

NOAA in the North Atlantic



Visitors line up to see a NOAA WP-3D Hurricane Hunter aircraft in Falmouth, Mass.

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 (NART).

NOAA Hurricane Awareness Tour Stops in the North Atlantic Region

Hurricane season started on June 1st. In preparation for the start of this year's hurricane season, in early May, NOAA hurricane experts visited two cities in the North Atlantic region aboard a NOAA hurricane hunter to raise awareness about storm threats and the danger of being caught without a personal hurricane plan. The Hurricane Awareness Tour included public tours of the NOAA WP-3D Orion turboprop aircraft, which NOAA uses to fly through the eye of approaching hurricanes. Bill Read, the director of the NOAA National Hurricane Center, was joined by National Weather Service hurricane and storm surge specialists for four stops at Falmouth, Mass. and Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Md.

In Falmouth, where the event was held at the Massachusetts Military Reservation, more than 600 school children, several VIPs, 20 exhibitors, and 300 general public guests attended. In addition to the NOAA aircraft, the public was also able to tour jets and helicopters from NOAA partners such as the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Army. Other NOAA partners who participated in the event at Falmouth included federal and state emergency management agencies, the American Red Cross, and the Salvation Army. Local NOAA offices and staff that supported this event included the Taunton National Weather Service Forecast Office, led by Bob Thompson, who was joined by the Eastern Regional Climate Services Director Ellen Mecray, and NART coordinator Nicole Bartlett.



"The 2010 hurricane season was one of the most active on record, yet no hurricanes made landfall in the U.S. That does not mean we will be as fortunate during the 2011 season," said Read. "Be prepared for a hurricane now, or one threatens your area."

The NOAA WP-3D Orion turboprop aircraft is used primarily by scientists on research missions to study various elements of a hurricane, flying through the eye of the storm several times each flight. The crew collects and transmits data by satellite directly to the National Hurricane Center so that forecasters can analyze and predict changes to the hurricane's path and strength.

For more information, contact Nicole.Bartlett@noaa.gov

NOAA Restoration Day in the Mid-Atlantic

This spring NOAA volunteers planted dune and marsh grass, cleaned beaches, and surveyed coastal flora and fauna as part of the 8th annual NOAA Restoration Day events in Maryland and Virginia. 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. This year, both projects built upon existing NOAA restoration projects.

The Maryland event was held at Piscataway Park in Accokeek, Md. on June 2, 2011. NOAA restoration specialists had previously completed a 3,000-foot long living shoreline restoration project at this site. More than 150 NOAA volunteers planted dune grass to enhance the existing restoration project and to replant an area that performed poorly due to drought.

The Virginia event was held at the Hermitage Museum and Gardens in Norfolk, Va. on the Lafayette River. More than 3,000 marsh grass (*Spartina alterniflora*) were planted to restore a quarter acre of tidal marsh adjacent to an existing NOAA-supported living shoreline project. For more information contact Andrew.W.Larkin@noaa.gov



NOAA Restoration Day 2011 volunteer, Jason Rolfe, in Maryland



Ocean Today kiosk at Nauticus.

NOAA Exhibit Brings Ocean News to Museums in the Region

The Ocean Today kiosk is a multi-media interactive exhibit originally designed by NOAA for the Sant Ocean Hall in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington, D.C.

The kiosk's dynamic interface is comprised of ocean imagery, sounds, and video clips, and invites visitors to explore several content areas. When a visitor touches the screen, the content areas are revealed to show the most recent information. The main content themes are Ocean News, Ocean Life, Science & Technology, and Discoveries.

In addition to Sant Ocean Hall, the Ocean Today kiosk can also be found in several other museums in the North Atlantic region including the Inner Space Center (R.I.), the New Bedford Whaling Museum (Mass.), the Mystic Aquarium (Conn.), the National Aquarium in Baltimore (Md.), the Maryland Science Center, the new NOAA museum on the Silver Spring (Md.) campus, Assateague Island National Seashore Visitor's Center (Md.), and Nauticus (Va.). One is planned for the New Bedford Whaling Museum (Mass.) later this year.

The goal of the Ocean Today kiosk is to enhance museumgoers' understanding of the ocean realm--both the ocean's influence on them and their influence upon the ocean.

For more information, contact Mike.Shelby@noaa.gov or go to <http://oceantoday.noaa.gov/>



Mahlon Lovett, Office of Communications, Princeton Univ.

East Pyne Tower, Princeton University

Regional Team Meets in Princeton

All eighteen members of NOAA's North Atlantic Regional Team (NART) met in Princeton, NJ on June 29-30 to review progress from Fiscal Year 2011, examine lessons learned and discuss potential activities for Fiscal Year 2012.

NART members were joined by Jeff Payne and Geno Olmi, Regional Team Lead and Regional Coordinator for NOAA's Southeast & Caribbean Regional Team, to facilitate collaborations on areas of common interest. Diane Wehner (NOS, Office of Response & Restoration) and Elisa Chae-Banaja (NOS, Office of Coastal Resource Management) also attended as guests.

During the meetnig, Chris Ellis, social scientist with the Coastal Services Center, presented results of a 2011 social network analysis, which depicted collaborations in the North Atlantic across NOAA's mission goals and NART priority areas. Brian Gross, Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Lab, and Beth Phelan, James J. Howard Laboratory, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, both presented on their lab's current activities relating to NART priorities. Stephanie Kavanaugh, NOS Special Projects, facilitated the meeting.

"It's a real opportunity to think about what our stakeholders need, and what we can do to help make NOAA products and services more effective in the region," said Peyton Robertson, North Atlantic Regional Team Lead.

The NART is the only collaborative body in the North Atlantic that brings together NOAA

employees from all line offices, including Sea Grant, to support integration of NOAA's products and services across the agency.

Several proposed projects received widespread support from the team, including one aimed at reducing nutrient runoff into the Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay.

Other high-ranking ideas were to expand Storm Reporter, an online tool to facilitate reporting of impacts from coastal flooding, and to help organize and facilitate an information exchange on NOAA's data visualization activities.

The NART is continuing development of its operating plan over the next several months. If you know of a cross-line collaboration that might benefit from NART involvement, contact Nicole.Bartlett@noaa.gov.

DID YOU KNOW?

Buzzards Bay Trustees Receive \$6 Million Settlement

On May 17, a Federal district court judge signed a decree requiring Bouchard Transportation Co. Inc. and its affiliates to pay more than \$6 million to settle a portion of the federal and state natural resource damage claims for the April 2003 spill of at least 98,000 gallons of oil into Buzzards Bay in Massachusetts. NOAA serves as a natural resource trustee for this case alongside of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of Rhode Island. The money will be used to compensate the public for injuries to shoreline and aquatic resources, piping plovers, coastal recreational uses, and Ram Island - a vital nesting habitat for roseate terns and other migrating seabirds. The trustees continue to work cooperatively with Bouchard Transportation Co. Inc. to assess the damages associated with other bird species.

NOAA People in the North Atlantic Region

NART Member

Chris Boelke is a Marine Habitat Resource Specialist with the Habitat Conservation Division of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service in Gloucester, Mass. Chris works primarily on Essential Fish Habitat Consultations with Federal regulatory agencies on coastal and ocean energy projects, navigational dredging, offshore sand and gravel mining, and serves as the Northeast Regional Office's point of contact for coastal and marine spatial planning. He joined the NART in 2010.



Prior to coming to NOAA in 2003, Chris worked with the New Jersey Coastal Management Program. Chris attended the Catholic University in Washington, DC and received an M.A. in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island. Chris is an avid skier and has been an active member of the National Ski Patrol since 2000. He currently lives in Newburyport, MA with his wife Deirdre, and three daughters, Elizabeth, Gretchen and Meredith.

NOAA Places in the North Atlantic Region

National Weather Service Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center

The National Weather Service (NWS) **Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center** (MARFC) is co-located with the Central Pennsylvania NWS Weather Forecast Office in State College, Pennsylvania. MARFC's sixteen-member team of hydrologists, meteorologists, engineers, and support staff provide river and flood forecasts and information. MARFC forecasters use the best scientific principles to integrate and model water, weather, and climate information.

A critical function of all RFCs is to prepare hydrologic forecasts during floods. These "flood forecasts" provide the expected crests (maximum height) rivers will reach at specific forecast points and the expected time of occurrence. Flood forecasts also indicate the approximate times when flooding will begin and end at each forecast point based on a predetermined "flood stage" unique to each forecast point.

The MARFC has responsibility for one of the most flood-prone and populous regions in the Nation, encompassing 87,000 square miles and including all or portions of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Major river basins located within the MARFC service area include the Susquehanna, Delaware, Passaic, Raritan, Potomac, Shenandoah, Rappahannock, James and Appomattox. Seven NWS Weather Forecast Offices receive hydrologic forecasts and guidance from the MARFC for distribution to the public and other users.

For more information, go to http://www.erh.noaa.gov/marfc/MARFC_brochure.pdf

NART Background

The NART is one of eight regional teams created by NOAA's Regional Collaboration effort. It is composed of 18 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.regions.noaa.gov/north_atlantic/

