. Expert testimony was provided by eight panelists representing tribal interests, regional ocean governance, research & science, ecosystem-based management and restoration, marine recreation, fisheries/aquaculture, climate change and hazard resilience, and renewable energy.

Over 250 people attended, 70 testified and an additional 450 tuned in via the web. A transcript and video of the session is expected to be available via the White House Council on Environmental Quality's website at: www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq

Correction: The summer newsletter contained an article which incorrectly stated that the NOAA Ship *Henry B. Bigelow* was homeported at the NOAA Woods Hole Laboratory. In fact, the ship's homeport has not yet been named.

"One NOAA" Team Recovers Lost Instrument

On August 12, 2009, scientists at the NOAA Fisheries Laboratory in Narragansett, RI were reunited with a lost piece of monitoring equipment worth approximately \$200,000.

Researchers at the Narragansett Lab tow a device called "Mariner Shuttle" (pictured left) through Narragansett Bay on a monthly basis to record data that helps NOAA scientists assess changes in the Bay's ecosystem. On July 16, during a routine survey, the shuttle's tow cable snapped, sending the device ninety feet to the bottom. Initial attempts by divers to recover the instrument were unsuccessful. The lab requested the assistance of NOAA's Office of Coast Survey (OCS) to help locate the device.

A crew from OCS Navigation Response Team 5 used side scan and multi-beam sonar to locate the shuttle which was then recovered by divers from NOAA Fisheries and the University of Rhode Island. The instrument was back in service in September.

For more information contact Matt.Wingate@noaa.gov

DID YOU KNOW?

Many NOAA projects that are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 are taking place in the North Atlantic region including:

--\$8.4 million in hydrographic survey projects in Virginia and the Delmarva peninsula. The surveys will include over 2000 nautical miles of the Chesapeake Bay.

--\$32.7 million in coastal habitat restoration projects from Virginia to Maine, including restoring hundreds of acres of wetlands, salt marsh, and oyster reefs, as well as removing fish passage barriers on coastal rivers and streams.

NOAA IOOS Funding to Support Ocean Observing in the North Atlantic Region

In August, NOAA's Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) announced more than \$5.1 million in competitive grant funding to support ocean observing efforts in the North Atlantic region.

Approximately \$2.5 million will support ocean observing activities from Long Island Sound to the Canadian Maritimes, as well as other projects funded by Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. The grant will also fund a variety of initiatives to improve ocean and coastal data and support fisheries and ecosystem management.

Rutgers University will receive \$1.7 million for continued development of a comprehensive ocean observing system for the Mid-Atlantic. Rutgers will focus on efforts to better coordinate and use data collected by underwater vehicles, buoys and other tools. Additional funding in the Mid-Atlantic will support the Chesapeake Inundation Prediction System to build forecasting efforts and predictions for the impacts of storm surge and for regional data management and communication efforts.

For more information contact Ben.Sherman@noaa.gov

NOAA to Implement First Fishery-Wide Catch-Share Program in Region Since '89

On August 24, 2009, the first catch-share program for the tilefish fishery was approved by NOAA Fisheries Service, after its adoption was recommended by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. The program allots each fisherman a share of the annual tilefish quota and will become effective November 1, 2009. New recreational fishing requirements for tilefish were also adopted.

The council recommended NOAA approve the catch-share program in an effort to reduce overcapacity in the fishery and improve profitability and working conditions for commercial tilefish fishermen.

This is the second catch-share program to be implemented in the Northeast. The first was in 1989 for Atlantic surfclams and quahogs.

Contact Timothy.Cardiasmenos@noaa.gov for more information.



NOAA GFDL Scientists: Increased Atlantic Hurricane Numbers Likely Due to Increase in Monitoring

Records of Atlantic hurricanes seem to show an increase in storm frequency since the late 19th century, but researchers with the NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) in Princeton, NJ co-authored a study published in August that reveals that the increase in tropical storm and hurricane numbers is likely due to better observations of short-lived storms. Improvements in observational tools and analysis techniques have resulted in more complete storm monitoring and recording systems.

A sampling methodology developed by GFDL scientists Gabriel Vecchi and Thomas Knutson takes into account the possibility of "missing" storms not measured by ships over the open Atlantic Ocean. Previously published research by Vecchi and Knutson demonstrated that a substantial number of storms would not have been observed or recorded during the era when satellites were not available, and ships were used to record storms.

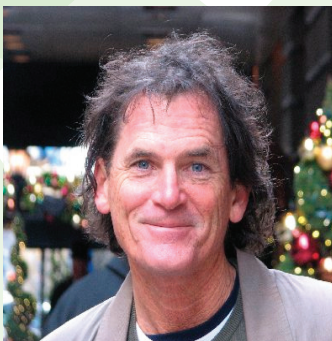
Although there is no significant increase in tropical cyclone frequency, their paper, "Impact of Duration Thresholds on Atlantic Cyclone Counts" (in American Meteorological Society's Journal of Climate) does not consider the possible changes in hurricane strength that may occur in the future, due to climate change.

Contact Jana.Goldman@noaa.gov for more information.

NOAA People in the North Atlantic Region

NART Team Member

George McKillop, the Deputy Regional Hydrologist of NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) Eastern Region, is the NART Integrated Water Resources Team Lead. In his current position, George manages hydrologic warning and forecast services for NWS. He supports water resources partners, planners and decision-makers by enhancing flood warning services to protect lives and property. As part of the NOAA water team, he is working to develop the Integrated Water Resources Science and Services consortium – an innovative partnership of federal agencies with complementary missions in water science, observation, prediction and management to meet the growing information needs of the water resources community.



George was formerly a meteorologist for Weather Forecast Offices in Honolulu and Los Angeles. He moved East, joining the "water side" of NWS; first as a Hydrologist at the Northeast River Forecast Center and then at WFO New York City where he managed hydrologic services for the New York City/Tri-State Region.

NART Background

The NART is one of eight regional teams created by NOAA's Regional Collaboration effort. It is composed of 20 members from five line offices and is currently led by Peyton Robertson. Nicole Bartlett is the NART's full-time Regional Coordinator. NOAA employees may obtain more information on team members and activities at: http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI_Capabilities/north_atlantic.html

NOAA Places in the North Atlantic Region

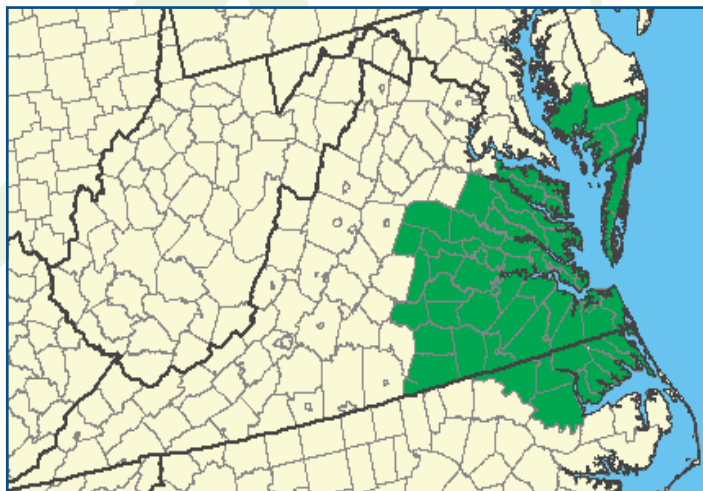
Wakefield Weather Forecast Office

The National Weather Service Forecast Office in Wakefield, Virginia (WFO) is located amid pine forests, peanut and cotton fields in southeast Virginia. The Wakefield office provides weather, water, and climate forecasts and warnings for the lower Maryland Eastern Shore, all of central and southeastern Virginia, and northeast North Carolina. The office is also responsible for marine forecasts and warnings for the Virginia portion of the Chesapeake Bay, the Atlantic coastal waters from Fenwick Island Delaware to the northern outer banks of North Carolina, as well as the Currituck Sound. Daily observations from more than 60 climate cooperative observers are collected and maintained by the office.

A staff of 23 people provides 24 hour a day coverage to a wide customer base including the general public, marine, aviation and fire weather communities. Wakefield has an active outreach program, including schools talks and tours, boat show participation, SKYWARN spotter training, and big events such as the Virginia State Fair.

The office also provides programming for six weather radio transmitters that broadcast official National Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For the latest forecasts from Wakefield, go to <http://www.weather.gov/akq>



The Wakefield WFO forecast area includes parts of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and North Carolina.