



NOAA

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION



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North Atlantic Region

NOAA Roundtables with Congressional District Staff

NOAA Priority: Organizational Excellence

ReCo Goal 3: Improve understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities.

Austere budgets and the lingering effects of a Federal hiring freeze have crippled some NOAA offices' ability, willingness, or even capacity to partner with other NOAA entities in the region and broaden their legislative engagement efforts. The NART sought to enable that collaboration through the team, following a 'best practice' from NOAA West. In December 2013, the NART held its inaugural NOAA roundtable with district Congressional staff. It was the first in a regional, multi-year effort to educate congressional staff in the region on the value of NOAA products and services to their constituents.

Since then there have been twelve roundtables within eight different states. This past year, the NART held four roundtables; two in Massachusetts, one in Vermont and a second one in New Jersey, with the focus on community resilience. Thirty representatives from every Senate office and twenty-two congressional offices have attended while more than 135 partners and 70 NOAA employees from five line offices have shared their information and services to Congressional staff.

NOAA's role as convener and authoritative data source was highlighted by many partners, as was the utility of NOAA information across sectors and the necessity of NOAA's work for local, state and Federal partners. Most importantly, staffers confirmed the need for these engagements and enthusiasm for the information and partner testimonials. "NOAA's approach to developing the agenda, and convening the right people and information, is just what we need," said Bonita Pothier, Office of Senator King (I-ME). The NART plans to continue this work in FY17 as a part of a broader regional legislative engagement strategy.



Connecticut Roundtable attendees aboard the R/V Connecticut in July.



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