



News from

Summer 2009

# NOAA in the North Atlantic



Welcome to the Summer 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).

## NART Co-Hosts Interagency Meeting on NE Climate Change

On June 2-4, the New England Federal Partners, with strong leadership from the NART climate team, hosted an interagency meeting on climate change in the Northeast in Gloucester, MA. This meeting gathered national and regional representatives of federal agencies with climate-related responsibilities for discussions on federal roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for collaboration.

The group heard from climate experts outside of the federal government, and representatives from each Federal agency described existing programs relating to climate change adaptation. The group identified common partners and projects for increased collaboration on the region's coasts, built environment and living resources. As a result of the meeting, many Federal projects have been enhanced and a draft framework for stakeholders on Federal agency roles regarding climate adaptation planning is in progress. In addition, this regional effort will inform the national discussion on Federal coordination on climate issues.

For more information contact Ellen Mecray at [ellen.l.mecray@noaa.gov](mailto:ellen.l.mecray@noaa.gov).

## NOAA Dedicates New Chesapeake Bay Research Vessel

On April 15, NOAA christened a new state-of-the-art research vessel, R/V *Bay Hydro II*, which will collect oceanographic data in the Chesapeake Bay region – data critical to safe navigation and environmental protection in the nation's largest estuary. The dedication took place in Baltimore's Inner Harbor, featuring a ceremonial breaking of a champagne bottle over the bow and a cannon salute from the USS Constellation.

The *Bay Hydro II*, based in Solomons, MD, is NOAA's primary platform to test and evaluate new and emerging hydrographic survey technologies. The bay's shoreline, including its islands and tidal wetlands, spans over 11,600 miles — more shoreline than the West Coast of the United States. R/V *Bay Hydro II*'s mission is critical to ensuring commercial ships and recreational boaters can safely travel to and from mid-Atlantic ports, marinas and docks.

For more information contact John Ewald at [john.ewald@noaa.gov](mailto:john.ewald@noaa.gov).



NOAA Survey Ship *Thomas Jefferson* participates in National Maritime Day festivities.

## NOAA Celebrated at National Maritime Day

On May 22, NOAA was honored at the 76th Annual National Maritime Day festivities in Norfolk, Virginia. The event featured a flyover of one of NOAA's P-3 Hurricane Hunter aircraft and a wreath laying ceremony from the bow of the NOAA Survey Ship *Thomas Jefferson*. As part of the celebration, more than 450 attendees from Virginia's maritime community and state businesses paid special tribute to NOAA's scientists, professionals, and NOAA Corps officers who work diligently to support safe commerce on America's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

Several hundred NOAA personnel are located in Virginia's Hampton Roads area and work with port and state officials to ensure safe transportation and environmental protection, including employees from the Office of Coast Survey, National Geodetic Survey, Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, U.S.S. Monitor National Marine Sanctuary, Marine Operations Center-Atlantic, National Weather Service and offices of NOAA Fisheries.

## North Atlantic Region Briefs

- On June 10-11, in Durham, NH researchers and coastal managers met to review the **Gulf of Maine Strategic Regional Ocean Science Plan**. Sponsored by NOAA's Center for Sponsored Coastal and Ocean Research and the NE Sea Grant Consortium, the workshop explored three topics: linkage of coastal ocean and watershed processes, biodiversity and invasive species, and cumulative impacts of multiple stressors to estuarine and coastal ecosystems. This effort, and a similar science plan being developed for the New York Bight are supported by the National Sea Grant College Program.
- On June 18, over 200 NOAA employees participated in the 6th Annual **NOAA Restoration Day** at sites located in Maryland and Virginia. The Maryland event took place near Havre De Grace at Otter Point Creek, a component of the Maryland Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. The Virginia event was located at First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach, near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Restoration activities at both sites included planting native vegetation and removing marine debris. The purpose of this annual event is to provide an opportunity for NOAA staff to work in the field, together as one organization, helping to restore coastal habitat in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

## DID YOU KNOW?

In FY 2009, the North Atlantic Regional Team is funding projects of regional significance including: the development of "One NOAA" regional outreach kits, science and policy workshops on marine spatial planning and climate adaptation strategies, a marine mammal stranding research initiative, two coastal inundation studies (Chesapeake Bay and New England), stakeholder coordination in the Susquehanna River basin, and improvements to the Potomac River stream gauge network.

For more information contact Nicole Bartlett at [nicole.bartlett@noaa.gov](mailto:nicole.bartlett@noaa.gov).



## Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Partnership Created

On June 4, the Governors of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia announced the establishment of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) and released a historic interstate agreement to improve the health of the region's coastal and ocean resources. The governors agreed to establish mechanisms for greater coordination on regional ocean issues, and to develop and implement shared actions to advance the partnership's priorities.

As with the Northeast Regional Ocean Council, NOAA will have a role to play in supporting the protection of habitat, collaborating on renewable energy siting, promoting water quality and preparing for climate change.

Additional information is available on the MARCO website: <http://www.midatlanticocean.org/>.

## NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office Holds Fisheries Science Symposium

The NCBO Fisheries Science Symposium was held on April 21-22 at the Patuxent Research Refuge, in Laurel, Maryland and featured updates from NCBO-supported research on Chesapeake Bay species, including eel, cownose rays, horseshoe crabs, blue crabs (research, enhancement, and derelict fishing gear), and striped bass and mycobacteriosis (fish skin disease), as well as updates on monitoring and modeling efforts, including fisheries visualization efforts. The second day of the symposium focused on the NCBO-sponsored menhaden research program, including such topics as recruitment dynamics, winter feeding habits, and predator/prey interactions. The research results from these various projects will help to inform management decisions in Maryland and Virginia for several of these key Bay species.

For more information go to <http://chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/docs/fss09program.pdf>

## Marine Spatial Planning Workshops Held in the Region

NOAA's Coastal Service Center and the North Atlantic Regional Team supported two workshops held by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), on marine spatial planning (MSP). The first was held on June 8-9 in Warwick, RI and the second on June 10-11 in Newark, DE. The workshops provided an overview of MSP concepts and a forum for reviewing TNC's Northwest Atlantic Marine Ecoregional Assessment which covers the area from Cape Hatteras to Nova Scotia. There were approximately 100 participants at each workshop, representing NGOs, state and Federal management agencies, stakeholders and scientists.

Offshore wind energy siting is a major driver for MSP in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. NOAA will play a supporting role as this issue develops. At the Delaware meeting, the newly formed MARCO was mentioned as an excellent vehicle for building MSP in that region.

For more information contact Betsy Nicholson at [betsy.nicholson@noaa.gov](mailto:betsy.nicholson@noaa.gov).



On June 12, NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco visited the NOAA Woods Hole Laboratory and received a tour of the Woods Hole Science Aquarium.

## NOAA People in the North Atlantic Region

### New NART Team Leader

**Peyton Robertson**, the Director of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO) since 2007, is the new NART Regional Team Lead. As part of his responsibilities, Peyton will direct the NART's efforts to improve collaboration among NOAA offices in the North Atlantic, and improve the delivery of NOAA products and services to our stakeholders.



Prior to becoming the Director of NCBO, Peyton served as the Deputy Director. He has also worked for NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management where he managed the coastal non-point source pollution program.

Peyton is succeeding Dean Gulezian, the Director of the National Weather Service's Eastern Region who has served with distinction as the NART Regional Team Lead since the inception of the NOAA regional effort in 2007. Dean is retiring from NOAA this summer after 35 years of federal service.

### NART Background

The NART is one of eight regional teams created by NOAA's Regional Collaboration effort. It is comprised of 20 members from 5 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: [https://www.ppbs.noaa.gov/Regional\\_Collaboration/North\\_Atlantic/north\\_atlantic.html](https://www.ppbs.noaa.gov/Regional_Collaboration/North_Atlantic/north_atlantic.html).

## NOAA Places in the North Atlantic Region

### Northeast Fisheries Science Center Woods Hole Laboratory

**NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center Woods Hole Laboratory** occupies 3.4 acres in the village of the Woods Hole, MA on the southwestern corner of Cape Cod. This thriving research community is also home to the Marine Biological Laboratory, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Created by Congress in 1871 as a summer sampling station, the Woods Hole Laboratory is the world's oldest facility specifically dedicated to marine fisheries research. The Laboratory employs about 175 natural and social scientists, technicians, and administrators. These scientists conduct research on fisheries resources and the fishermen who harvest them, as well as marine mammals and other protected resources in the northwest Atlantic. Results of this research are used by state and federal fisheries and habitat managers.

The Laboratory houses a public and research aquarium that is open to visitors year round and is also home port for two research vessels, the R/V *Henry Bigelow* and R/V *Delaware II*.

For more information go to [www.nefsc.noaa.gov](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov).



The Woods Hole Laboratory is the headquarters for NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center.