

FISCAL YEAR 2021



# ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT



NOAA Regional  
Collaboration  
**NETWORK**

*Improving NOAA's service to the Nation through collaboration*



About the photos on cover and inside cover.

The NOAA West Regional Team is pleased to announce the winners of the [NOAA's "Picture Climate Change" Student Photo Contest](#).

In this contest, we asked students to showcase photos of how climate change has impacted them or their communities. As part of the contest, we asked students to include a short write-up of why they took the picture and how it represents climate change, from their perspective. Our vision for this project and contest is to enhance the understanding of diverse climate experiences as seen through the lens of America's youth. We wanted this to be more than just a photo contest. It's an opportunity for NOAA to see and hear from students about their climate change perspectives and experiences, and for those students to hear back from NOAA about what NOAA science, research, and projects we are taking related to the climate impacts the students are experiencing.

## DEAR READERS

It is with great pleasure that I introduce some of the most inspiring FY2021 accomplishments of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Regional Collaboration Network (Network).

The Network's 175 employees and partners serve on eight Regional Teams and at NOAA Headquarters, where they have championed significant projects and initiatives that improve NOAA's service to the Nation. I had the opportunity to attend the Network's virtual 2021 all hands Annual Workshop, and I applaud the exemplary work achieved by this group of dedicated volunteers.

This year, the Network responded to the Administration's call to action, hosting several Climate and Equity roundtables that connected NOAA Leadership with underserved communities facing impacts from climate change. Multiple teams hosted congressional engagement activities to build regional connections with district congressional staff. Despite the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the teams rallied to continue educating NOAA staff and partners on NOAA's diverse mission through regional webinars and the NOAA Live! series.

These are just a few examples of how the Regional Collaboration Network continues to improve NOAA's service to the Nation. Please join me in thanking these influential teams for their outstanding work and celebrating the achievements showcased in this 2021 Annual Accomplishments Report.

Sincerely,

**BEN  
FRIEDMAN**

*NOAA Deputy Secretary for Operations*



## ABOUT US

Many of the complex challenges that drive NOAA missions are place-based, and require interdisciplinary approaches and regionally tailored solutions. The Regional Collaboration Network addresses regional challenges by engaging and connecting people and resources within the regions and with headquarters, in ways that are rich in regional insight and inform action.

### Our Vision

A unified and regionally integrated NOAA

### Our Mission

To identify, communicate, and respond to regional needs; catalyze collaboration; and connect people and capabilities to advance NOAA's mission and priorities

## ICON KEY



National Weather Service



NOAA Fisheries



National Ocean Service



National Environmental Satellite,  
Data, and Information Service



NOAA Research



Office of Marine and Aircraft  
Operations

*Thank you to our Network and partners who work hard to improve NOAA's service to the Nation.*



## Pacific Islands Participates in and Contributes to the 2021 Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum



To help users better understand climate risks, the Pacific Islands Regional Team participated in and contributed valuable data and analysis to the 8th Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum. This Forum focused on producing consensus-based, user-relevant climate outlook guidance in real time to reduce climate-related risks and support sustainable development. It was reported that there have been consistently high sea levels across the South Pacific since October 2020, with warm water temperatures. The warm water contributed to coral bleaching in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Palau, and Federated States of Micronesia. Surveys reported that

coral bleaching at PNG and Solomon Islands, mentioned as being the worst in 15 years at PNG. The summaries and outlooks were developed through international collaborative efforts between NOAA, University of Guam, University of Hawaii, Pacific Meteorological Council, Australian Government- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, APEC Climate Centre, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, and other Pacific Island countries.



The Pacific Islands Regional Team used their expertise to contribute to efforts focused at addressing climate impacts in the region.

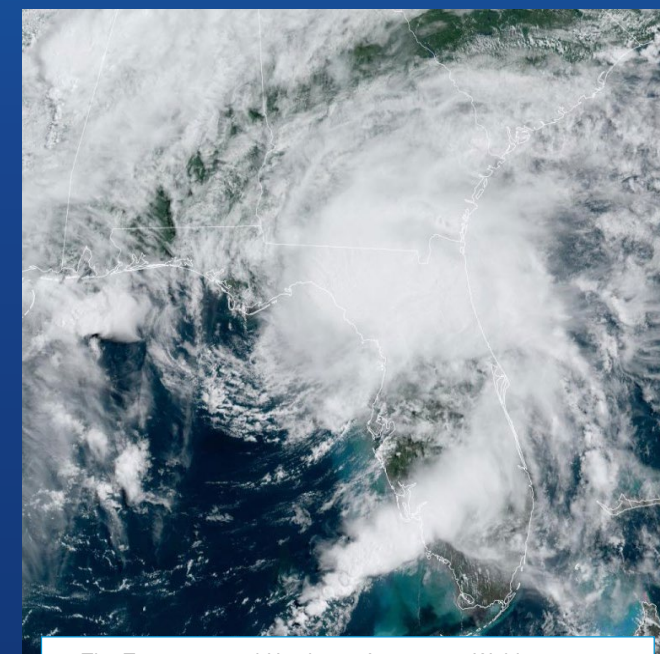
“Thank you for the very well-done presentation. The speakers were articulate and engaging, and the content was fascinating. Thank you also, for working to make us safer, every single day.”

-- L. Allen Linkenhoker  
Pollution Response Coordinator Sr.,  
Department of Environmental Quality

## Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series Prepares Southeast and Caribbean Stakeholders for Active Season



To help emergency managers and broadcast meteorologists be aware of new products and services provided by NOAA in advance of the hurricane season, NOAA’s Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team hosts an annual [Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series](#). The 2021 series supported by the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory, and the National Hurricane Center, occurred during May and early June and featured six webinars, including one in Spanish. Topics included the 2020 hurricane season, impacts and recovery from Hurricane Maria, measuring storm surge, marine navigation and forecasts, forecast accuracy, and interoffice cooperation. The webinar series had 1,826 live attendees and received numerous positive comments from across the region.

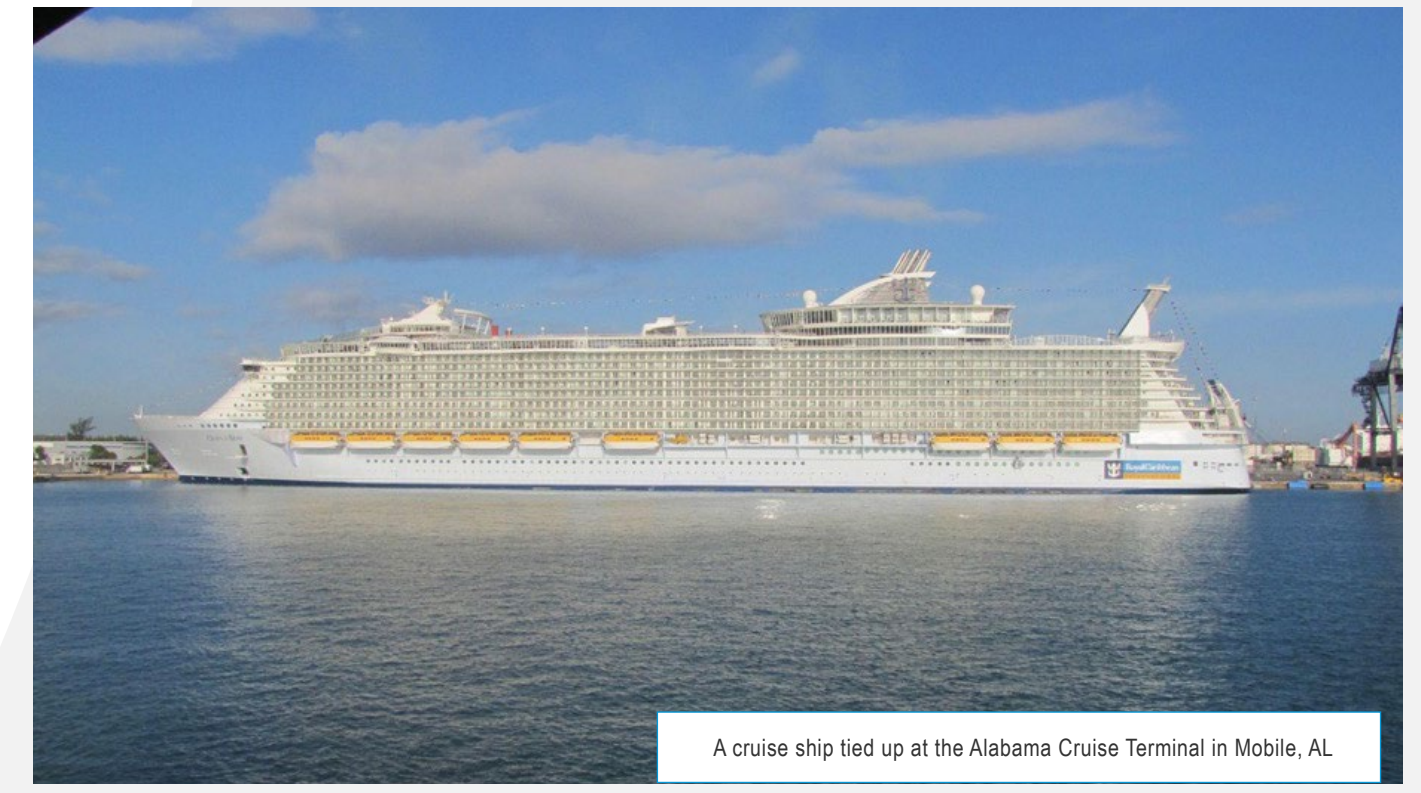


The Team’s annual Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series is a valuable and popular tool for NOAA to use to communicate with stakeholders and decision makers.

# Economic Development and Environmental Stewardship

Supporting our partners and stakeholders is a major component of the NOAA Regional Collaboration Team's activities.

In FY21, the Teams completed numerous projects that assisted mariners, researchers, educators, and the public.



A cruise ship tied up at the Alabama Cruise Terminal in Mobile, AL

## Marine Channels Forecast Expands to Mobile Bay



Visibility and other weather and oceanographic conditions can change a lot from a bay's mouth to a port within it. Forecasts for key points along shipping channels are valuable for safe and efficient marine transportation. The Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team enabled collaboration between NWS, NOS and Port of Mobile to expand the Marine Channels Forecast from Tampa Bay, Florida to Mobile Bay, Alabama. Mobile Bay will begin

producing an experimental Marine Channels Forecast for the 2021-2022 Fall-Winter fog season. This connects NOS water level and current forecast guidance with NWS wind, gust, waves, rain, weather, and visibility forecasts.

## Southeast Region Climate Resilience Toolkit Released



The Climate Resilience Toolkit (<https://toolkit.climate.gov/>) provides a wealth of information for meeting the challenges of a changing climate. The Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team organized volunteers from across the region to assist in developing a regional section for the Southeast. The [Southeast Region](#) section

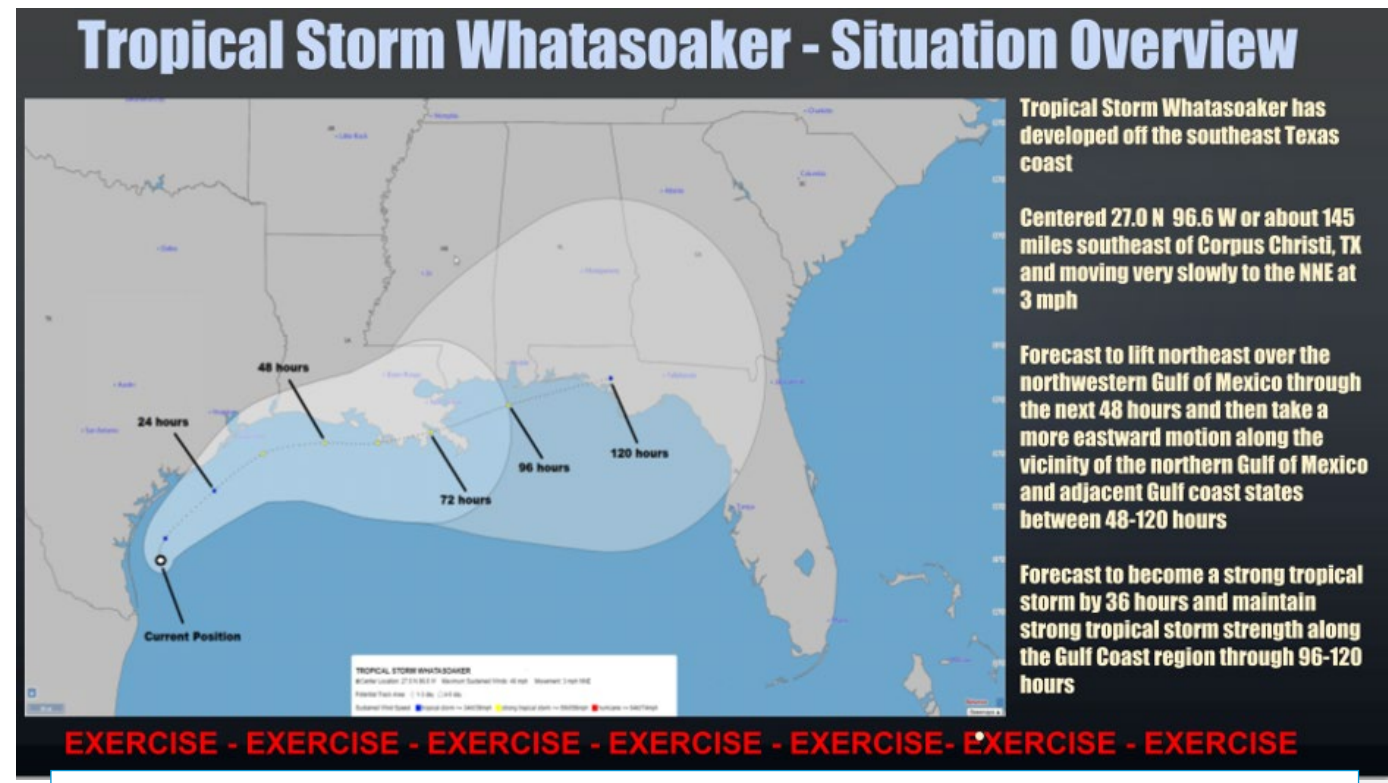
went live in June 2021 and contains an overall narrative, with sections focusing on urban, rural, coastal, and ecosystem impacts, as well as a section on building resilience in the region. The team also tagged resources for the region including tools, case studies, reports, and training opportunities.

## Gulf of Mexico Hosts Successful "Coastal Chaos" Table Top



All NOAA Offices play a role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from a variety of hazardous events in the Gulf of Mexico region. To improve coordination and communication, the Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team and the NOAA Disaster Preparedness Program held the "Coastal Chaos" virtual tabletop exercise. This multi-hazard scenario (chemical spill followed by two tropical

cyclones) allowed participants to learn about capabilities and resources throughout NOAA, which fosters connections useful in future, real events. The exercise also highlighted challenges including a distributed and virtual workforce, and the need to share disaster-related information across regional offices.



"Coastal Chaos" participants stepped through NOAA responses to major events that can happen in the Gulf.



In partnership with Sea Grant, the Gulf and Central Teams have brought the acclaimed Watershed Game to dozens of educators across 14 states.

### Watershed Game Expands with New Coastal Version



The development of a coastal model of the popular "Watershed Game" was supported by joint funding from the NOAA Central and Gulf of Mexico Regional Teams. Tailored for the unique attributes of the challenges of coastal communities, the new version builds on the upper basin models and includes specific sector lessons and a resilience component. Additionally, funds provided an opportunity to host two training sessions for 36 attendees representing 14 states from the Great Lakes, Central and Gulf of Mexico.

"I plan to improve upon my skills and knowledge and build a foundation for UAS research and resource management at Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve to assist local, state, and federal partners in understanding coastal ecosystem change."

-- Alix North  
scholarship recipient,  
Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve

### Uncrewed Aerial Systems in the Southeast



Uncrewed aerial systems (aka drones) are increasingly being used for a variety of applications including research, monitoring, and coastal management. Held in October 2020, to improve coordination across uses, the Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team sponsored a [Drones in the Coastal Zone - Southeast Workshop](#). This workshop improved awareness of the emerging issues in coastal management, state-of-science, and regulatory policies in drone technologies. In addition, the Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team and Southeastern Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association supported seven competitively-awarded scholarships to attend an online drone course provided by Duke University Marine Robotics and Remote Sensing Lab.



As uncrewed aerial systems have become a major part of research, the team seized the opportunity to reduce duplication of effort and increase collaboration across sectors in the Southeast.

# NOAA Live! Partners with NOAA Heritage in First Ever Virtual NOAA Open Houses



As the COVID- 19 situation continued to shake up traditional outreach offerings at NOAA, the North Atlantic Regional Team offered the popular NOAA Live! webinar series as a way to host the NOAA Open House. With this support, the NOAA Heritage Program sponsored its first-ever virtual open house series. Nearly 2,500 viewers from 40 states “visited” six NOAA facilities through live webinars and interacted with scientists who work there. The webinars continue to receive thousands of views through the NOAA Live! archive. Overall, NOAA Live! completed its 100th webinar in 2021, with speakers from every region and line office. The series birthed an Alaska spin off, and drew thousands of live viewers.

**NOAA Live!**  
**2021 Virtual Open House Series**

**3/30: Kodiak, AK**  
Kodiak Fisheries Lab

**3/3: Woods Hole, MA**  
Woods Hole Fisheries Lab & Aquarium

**3/17: Santa Cruz, CA**  
Monterey Bay Sanctuary Exploration Center

**3/10: Suitland, MD**  
Satellite Operations Facility

**3/24: Long Beach, CA**  
Seafood Inspection Facility

**3/31: Lakeland, FL**  
Aircraft Operations Center

**NOAA**

Learn more: [www.noaa.gov/openhouse](http://www.noaa.gov/openhouse)

NOAA's first virtual Open House was a success due to the NOAA Live! Webinar platform and its expansive audience.



# Supporting Diversity and Inclusion, NOAA's Workforce, and Scientific Integrity

NOAA's Regional Collaboration Network brings people together and shares NOAA's mission with a wide audience in a regional and cross Line Office way. Over the last year the Teams have educated NOAA staff, brought new diverse training and leadership development, and created partnerships to enhance our workforce.

## Collaboration Brings Alaska Native Relations Training to Staff



A major priority for the NOAA's Alaska Regional Collaboration Team has been working with Alaska Native Tribes and Organizations to improve and integrate the agency's engagement with the Indigenous peoples of Alaska. Through connections made in previous collaborations with Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, NOAA was invited to participate in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska Native

Relations 101 Course and be part of the inaugural offering of Alaska Pacific University's "Indigenous Land Stewardship: Creating Meaningful Collaborations across Alaska" course. The Teams plan to evaluate these experiences and recommend options for educating all NOAA Alaska staff and those who regularly work in the region.



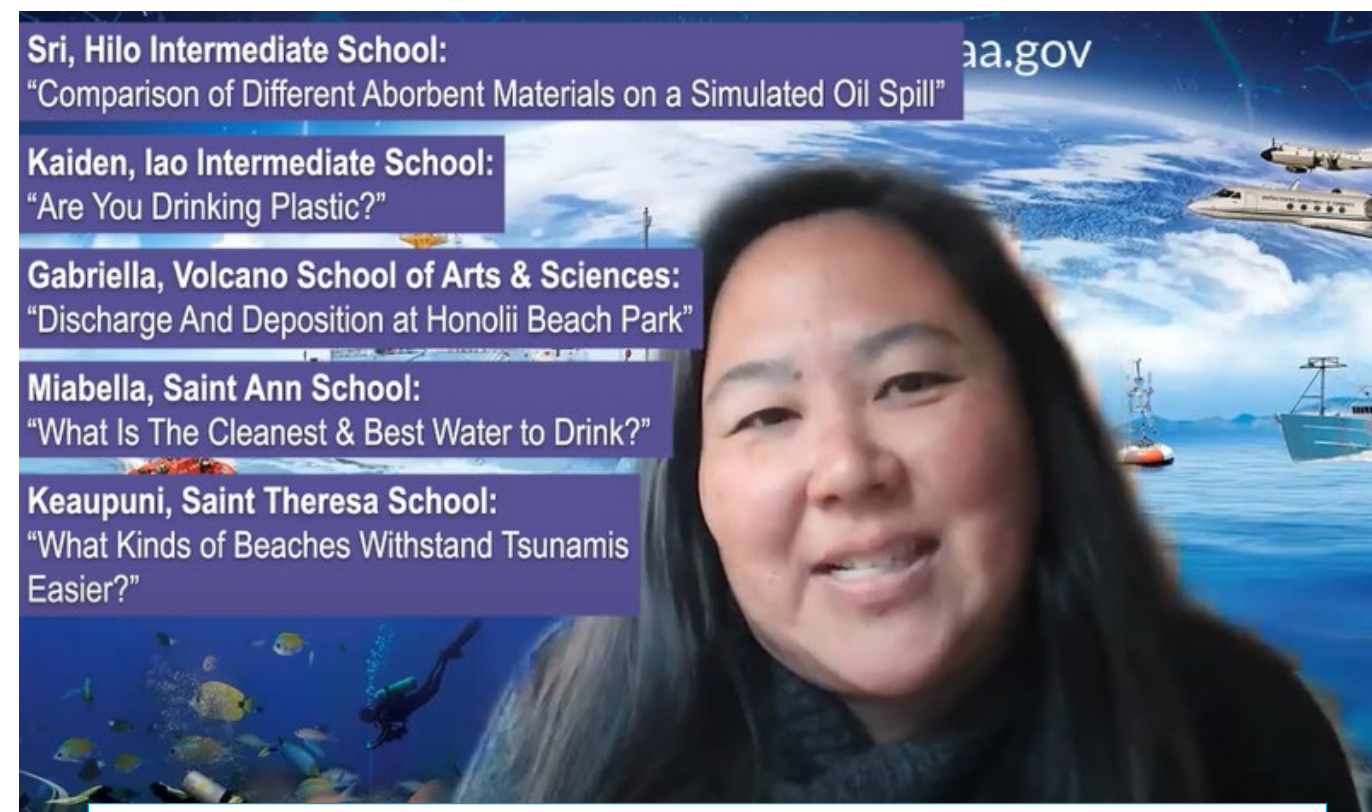
NOAA staff in Alaska have benefited from tribal relations training, allowing them to grow and strengthen relationships with Alaska Natives.

# Pacific Islands Supports Hawaii State Science and Engineering Fair



The West Regional Collaboration Team, with contract support from the Office of Personnel Management, launched a 12-month NOAA West Leadership Program Pilot. The pilot offers geographic and cost accessibility to western region NOAA staff, a focus on NOAA culture, regional cross-line networking and learning opportunities, and support for new and emerging NOAA leaders. Eighteen participants from all NOAA Line and Staff Offices in the NOAA West geographic area were selected to participate. About 25 senior NOAA leaders volunteered to teach the curriculum, drawing on lived professional experience at NOAA to convey leadership concepts.

Participants will develop three capstone projects that fall into NOAA West priority areas. The projects include an integrated, cross-Line Office web portal on wildfires; a youth photo contest showcasing climate change impacts in Western states; and, a NOAA West Diversity, Equity, Inclusion presence, award, and recommendations for better incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into the NOAA West Leadership Program process and curriculum. The Team plans to begin recruiting for a 2nd cohort for the leadership program in April 2022, and will begin the 2nd cohort in October 2022.



Diverse student projects are supported by NOAA staff in the Pacific Islands through a long standing partnership with the Hawaii State Science and Engineering Fair. Jean Tanimoto, Regional Director, for the NOAA Office for Coastal Management-Pacific Islands announces the winners in the junior division category of the Hawaii State Science and Engineering Fair.



The tribal training hosted by the West Team helps to strengthen and build tribal engagement over topics such as pacific salmon and steelhead tribal harvest.

### West Regional Team Develops Tribal Training



The West Regional Collaboration Team contracted the Udall Foundation and the Tribal Caucus of the West Coast Ocean Alliance to develop online trainings for NOAA staff on the [Tribal Caucus's Guidance and Responsibilities for Effective Tribal Consultation, Communication, and Engagement: A Guide for Agencies Working with West Coast Tribes on Ocean & Coastal Issues](#). Udall Foundation recruited and trained tribe members to participate in the training and lead breakout sessions to give practical and experience-based advice on planning for tribal engagement in federal actions. The

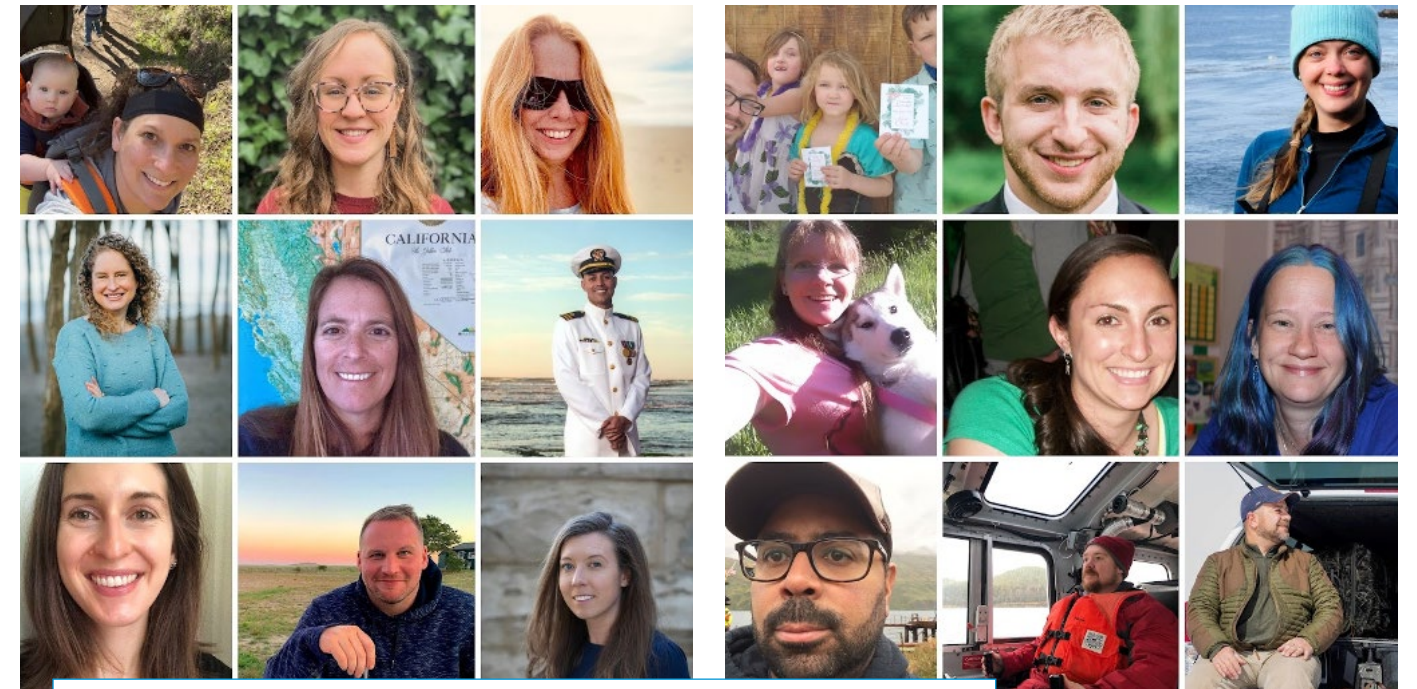
West Regional Team hosted over 75 participants from across NOAA including 22 NOAA West Team members in these training sessions. The Team plans to explore ways to repeat the training opportunity in future years.

### NOAA West Leadership Program Pilot Underway



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Eighteen NOAA staff from the West region were selected to participate in the first ever NOAA West Regional Leadership Program.

## Engaging NOAA Workforce Through Three Minute Thesis



NOAA is a large agency with a diverse mission, and it can often be difficult for NOAA staff to keep up to date on issues outside their own programs. To build more awareness, the NOAA Central Region Collaboration Team continued the popular “Three Minute Thesis Webinar” series to showcase experts from NOAA line office through focusing attention on 3 timely topics: communication and engagement in a virtual world, tropical weather, and NOAA’s role in wildfire events. The webinars were viewed by over 2,000 NOAA staff, partners, and the public. Each webinar connected the presenters with other NOAA staff working on similar issues and created new relationships. One highlight was the increased collaboration and information sharing between the Interagency Fire Center and multiple NOAA components during the height of a historic wildland fire season.



“The NOAA Three Minute Thesis Webinar is an excellent way to quickly share information about a project or program. It provides just enough time for viewers to determine their interest level in the topic. I have been contacted by several viewers post the webinar asking for additional information. It is a great way to connect, especially in our virtual world.”

-- Robyn Heffernan

*National Fire Weather Science and Dissemination Meteorologist*

## North Atlantic Funds Eight Summer Student Internships



NOAA's North Atlantic Regional Team was proud to sponsor eight separate internships in Summer 2021 supporting NOAA projects throughout the region, crossing a variety of disciplines and partners. While most were virtual, given travel limitations due to COVID-19, these students found creative ways to contribute to NOAA's science, service, and stewardship mission and learn valuable skills for careers supporting the environment. Projects with five different Line Offices included creating roadmaps for resilience data and tools with the engineering/planning sector in Delaware, co-developing satellite-derived data products in the Middle Peninsula, developing learning activities from the NOAA Live! Archive, programming a workflow for NERRs data to be used in ecosystem management, creating animations/videos for outreach on nitrogen pollution and conducting field research on salt marsh habitats.



Divine Siam and Linda Pham were two of eight interns who worked on various projects including field work at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve that contributed to NOAA science, service, and stewardship.

“ I really wanted to meet people from NOAA, and just other scientists in general. I've always loved the water and marine life, and being from the desert I never really get to experience it.... so I promised myself that I would have a career working with the ocean in some way.”

-- **Rehgan Thomason,**  
*NOAA North Atlantic Regional Team 2021 Intern*

## NOAA Climate and Equity Roundtables

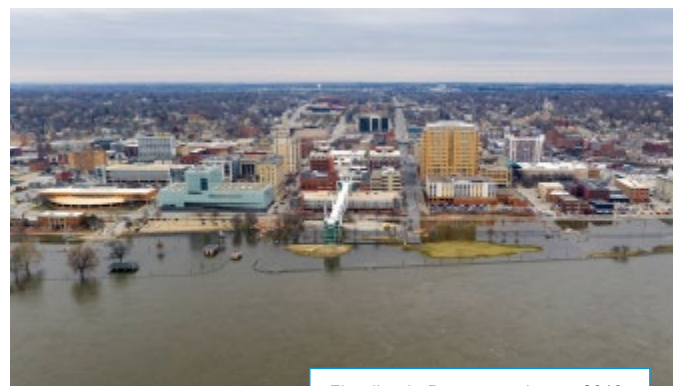
NOAA convened a series of Climate and Equity Roundtables across the country to gather feedback from community partners to inform how NOAA provides climate services, engages with underserved and vulnerable communities, and strengthens internal processes to respond to expressed needs. Hosted by the NOAA's Regional Collaboration Teams, these events were designed to frame

discussions around impacts experienced in local communities related to a changing climate.

Events in Alaska, North Atlantic, Pacific Islands, and Central were held in FY21. West, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico, and Southeast and Caribbean were held in FY22 and will be featured again in the FY22 report.

### Flooding and Resilience in Mississippi River Communities

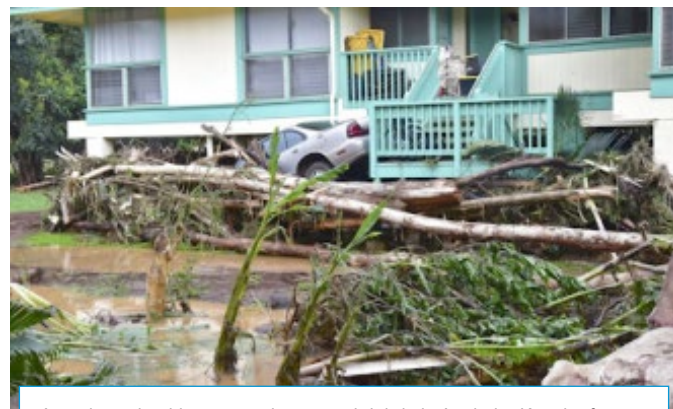
NOAA's Central Regional Collaboration Team hosted a climate and equity roundtable focused on flooding and resilience in Mississippi River communities. The roundtables were designed to gather feedback from partners to inform how NOAA provides climate services, engages with underserved and vulnerable communities, and strengthens internal processes to respond to needs. Discussion themes included better understanding of risks and impacts along the river, the critical need for data accuracy, partnerships with underrepresented communities in the planning process, and improving awareness of NOAA data, products and services. Participants represented several cities, counties, levee and drainage districts, the University of Iowa, the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative and the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association.



Flooding in Davenport, Iowa - 2019.

### Talking Story about Equitable Resilience in Light of a Climate Emergency in Hawai'i

NOAA's Pacific Islands Regional Collaboration Team hosted a roundtable event: Equitable Resilience in Light of a Climate Emergency. This event was constructed in the traditional way of sharing knowledge, also known as "talk story," allowing participants to feel comfortable and share their thoughts openly about climate change. Although the panelists were diverse in terms of disciplines and islands, their requests to NOAA focused on the following themes: acknowledging the value of traditional and place-based knowledge, involving and expanding capacity-build efforts in our local communities, and letting traditional knowledge be the guiding source for management decisions.



A car is wedged between a house and debris in Anahola, Kauai, after the Anahola River broke its banks in the pre-dawn hours and flooded the community downstream. (Dennis Fujimoto/ The Garden Island via AP)

### Tackling Barriers to Accessing NOAA Climate and Resilience Resources in Alaska

The Alaska Regional Collaboration Team hosted a climate and equity discussion with the leadership of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC). As the largest tribal serving health organization in the country, the ANTHC is a recognized leader in addressing poor health outcomes resulting from disparities in the social determinants of health including increasing environmental risks from permafrost thaw, flooding, coastal inundation and erosion, and detrimental shifts in access and availability of traditional food sources resulting from climate change. NOAA leadership learned about the roles of tribal serving organizations, the limited direct benefits many Alaska Native communities receive from NOAA programs, and barriers these communities face in accessing federal resources to address climate and resilience needs. Discussion included specific federal grant programs that disadvantage or exclude rural Alaskan communities and lead to underinvestment in the data collection and monitoring of environmental conditions needed to inform community derived climate

adaptation solutions, and specific steps NOAA could take to achieve climate services and equity improvements in Alaska.



A snowmachine sits in the Niglick River as a result of the rapid erosion in Newtok, AK (Amy Holman)

### Inundation and Flooding in Louisiana

NOAA's Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team hosted a virtual roundtable discussion on climate and inundation impacts with partners in Louisiana. This session was rescheduled due to the impacts of Hurricane Ida to the state in late August, and the storm became a backdrop for several parts of the conversation. Partners provided case studies and examples of what Louisiana and Gulf of Mexico communities experience, including many climate-related impacts, such as sea level rise, extreme rainfall, and hurricane impacts including storm surge, rapid intensification, and post-storm hazards. Partners also discussed state and local adaptation and resilience planning, impacts on fishing communities, and compounding effects of multiple natural disasters in a community. They shared perspectives on the spectrum of causes and impacts of coastal and inland inundation. Some discussion themes brought up independently by different speakers included the opportunity for climate resilience and equity focus in smaller communities, investment in the people that are invested in their communities' futures, and the importance of developing trust. Participants represented the State of Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and

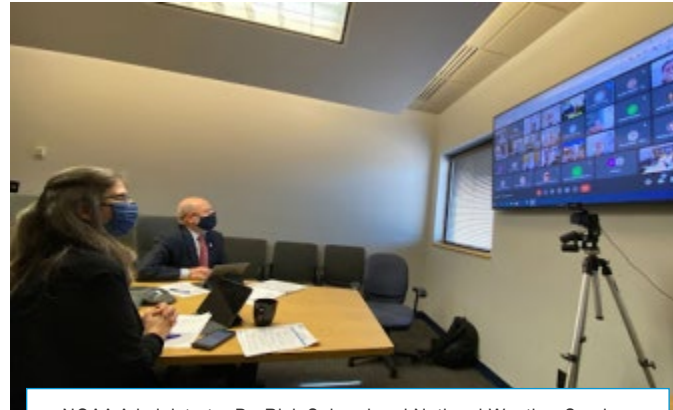
Emergency Preparedness, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe, United Way of Southwest Louisiana, Louisiana Sea Grant, the Louisiana State University Coastal Sustainability Studio, and the Foundation for Louisiana.



NOAA National Geodetic Survey emergency response imagery shows damage to buildings and homes in Houma, Louisiana, following Hurricane Ida.

## Heat Resilience in the U.S. Southwest

NOAA's West Regional Collaboration Team hosted a virtual roundtable discussion on heat resilience in the U.S. Southwest. Partners provided case studies and examples from Arizona and Nevada. Urban heat is a chronic environmental and health challenge for U.S. southwest residents, communities, and visitors, and is deadlier than nearly all other U.S. weather-related hazards combined. Extreme heat is particularly detrimental for vulnerable populations, including the homeless, elderly, communities of color, and those in low income areas. Arizona and Nevada partners suggested supporting regional scale coordination among partners working in extreme heat management and mitigation; increasing surface temperature readings in urban heat islands; and/or scaling data products to support community-level evaluation of heat impacts. Participants represented the Arizona Heat Resilience Workgroup; the Arizona Interfaith Network; Arizona State Department of Health Services; ABC15 News Arizona; the City of Henderson, NV; Help of Southern Nevada; the City of Las Vegas, NV; City of Tempe, AZ; Chispa Arizona; and the University of Arizona.



NOAA Administrator Dr. Rick Spinrad and National Weather Service Deputy Assistant Administrator Mary Erickson participate in the heat risk roundtable from the Las Vegas, NV Weather Forecast Office.

## Heat Health in the Southeast

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team hosted a roundtable focused on heat health in the southeast, with a focus on Charleston, SC and Miami, FL. Extreme temperatures are often dismissed as "commonplace" yet heat illness and death are, unfortunately, also commonplace, with heat (coupled with humidity) responsible for more deaths than any other weather hazard. Both cities have completed "urban heat island" mapping and are addressing the role of extreme heat in health related issues, particularly for more vulnerable segments of the community. The roundtable featured medical, community, and municipality leaders discussing extreme heat, its impact on residents, and steps to address those impacts. Panelists had suggestions for partnership approaches to forecasting and monitoring heat risk and improvements in education and communication to provide intervention and mitigation to protect citizens from extreme heat. Participants represented The Medical University of South Carolina, Lowcountry Alliance for Model Communities, Climate

Adaptation Partners, The City of Charleston, Florida International University College of Medicine, Catalyst Miami, and Miami-Dade County.

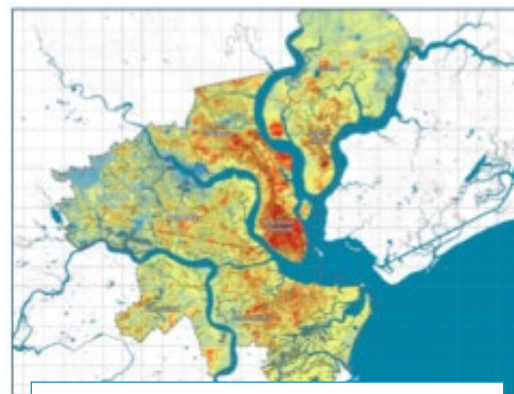


Image from 2021 heat mapping work in Charleston, SC. (Climate Adaptation Partners)

## Coastal Flooding in Connecticut

The North Atlantic Regional Collaboration Team hosted a climate and equity roundtable focused on coastal flooding in Connecticut. Discussion themes included the need for 'hyperlocal' climate planning for Connecticut's 169 municipalities, the inclusion of underrepresented communities in the planning process, coordination of funding and grant phasing through a 'whole of government approach,' including requiring local engagement and defining it to include community organizations, and continued support for capacity (trainings, grant writing) and messaging (e.g. warnings and watches, as well as sharing of NOAA data, products, and services). Participants represented Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, the Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3) Equity & Environmental Justice Working Group, University of Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation, the MetroCouncil of Governments

(MetroCOG), Stratford, CT Office of Planning and Zoning, Connecticut Sea Grant, and the Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community.



The frequency of flooding events like this in the South End neighborhood of Bridgeport, CT were discussed. (Andrew Martinez)

## Urban Flooding in Southeast Michigan/Detroit

NOAA's Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Team hosted a virtual roundtable discussion on climate and urban flooding impacts. Partners provided case studies and examples from Detroit and southeast Michigan of what large urban communities across the Great Lakes are experiencing after increasingly heavy rains and neighborhood and basement flooding due to climate change, aging infrastructure, lake levels, and disinvestment. They shared challenges stemming from climate-related urban flooding, ongoing activities to address impacts to communities, and ways NOAA can partner in southeast Michigan and across the Great Lakes region to complement these efforts. Participants represented the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, local leaders and activists, Detroit Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Wayne County Homeland Security, City of Detroit Office of Sustainability, National Coastal Resilience Fund Grantee (NOAA-OCM Grant), EcoWorks Detroit, and the University of Michigan.



Regional Coordinator Jennifer Day meets with NOAA Administrator Dr. Rick Spinrad, White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory and Terry Campbell from Senator Debbie Stabinow's office during the in-person portion of the Roundtable to discuss and tour issues addressed during the roundtable.

## Congressional Engagement

Since 2013, the NOAA Regional Collaboration Teams have engaged with Congressional Staff and representatives from state and foreign governments to help them better understand NOAA's capabilities. These engagements show the power of NOAA's programs and how they work together to address important issues.



Offshore wind development is an example of a specific topic that was of interest to congressional staffers in the area.

### Great Lakes Shows off NOAA Products and Services to Members of Congress

The Great Lakes team participated in Great Lakes Day on the Hill. This coordinated annual event brings folks from across the region to Capitol Hill to educate and advocate for the lakes. While virtual, the team successfully educated members or their staff on NOAA products and services and how we touch the lives of their constituents every day. Meetings were held with Representatives Lawrence (MI-14), Mrvan (IN-1) and McClain (MI-10) and staff from the offices of WI-8, OH-9, MI-2, OH-14, MI-12, NY-22. They also met with staff from Senators Klobuchar-MN, Durbin-IL, Peters-MI, Portman-OH, Braun-IN, and Baldwin-WI.

### Connecting Congressional Staff in the Southeast and Caribbean with NOAA

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team hosted virtual "Meet and Greet" with staff from the offices of Senator Richard Burr-NC and Representative Stacey Plaskett-VI to inform them about NOAA programs in their state/territory and respond to questions. The calls highlighted NOAA offices and partner programs, seafloor mapping and coastal resilience efforts, NOAA in the Caribbean, NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, habitat mapping, corals, and coastal zone management.

### NART Hosts Virtual Meet & Greet for Freshman District Congressional Staff

At the request of NOAA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, the North Atlantic Regional Team held several virtual engagements with district staff on their topic of interest. These engagements were very effective in a virtual setting for introducing NOAA to district staff. NART hosted Meet & Greet for district staff in NY-15, NY-16 and MA-4 in FY21. Topics included offshore wind, hazard mitigation, climate preparedness and restoration. District congressional staff applauded NOAA's 'interagency collaboration' and assembly of partners from 'all corners of the issue' in MA. The NY engagements also resulted in increased NOAA connections to the Bronx & Harlem Urban Waters Federal Partnership.

# Around the Regions

## ALASKA

### Fostering Impact Decision Support Services in Alaska

Determined to assist other line offices get the most out of their field days, regional team members connected their research cruise, hydrographic survey, and other field crews with the NWS Alaska Region Operations center and appropriate Weather Forecast Offices to develop impact based decision support services.

### Alaska Plans and Attends Marine Science Symposium

When COVID forced the conference virtual, regional team members on the steering committee for the Alaska Marine Science Symposium created panel presentations to synthesize research, describe how marine science relates to a bigger picture, and provide different perspectives on tough questions.

### NOAA Live! Alaska Spin Off Continues

A NOAA Live! Alaska-themed week was so successful the Alaska Regional Team helped to create a full time spin off hosted by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center.

### Coordinates Emergency Response to COVID Outbreak

In addition to overall COVID leadership, the Alaska Regional Team provided support and coordination to a research vessel experiencing COVID-19 outbreak that resulted in air evacuation to in-state and out-of-state medical care.



I wanted to tell you how impressed I have been with the concern you and your colleagues have shown your personnel and university colleagues that were on the vessel. It stands out as a great example of how to support staff and associates.

**Dr Kim Porter**  
Field Epidemiology Office  
Center for Disease Control

## CENTRAL

### Developed NOAA Central Region Snapshot

The Team produced a region-wide e-newsletter that helps NOAA staff to share opportunities and learn more about other components of NOAA.

### Connecting Regional Climate Partners with NWS Local Offices Through Virtual Website Walkabout

Using a new webinar format, the Team connected 44 attendees by conducting a virtual walkabout of the new National Integrated Drought Information System and High Plains Regional Climate Centers websites.

### Increasing Awareness of NOAA's Role in Tropical Weather

Listening to feedback from previous webinars, the Team hosted a Three Minute Thesis Webinar for NOAA employees on the topic of tropical weather and how NOAA forecasts and responds.

### Sea Grant Meeting Attendees First to Play Coast Version of Watershed Game

With support from the Central and Gulf of Mexico Regional Teams, participants at the Sea Grant South Atlantic Regional Meeting were the first to see and play the newest coastal version of the popular education tool--the Watershed Game.

## GREAT LAKES

### Team Coordinates \$16 Million in GLRI Funding

The Great Lakes Regional Team Leadership assisted in obtaining and distributing more than \$15 million in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds across four line offices.

### NOAA Great Lakes Invited to Attend Special Group on Lake Erie Harmful Algal Blooms

Due to relationships built by the Team, NOAA was invited to a group that included the Army Corps, State of Ohio, and Sea Grant around harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie.

### Great Lakes Team Provides Water Level Information

The Team developed new generic Great Lakes water levels graphics explaining the forces that impact water levels and making them available with regional partners to ensure coordinated storytelling across the region.

### Team Leads Bi-national Climate Work

The Team represented NOAA and served as the U.S. Co-chair on regional climate change impacts work with Canada.



## GULF OF MEXICO

### Gulf of Mexico Sponsors Applied Social Science Research Course

The Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team in partnership with the Northern Gulf Institute and the University of Alabama Center for Advanced Public Safety offered a three-month course ending in November 2020 about applied social science research that complements weather, water, and coastal research, culminating with participants designing projects for further study.

### Paddle the Gulf Equips Partners for Meaningful Coastal Events

With support from the Gulf of Mexico Regional Team, the Paddle the Gulf initiative promoted regional blueways, supported partner events to connect people with their coastal surroundings, and held training webinars that equipped event organizers to incorporate marine debris removal and species identification and tracking into their events, providing visitors with meaningful ways to interact with and make a difference for their waters and coastal resources.

### Gulf of Mexico Reaches NOAA Workforce

Facing the ongoing need to work remotely, the Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team promoted connections and awareness in the region through virtual channels including six Gulf Forum webinars, two Paddle the Gulf webinars, and by ensuring a visible NOAA presence at a regional virtual conference.

### Plantation Key School in Florida Becomes Ocean Guardian School

With funding support from the Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team, Plantation Key School in Tavernier, Florida marked its designation as an Ocean Guardian School by removing 50 pounds of trash from their campus, distributing reusable water bottles, creating ocean health posters, and auditing plastic trash in classrooms.

## NORTH ATLANTIC

### Commissioned Tribal Situational Assessment

The Team commissioned the 2021 North Atlantic Tribal Situational Assessment through the Udall Foundation's National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

### NOAA Live! Partnership with Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Family Day

Through the partnership the Team helped expand the initial focus from weather to include conservation and stewardship missions using satellite tags, drones, and aerial surveys.

### Team Members Represent NOAA at New England Tribal/Federal Partners Meeting

Tribal nations in EPA Region 1 requested a group discussion with federal agencies engaged in their priority areas.

### North Atlantic Team Produces Acclaimed NOAA Live! Series for 2021 School Year

The North Atlantic Regional Team continued to support and produce the popular NOAA Live! Webinar Series which brings NOAA's mission to kids in grades 2-8.

## PACIFIC ISLANDS

### Pacific Islands Hosts 5th Annual World's Ocean Day

The theme of the 5th Annual World's Ocean Day was "Generations". It focused on the kuleana of caring for our oceans passed down from parents to children, the forward march of technology to help understand the ocean realm, and the rapidly changing environment and shifting baselines.

### Supporting the 12th Annual Hawaii Stem Conference

The Pacific Islands supported conference which is an opportunity for NOAA to educate the public on NOAA's mission and provide teachers with tools that they can use in their classroom

### Get Tsunami Ready Now

The Pacific Region marked the 75th anniversary of the magnitude 8.6, April 1, 1946, Aleutian Island earthquake and tsunami to bring awareness of Tsunami preparedness.

### Region Partners on 2020 Pacific Islands Climate Adaptation Science Summit

NOAA partnered with USGS to share recent and ongoing climate change science and adaptation work in Hawai'i and the U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands while strengthening NOAA's regional partnerships and collaborations.

## SOUTHEAST & CARIBBEAN

### Seafloor Mapping Tool Developed for Southeast

The team through its Southeast seafloor mapping workshops developed a [seafloor mapping prioritization tool](#) which resulted in cost savings and an informed mapping strategy for the region

### Southeast and Caribbean Team Hosts Disaster Resilience Partnership Annual Meeting

With support from the Team, the [Southeast and Caribbean Disaster Resilience Partnership](#) held its annual meeting which focused on status of resilience in states and territories and private sector, lessons learned, green infrastructure and evolution of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program, building coastal and stormwater resilience, and justice issues in disaster management and adaptation.

### Expanding Opportunities for NOAA to Provide Support for Shellfish Management

The Team hosted a shellfish sanitation workshop to bring NOAA tools and expertise to shellfish managers facing harvesting issues from pathogens.

### Team Supports North Carolina Aquaculture Gear Management and Storm Preparedness Workshop

Close to 60 individuals from the shellfish farming community, including local farmers and aquaculture business owners, attended the workshop and received resources to help prevent aquaculture debris and prepare for storm events.

## WEST

### NOAA West Webinars Educate NOAA Staff

The West Regional Collaboration Team hosted a series of webinars to educate NOAA staff about NOAA activities including on wildfire forecasting, NOAA connections to underserved communities, and NOAA's role in wildfire events.

### Sharing Stories of NOAA Connections to Underserved Communities

The West Team coordinated a webinar as part of a series showcasing NOAA programs/work supporting underserved communities including: land acknowledgements, legal basis for tribal relationships, weather forecasting for Navajo Nation, and proposed Chumash Heritage Site NMS..

### NOAA West Brings Attention to NOAA's Role in Wildfires

The NOAA West Team produced a webinar that educated over 194 viewers about a range of NOAA activities responding to the 2020 wildfire across the Western U.S., and is developing a web portal that showcases NOAA's support for wildfire response across line offices.

### Team Develops NOAA's "Picture Climate Change" Student Photo Contest

NOAA West launched a photo contest to collect photos from students in 5th through 12th grades that represent climate change or climate impacts in their communities.

# Our Network

\* denotes member during FY21



## Alaska

**Robert Foy**, Regional Team Lead  
robert.foy@noaa.gov

**Amy Holman**, Regional Coordinator  
amy.holman@noaa.gov

## West

**Kevin Werner**, Regional Team Lead  
kevin.werner@noaa.gov

**Michelle Stokes**, Co Team Lead  
michelle.stokes@noaa.gov

**Aja Szumylo**, Regional Coordinator  
aja.szumylo@noaa.gov

## Pacific Islands

**Fred Tucher**, Regional Team Lead\*  
fred.tucher@noaa.gov

**John Marra**, Vice Regional Team Lead  
john.marra@noaa.gov

**Pua Kamaka**, Regional Coordinator  
pua.kamaka@noaa.gov

**Beth Lumsden**, Acting Regional Coordinator\*  
beth.lumsden@noaa.gov

**Ray Tanabe**, Vice Regional Team Lead  
raymond.tanabe@noaa.gov



## Central

**John Ogren**, Regional Team Lead  
john.ogren@noaa.gov

**Bethany Perry**, Regional Coordinator  
bethany.perry@noaa.gov

## National

**Louisa Koch**, National Team Lead  
louisa.koch@noaa.gov

**Meredith Cameron**, National Coordinator  
meredith.cameron@noaa.gov

## Line Office Representatives

**Jennifer Lukens**, NMFS  
jennifer.lukens@noaa.gov

**Jim Jenkins**, OAR  
james.jenkins@noaa.gov

**John Ten Hoeve**, NWS\*  
john.tenhoeve@noaa.gov

**Kelly Tuner**, NESDIS  
kelly.turner@noaa.gov

**Andrea Bleistein**, NWS  
andrea.bleistein@noaa.gov

**Randall TeBeest**, OMAO  
randall.tebeest@noaa.gov

**Rebecca Holyoke**, NOS  
rebecca.holyoke@noaa.gov

**CAPT Ben Evans**, NOS\*  
benjamin.k.evans@noaa.gov

**Shawna Karlson**, OMAO  
shawna.karlson@noaa.gov

**Kenneth Erickson**, OLIA  
Kenneth.erickson@noaa.gov

## Great Lakes

**Debbie Lee**, Regional Team Lead  
deborah.lee@noaa.gov

**Jennifer Day**, Regional Coordinator  
jennifer.day@noaa.gov

## North Atlantic

**Jason Tuell**, Regional Team Lead\*  
jason.tuell@noaa.gov

**Jon Hare**, Vice Regional Team Lead  
jon.hare@noaa.gov

**Nicole Bartlett**, Regional Coordinator  
nicole.bartlett@noaa.gov

## Southeast and Caribbean

**Rich Okulski**, Regional Team Lead  
rich.okulski@noaa.gov

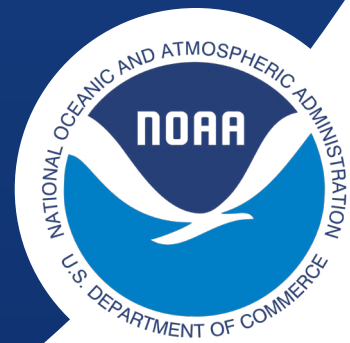
**Geno Olmi**, Regional Coordinator  
geno.olmi@noaa.gov

## Gulf of Mexico

**Brian LaMarre**, Regional Team Lead  
brian.lamarre@noaa.gov

**Kristen Laursen**, Regional Coordinator  
kristen.r.laursen@noaa.gov





[www.noaa.gov/regional-collaboration](http://www.noaa.gov/regional-collaboration)