

**FISCAL YEAR 2022**

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**ANNUAL  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS  
REPORT**



**NOAA Regional  
Collaboration  
NETWORK**



Regional Coordinators and Maisa Tisdale, CT Climate & Equity roundtable participant, and President of the Mary & Eliza Freeman Center for History & Community met with Executive Director of Green Village Initiative, Ellie Angerame, and their Operations Coordinator, Dune Bryant, at their community urban farm in Bridgeport, CT to discuss what NOAA products and services would be valuable to the community.



# INTRODUCTION

**On the Cover:** In August, 2022, Regional Coordinators gathered in Bridgeport, CT, one of the locations for the NOAA Climate and Equity Pilot Project. RCs connected with historically marginalized communities, heard about the challenges they face in accessing and understanding NOAA programs and data, and explored ways NOAA could improve its service delivery in these locations

**Pictured:** Restored tidal marsh in the Stewart McKinney Wildlife Refuge, Stratford, CT

## DEAR READERS,

I am pleased to share the FY2022 Regional Collaboration Network Accomplishments Report. The Network’s members serve on eight Regional Teams and at NOAA Headquarters, representing the agency’s diverse capabilities across the country. The Regional Collaboration Network works to advance NOAA’s ability to provide place-based solutions to meet the evolving demands of regional stakeholders. I applaud the outstanding work achieved by this group of dedicated employees.



Over the past year, the Regional Collaboration Teams carefully reviewed community input provided during the Climate and Equity Roundtables and developed pilot projects to address issues raised by participants. These pilots are helping NOAA develop more equity-based approaches. In addition, NOAA’s Regional Collaboration Teams developed activities in support of NOAA’s strategic goals and priorities: building a Climate Ready Nation, integrating equity into NOAA’s core operations and advancing the New Blue Economy. The Teams also built connections with congressional staff in the regions to raise awareness about NOAA’s programs and services.

This Report provides examples of how the Regional Collaboration Network continues to improve NOAA’s service to the Nation. Please join me in thanking the Regional Collaboration Teams for their outstanding work and celebrating the achievements showcased in this 2022 Annual Accomplishments Report.

Sincerely,

*Ben Friedman*

*NOAA Deputy Under Secretary for Operations*

## ABOUT US

Many of the complex challenges facing NOAA are place-based, and require interdisciplinary approaches and regionally tailored solutions. The Regional Collaboration Network addresses these 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.

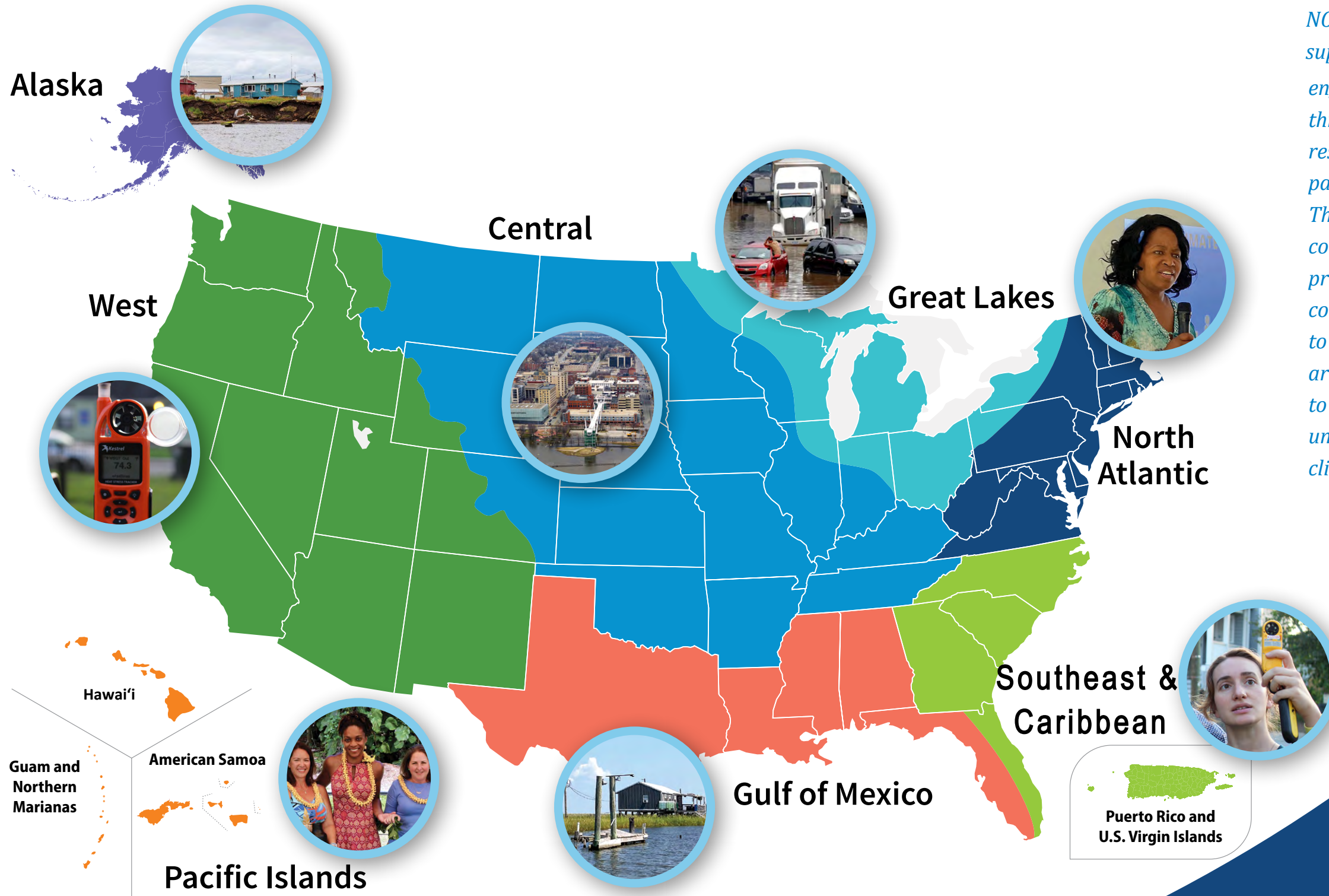
### Vision

A unified and regionally integrated NOAA

### Mission

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





*NOAA's Regional Collaboration Network is supporting the agency's commitment to sustained engagement with underserved communities through seven pilot projects. Each regional pilot is responding directly to feedback received from partners during Climate and Equity Roundtables. The Roundtables gathered feedback from community partners to inform how NOAA provides climate services, engages with vulnerable communities, and strengthens internal processes to respond to expressed needs. The seven Pilots are taking a unique, place-based approach to help these communities better understand, prepare for, and respond to climate change.*

# CLIMATE AND EQUITY PILOTS IN THE REGIONS



## ALASKA REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAM

### Pilot partnership between NOAA and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC)

To address the impact of climate change on Alaska Native communities, this tribally led and co-developed Alaska pilot created a position of Director of Tribal climate change initiatives at ANTHC and mechanism for broader collaboration with NOAA. This first of its kind position is responsible for conducting a landscape assessment of Tribal climate change adaptation activities in Alaska, ensuring that Tribal related climate change efforts are led and prioritized by Alaska Native people through the creation of an Alaska Tribal Climate Change Advisory Group, and leading the Tribal review and publication of the Unmet Needs of Environmentally Threatened Alaska Native Villages Report: Assessment and

Recommendations. Through this pilot, NOAA, ANTHC, and Alaska Native people are creating a dedicated mechanism for outreach, engagement on climate change issues, mutual and continual learning, elevated understanding of Alaska Native perspectives and intergenerational knowledge, and visibility and value for NOAA's work. NOAA will understand tribal priorities for climate services, including research, data and information, decision support tools, and community capacity needs, and will be able to align mission priorities and capabilities with articulated needs in ongoing and sustainable ways. Through these efforts, NOAA hopes to build trusted relationships with Alaska Native people.



Storm-driven erosion on the Ninglik River that was creeping towards Newtok has caused the southwest Alaska community to relocate nine miles downriver to Mertarvik. (Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium)



## NORTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAM

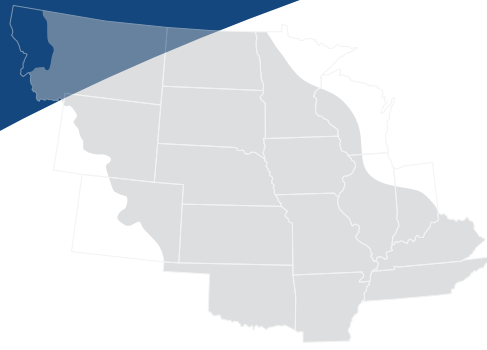
### Connecticut Community Participation & Risk Communication Pilot

To increase participation in climate change planning, pilot activities in Bridgeport, New Haven, New London and Norwich, CT are focused on relationship building with community organizations and leaders in these historically marginalized communities. Leveraging Connecticut Sea Grant's resilience specialists, this pilot will provide resources to build trusted relationships with bridge organizations and explore innovative ways to engage and support the community from within. Key components of activities in all four communities include practical incentives for participation, such as offering transportation and gift cards, scheduling events at optimal times for working

families and using locally owned businesses to provide food and refreshments. Additionally, to ensure members of limited English proficiency communities are able to participate in these events, oral translation and/or written materials may be resourced through the pilot. Successful strategies for funding stakeholder engagement will be shared across pilot partners. NOAA programs will be informed by this pilot to advance hyper-local flood warnings, develop climate products, and tailor digital coast flood and stormwater training and tools to meet communities where they are.



Doreen Abubaker, of the Community Placement Engagement Network and West River Watershed Partnership, talks to a group at the New Haven Folk Festival about climate change impacts in New Haven and the upcoming Climathon. (Steve Hamm, Reimaging New Haven)



## CENTRAL REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAM

### Building Knowledge to Support Equitable Climate Resilience

To support equitable climate resilience along the upper Mississippi River NOAA is partnering with the Cooperative Institute for Research to Operations in Hydrology, through the University of Minnesota, to achieve two objectives. First, to better understand the flow patterns of the upper Mississippi River to provide data on how the river will likely respond to changing climate conditions. This data is crucial for communities to plan for both flood and low flow

conditions. Second, to develop customized community engagement strategies for vulnerable communities to enhance their climate resilience. These strategies will focus on collaboratively building long-term, respectful partnership and relationships with underserved communities. Overall, this work is intended to improve the understanding, interpretation, and use of these forecasts and hydrological data products and services to improve preparedness and resilience.



Flooding of the Mississippi River shown in Davenport, Iowa. (Getty Images)

## PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAM

### Poly-Forestry Climate Pilot with a Native Hawaiian Homestead Community

To address the climate emergency in Hawai'i, the Pacific Islands team pilot will blend traditional knowledge associated with agroforestry and planting with western climate science. Utilizing NOAA data and climate expertise, NOAA and its partners are working with the community through the co-development of knowledge to understand 1) how the climate is affecting the Pana'ewa area and thus the long-term viability of traditionally reliable "canoe-plant" food sources for the community; and 2) how climate variability affects relative abundance of food sources over the short-term. NOAA and its partners will then aggregate and transform the climate data to create a set of decision support products and services called for by the Pana'ewa community. This may include a catalog of preferred plantings and an almanac providing information on agriculture practices associated with these plantings (e.g. planting, watering, fertiliz-

ing, fertilizing, pruning, harvesting) that would vary with the seasonal climate predictions. This information would be provided in the form of a web-based "dashboard", printed handbooks, planting calendars, or other such communication and education tools that aggregate and tailor information, as deemed by the Pana'ewa community to be of greatest use. The climate products will help to inform the Hawaiian Homestead community of Pana'ewa about how climate conditions will change over time (trends and patterns), what is the best assortment of plants that will survive over the long term, and inform when planting, harvesting, extra watering, shading, etc will be necessary as it relates to El Niño and La Niña. Where appropriate these products would be available in 'ōlelo Hawai'i and English.



Representatives from NOAA and Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association affirm partnership through site blessing of the pilot project. Pictured from left to right are: Nāmaka Rawlins (Pana'ewa homesteader), Maka'ala Rawlins (Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association member), Pua Kamaka (NOAA Pacific Islands Coordinator), Letise LaFeir (NOAA Senior Advisor), Nicole LeBoeuf (Assistant Administrator for NOAA's National Ocean Service), Maile Lu'uwai (President of Keaukaha Pana'ewa Farmers Association) and Kalani Quiocho (NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Pacific Islands Cultural Resource Coordinator).



## GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAM

### Building Relationships and Community Resilience with the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe of Southeast Louisiana

The Gulf pilot will develop NOAA relationships with the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe (PACIT) in South-east Louisiana to help inform their decisions addressing the impacts of hurricanes and other disasters that impact tribal lands. NOAA staff, Sea Grant staff, and representatives of the PACIT are building some of the personal connections that NOAA currently lacks to better accomplish this. These conversations will lead to a catalog of environmental conditions that impact the PACIT and what thresholds may trigger information needs, and a broader assessment of priority

challenges that the community faces where NOAA resources may be useful. The project will also address specific high-value resilience challenges for the PACIT where NOAA information, products, or services may enhance their community resilience and adaptive capacity. This will leverage an existing project supported by the EPA that the PACIT is working on with Louisiana Sea Grant to develop a Tribal Community Resilience Index, for which customized versions of NOAA visualization tools and/or other data products may be beneficial.



The Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe live in Southeast Louisiana, where land is rapidly being lost to water. Land loss leaves the area more vulnerable to the impacts of disasters like hurricanes.



## GREAT LAKES REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAM

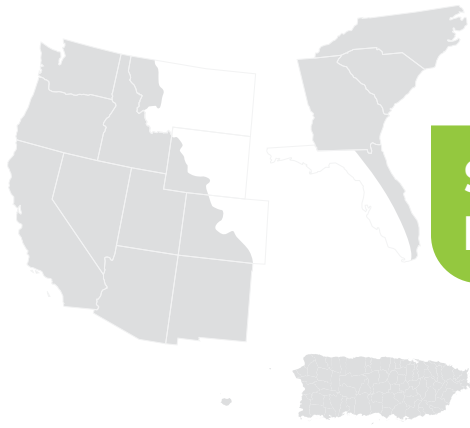
### Climate and Equity Centered Transportation Planning for Southeast Michigan

NOAA is working with the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) to address impacts to historically disadvantaged communities from transportation disruptions due to urban flooding. Pilot objectives include creating a replicable, realistic decision support methodology to enhance the integration of equity and climate information within transportation planning; addressing livelihoods and community values alongside transportation-related disruptions due to flooding; and incorporating climate and equity throughout local transportation project identification and prioritization. The pilot is evaluating a methodology for integrating data and knowledge into SEMCOG's Regional Transportation Plan making it more "equity-centered" and "climate

smart." Working with data tools developed by SEMCOG, the NOAA team is developing metrics, such as how chronic transportation disruptions due to flooding affect access and drive times to core services, such as hospitals, schools and food stores, located in historically disadvantaged communities areas in the greater Detroit Metro Region. The team is producing data analytics to enhance equity-centered climate resilience decision making focused on transportation project selection and prioritization. Outputs from the pilot will support SEMCOG's Regional Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan, both to be completed in 2023. It is hoped that this work will be applied nation-wide.



Detroit suffered massive flooding in 2014, 2016, 2019, and 2021. These flood events in such a short span of time are exhausting and have caused economic, environmental, emotional, psychological, and financial hardship on residents and devastating effect on public facilities, museums, and schools from all across the city (Image Credit: City of Detroit).



## SOUTHEAST & CARIBBEAN AND WEST REGIONAL COLLABORATION TEAMS

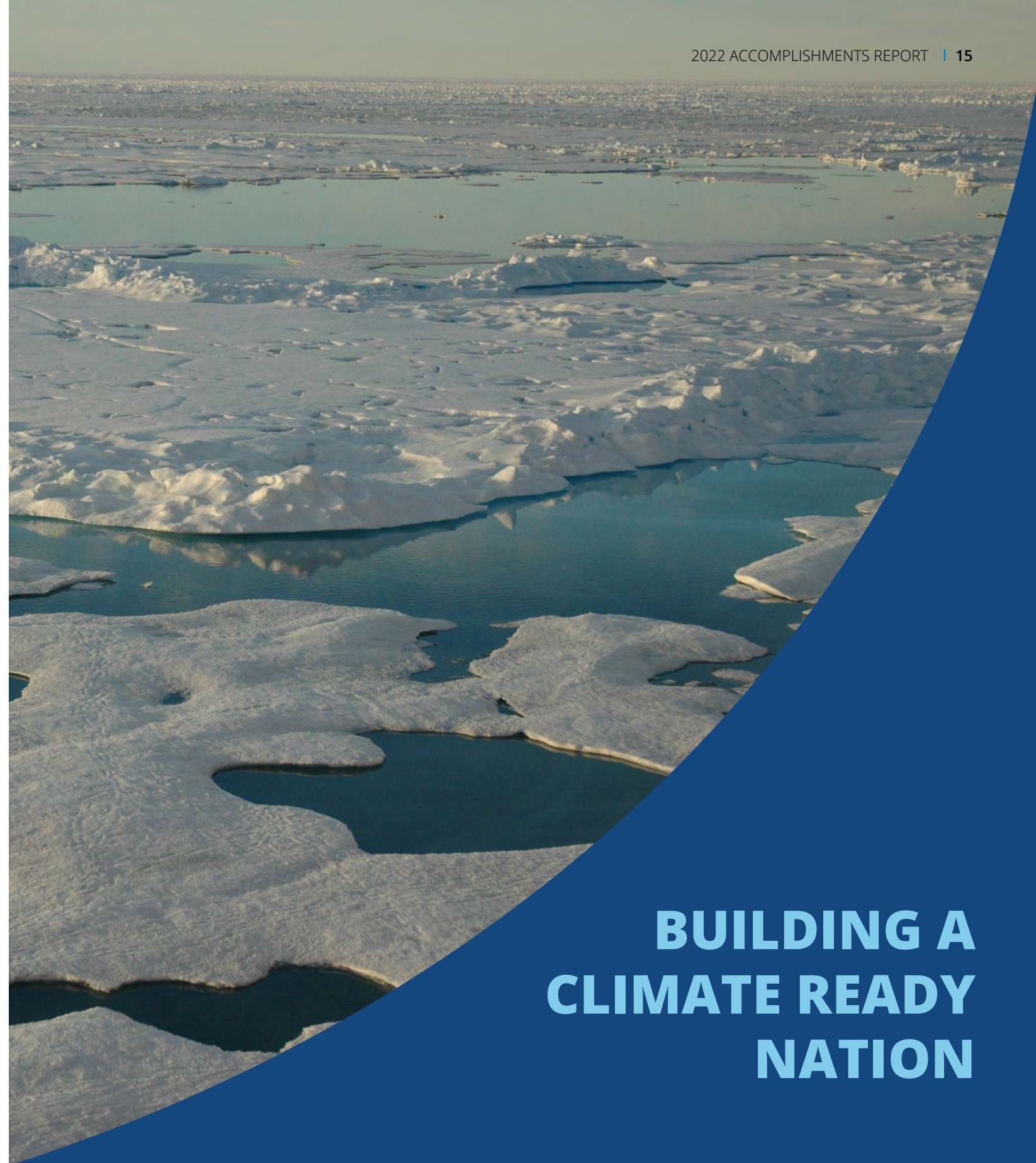
### Building Capacity for Heat Resilience through Community Monitoring, Planning, and Intervention

To increase heat resilience, this pilot project aims to enhance understanding of local-scale extreme heat impacts and improve heat awareness communication and intervention across agencies and organizations in four municipalities: Charleston, SC; Miami, FL; Las Vegas, NV; and Phoenix, AZ. The pilot is gathering in situ data through citizen science activities by enabling local communities to collect on-the-ground heat conditions using sensors. The sensor data will

be used to develop realistic tabletop exercises with federal, state, municipal, and non-governmental partners in each community to evaluate opportunities and limitations to reduce heat risk. The exercises will result in a set of recommendations for improved communications and interventions to reduce heat risk for vulnerable populations. Priority recommendations will be implemented in the final phase of the pilot project.



Two volunteers collect heat information in the Gadsden Green Community in Charleston, SC.



## BUILDING A CLIMATE READY NATION



Lake Michigan water levels are highly variable and impact inland areas, such as protected harbors and overbank areas along some rivers (Image: Unsplash)



## GREAT LAKES HOSTS CROSS NOAA WATER LEVELS COORDINATION WORKSHOP

NOAA has numerous tools, products, and services to inform partners about water levels in the Great Lakes region. To increase collaboration and communication, the Great Lakes Team hosted a NOAA Great Lakes Water Levels Workshop.

Participants developed an enhanced awareness of NOAA's Great Lakes water level work and the NOAA programs and people that are involved, engaged in discussion about the flow of information within NOAA regarding Great Lakes water levels to fill existing communication gaps, and explored the potential for cross-NOAA collaboration opportunities on Great Lake water level projects. This event was a great success, and it served as a springboard for new connections, potential collaborations and future workshops.

## CARIBBEAN REGION IS NOW AVAILABLE ON THE CLIMATE RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

The U.S. Caribbean Region page of the Climate Resilience Toolkit (<https://toolkit.climate.gov/>) is now available. The Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team completed regional sections for the [Southeast Region](#) and the [Caribbean](#) region as part of this valuable collection of information. The impacts of climate change are immense in the Caribbean Region. The Toolkit is a volunteer effort from partners across the region and includes general information on challenges that local communities face as well as the effects of climate change on natural systems, local economy and public health. The team also tagged resources for the region including climate data tools, case studies, reports, and training opportunities.

*The Climate Resilience Toolkit provides a wealth of information for addressing climate change impacts such as sargassum that is overtaking Caribbean waters.*



## NOAA WEST DEVELOPED WILDFIRE PORTAL

Numerous NOAA programs and offices provide critical resources to support wildfire response, including outlooks, forecasts and early warning products, and tools to monitor temperature, precipitation, and soil moisture across the nation. To better connect NOAA's wildfire resources, the West Regional Collaboration Team supported creation of a [Wildfire Portal](#) that

houses informational resources supporting wildfire science and response. This portal was a capstone project by participants in Cohort 1 of the NOAA West Leadership Program. NOAA collaborates on wildfire response with multiple federal and state partners, and this portal helps connect them in coordinating planning, response, and recovery.

*2022 Wildfire season kicked off early due to dry and windy conditions across the Southwest and Plains.*





## MEET CURBY, NOAA'S REAL-TIME DATA BUOY!

Climate change impacts pose significant challenges for coastal areas, resulting in a need for preparedness and quick emergency response. With support from the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team, the Disaster Preparedness Program and the Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) partnered for a collaborative response exercise with the Real-Time Currents and Meteorological Buoys (affectionately known as CURBY). The buoys are a NOAA scientific asset that can be used to support planning and operational decision-making during scientific research and emergency response. The buoys were built to be rapidly deployed by a small vessel where there is a need for real-time data. This hybrid functional exercise included a practice deployment and a tabletop exercise discussion based on a scenario of a ship collision in the Mobile River.

As part of the exercise, CO-OPS and USCG Sector Mobile deployed the CURBY buoy in the Port of Mobile.

## CONNECTING RESOURCES IN UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN

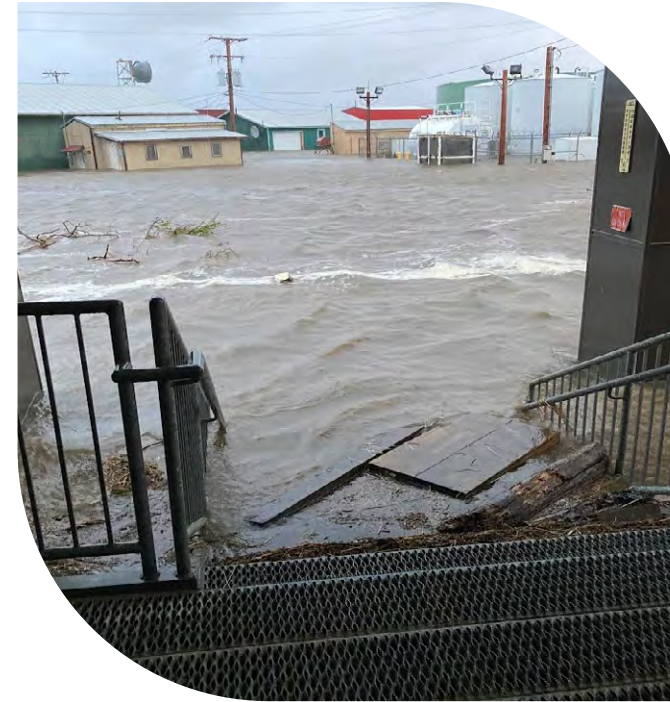
With the increased risks of climate change impacts, communities face critical challenges in decision making related to water and nutrient management. Over the past 5 years, team members and partners from NOAA's Central and Gulf regions have combined efforts to better connect the Upper Mississippi River Basin with the Gulf of Mexico. Products such as a Nutrient Run Off Informational Bulletin and expanded version of the Watershed Game are results of this sustained effort to increase collaboration and share effective outreach and educational tools to build flood resilient communities. Supported by joint funding from the NOAA Central and Gulf of Mexico Regional Teams, the new Coast Model of the Watershed Game is focused on challenges of coastal and estuary communities and includes hands-on simulation activities built around critical water quality and flooding issues.

A cross-region working group shares current resources and tools for NOAA staff and partners to effectively combat nutrient pollution and flooding in the Upper Mississippi River Basin.



Image: Unsplash

## DEVASTATING FALL STORMS ARE HARBINGER OF ALASKA'S CLIMATE CHANGE FUTURE



A harbinger of future fall storms, Typhoon Merbok was enhanced by climate change. (Image credit: State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management)

Typhoon Merbok and the other major fall sea storms ravaged communities along 1,000 miles of Alaska coastline from Bristol Bay to the North Slope in September 2022. Alaska Regional Collaboration team members coordinated NOAA's response, interagency storm science data collection, and development of disaster supplemental appropriation request. Pulling in available technical capacities across NOAA and other agencies and organizations, Team members coordinated assistance from scientists, emergency managers, planners, and partners to build the most extensive, accurate, and accessible documentation of flooding and erosion for an event of this scale in the State. Rapid pre- and post-storm response activities provided considerable benefits to residents on multiple timescales, from directly assisting the response and recovery process, to enhancing models and data that, in turn, will improve the quality of future National Weather Service watches, warnings, and advisories.

## ENGAGING LOCAL TEACHERS TO BUILD CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCY

The Pacific Islands Team in partnership with NOAA Planet Stewards, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and the Hawai'i Science Teaching Association hosted a three-day workshop for educators to learn about climate change, how it is impacting Hawai'i, and how we can engage students to take action through place-based activities grounded in Hawaiian perspectives. The event took place at three different NOAA facilities on three different islands - Inouye Regional Center in Honolulu, Mokuāpāpapa Discovery Center in Hilo, and the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary in Kihei. This event engaged upper elementary, middle and high school Hawai'i educators and allowed NOAA staff to build relationships with like-minded educators from across the state through collaborative conversations. It also provided an opportunity to engage with climate-related organizations in the community.

Hawai'i participants learn a sea level rise shoreline impact exercise. (Credit: Justin Umholtz/NOAA)





# EQUITY AT NOAA'S CORE

## ■ BOOZHOO AND MIIGWEC!

Boozhoo! or Hello in Ojibwe highlights the creation of an educational climate poster designed through a partnership between NOAA and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

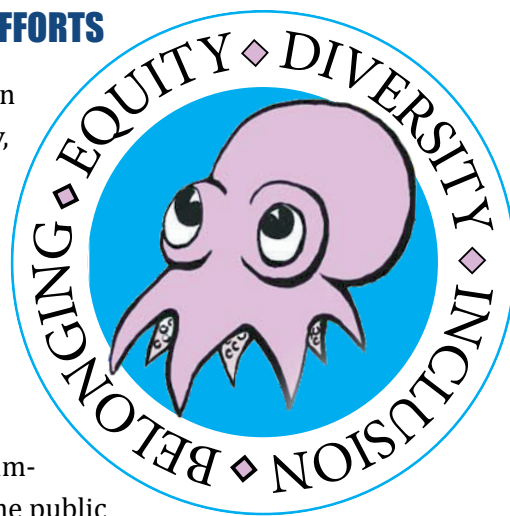
Ojibwe is a nearly extinct language and using it in an educational format with information from indigenous culture and western science has created a lasting partnership. Combining both traditional ecological knowledge and western science, climate change is explained through art, storytelling, and NOAA data. Miigwech! or Thank you.

*This poster focuses on Inawendiwin (connection) and how climate change is impacting the treaty-guaranteed rights of the Ojibwe to hunt, fish, and gather in the Ceded Territories.*



## ■ NOAA WEST PROMOTES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS

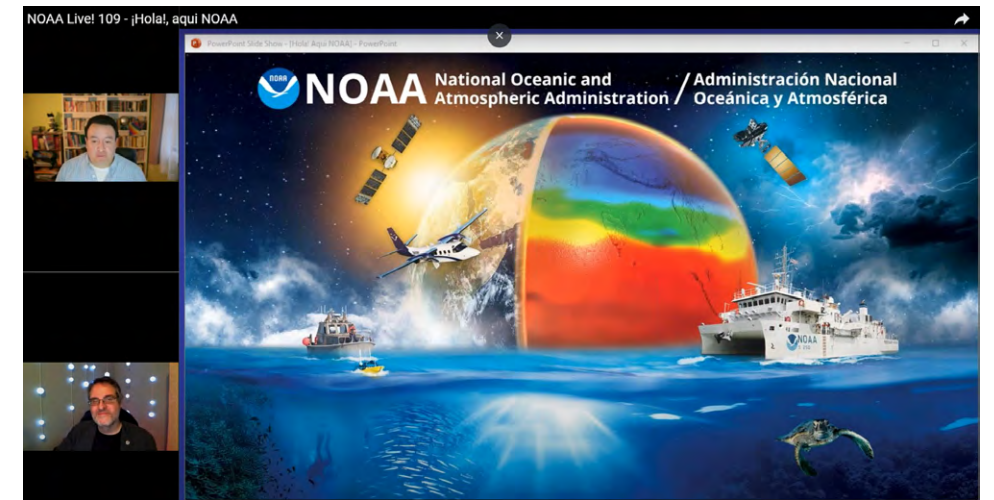
With support from the West Regional Collaboration Team, participants in Cohort 1 of the NOAA West Leadership Program developed the Diversity, Equity, Belonging, and Inclusion (DEBI) Coordination Group. The group facilitates discussion on DEBI efforts in different NOAA line offices around the western region, and allows participants to bring information and ideas back to inform ongoing DEBI efforts within their home line offices. Ultimately, the group contributes to increasing and retaining diversity within the NOAA workforce. The Team recently honored efforts by presenting awards to staff that contributed to creating and enhancing diversity, equity, belonging, and inclusion, efforts that either improved NOAA's culture or improved services for external partners and the public within NOAA's Western region.



*The DEBI Coordination Group's purpose is to promote diversity and inclusion efforts and facilitate information and idea sharing between line offices within the NOAA West region.*

## ■ ¡HOLA!, Aquí NOAA

While more than 100 webinars in the award-winning NOAA Live! Webinar series were captioned in Spanish, the North Atlantic Regional Team, Woods Hole Sea Grant and the NOAA Office of Education held the final NOAA Live! 4 Kids series webinar entirely in Spanish thanks to spanish-speaking employees Juan Pablo Hurtado Padilla (Office of Education) and Rafael de Ameller (NESDIS). The webinar drew attendees from several states and Puerto Rico as well as Mexico, Costa Rica and Guatemala, and provided insight into future NOAA Spanish-language programming.



*North Atlantic Team engaging with communities, one webinar at a time.*

## ■ INSPIRING EVERYONE TO CONNECT WITH COASTAL RESOURCES

The Paddle the Gulf Initiative, developed through the Gulf of Mexico Regional Team, hosted a widely attended event at various locations around the Gulf States timed with Earth Day. Participants joined in a Gulf-wide Bioblitz, a citizen science opportunity for people to become more connected to nature by exploring coastal streams and rivers flowing into the Gulf and recording the plants and animals that they saw via the iNaturalist app. Fifteen partner organizations from around the Gulf of Mexico and up to 50 citizens per location participated in the Paddle the Gulf Earth Day Bioblitz!



*People around the Gulf of Mexico coastline were invited to get out paddling on the water and identify species while exploring coastal resources and waterways.*

## VISITING ALASKAN COMMUNITIES SHOWS DR. SPINRAD A VIEW OF THE FUTURE OF CLIMATE IMPACTS & DISRUPTIONS IN THE US

NOAA's Alaska Team organized and hosted Dr. Spinrad's summer trip to visit several locations around Alaska and hear about NOAA's role in critical issues. Meetings with line office staff and partner organizations emphasized their passion to make a difference, interconnectedness of issues, and importance of NOAA collaboration in the region. NOAA and the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) used the visit to announce the kickoff of the Climate and Equity Pilot Project to support Alaska Native communities' resilience to climate change. During the trip, Dr. Spinrad connected with Tribes, Tribal Organiza-

tions, Tribal Corporations and local communities in several parts of the state and heard their stories of resilience and local challenges due to climate change impacts. Dr. Spinrad included "Tribes and Tribal Organizations" as one of the groups eligible for NOAA funding provided by the Inflation Reduction Act. Inclusion of Tribes and Tribal Organizations is an important turning point for local communities, enabling them to seek funding for impactful projects in the region.



From Anchorage to Juneau, Kenai to Nome, and Homer to Fairbanks, Alaskans are at the frontline of climate change. NOAA works with local communities and decision makers to create timely solutions.

## PACIFIC ISLANDS AND WEST TEAMS CELEBRATE DIVERSITY OF NOAA'S WORKFORCE

With NOAA progressing toward the Build a Model Workplace objective, regional teams are working to increase awareness around employee diversity and foster a sense of belonging and feeling valued for all NOAA employees. Pacific Islands and West Regional Collaboration Teams, in partnership with the Asian Employee Resource Group and the Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group, organized a webinar to celebrate NOAA Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. NOAA colleagues shared their journeys and discussed opportunities to strengthen NOAA's service to Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Island communities.

NOAA West and Pacific Islands Region collaboration network in partnership with the Asian and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group planned and co-hosted a panel of NOAA employees to celebrate 2022 Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month



## PROMOTING THE NEW BLUE ECONOMY

## NOAA'S SCIENCE ONBOARD VIKING CRUISE SHIP

The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Team is coordinating a partnership with Viking Expedition Cruises with a goal of expanding NOAA's research in the Great Lakes and educating passengers through engagement with NOAA employees participating in curated science and other learning opportunities. Completing its inaugural sail in the Great Lakes, Viking, with the help of NOAA, has ed-

ucated more than 3,000 guests about NOAA and the Great Lakes. Passengers on the cruise ship Octantis had the chance to observe a weather balloon launch, ozone monitoring processes, deployment of marine technology to study the bottom, along with numerous other NOAA research activities performed aboard. This partnership draws attention to NOAA's research, facilities, and programs serving and protecting the Great Lakes region and increasing local tourism, economic development, and its growing blue economy.



*NOAA brings together the public and private sectors to provide the data, information, and knowledge needed to support growth of the blue economy and to advance NOAA's science mission (Credit: Stephanie Gandulla)*

## SOUTHEAST AND CARIBBEAN TEAM ENGAGES WITH SHELLFISH MANAGERS

Shellfish management affects seafood supply, jobs, and ecosystem services. In order to improve shellfish management in the Southeast U.S. States, the Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team organized and led a Shellfish Sanitation Workshop (3rd annual) with state shellfish managers and aquacul-

turists to identify NOAA data and tools that would be useful in management and culture operations. NOAA provides data and expertise to support shellfish managers in the region and has initiated and leads a Shellfish GIS Community of Practice among shellfish managers. The workshop included a discussion on harmful algal bloom monitoring by underserved communities in the southeast for improved shellfish management decisions. NOAA's information and tools facilitate more accurate harvest closure decisions, the development of emergency closure tools, and the improvement of existing aquaculture siting tools.



*NOAA plays a critical role in coordinating efforts with shellfish managers to ensure successful shellfish production while preserving the environment.*

## GULF TEAM HELPS COMBINE NOAA'S EFFORTS TO PROVIDE DATA TO MARINERS IN MOBILE, ALABAMA

Forecasts for key points along shipping channels are valuable for safe and efficient marine transportation. Weather and oceanographic conditions can vary a lot as a ship approaches or leaves port. The Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaboration Team supported col-

laboration between NWS, NOS and the Port of Mobile to implement a second Marine Channels Forecast in Mobile Bay, Alabama. This follows the first Marine Channels Forecast, in Tampa Bay, Florida. Mobile Bay began producing an experimental Marine Channels Forecast right in time for Fall-Winter fog season and provided publicly available data throughout 2022. The Mobile Bay Marine Channels Forecast includes information on current, winds, salinity, visibility, probability of precipitation, water levels, and waves. Especially important to mariners is data on visibility of less than one nautical mile due to fog, which is updated at least 4 times a day.



*Visibility of less than one nautical mile is particularly important for mariners navigating the Gulf, especially during the winter season. Photo credit: Captain Dave Berault, Mobile Bay Bar Pilots.*

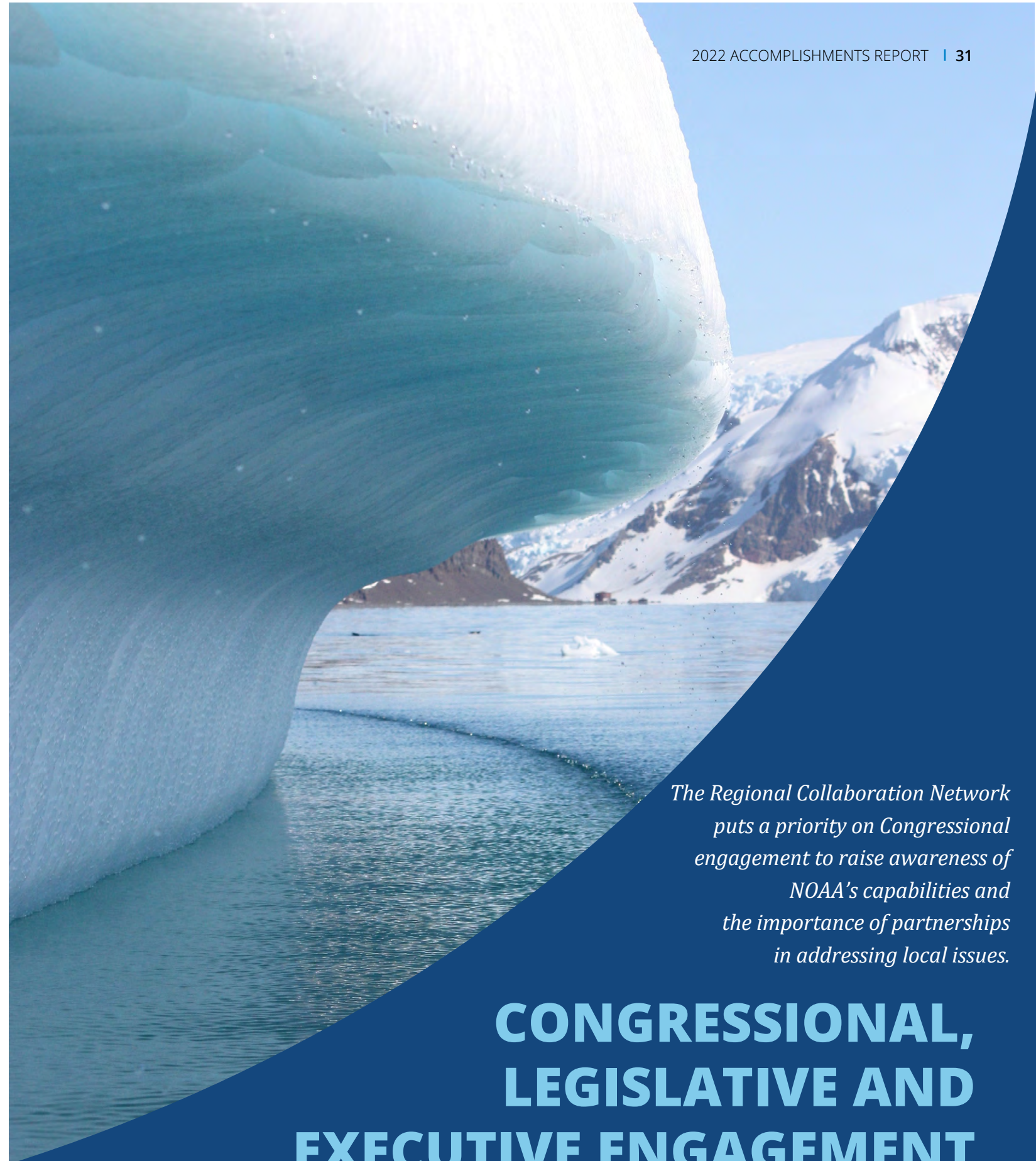
## POSITIONING NOAA FOR SUCCESS IN SUPPORTING MULTIPLE OCEAN USES

In the fast-paced and complex environment of emerging ocean uses, NOAA needs pathways through which we can quickly and efficiently improve practical coordination across offices and programs to leverage NOAA expertise, relationships, and roles. Through a series of virtual workshops, participants explored ways to improve communication and coordination by leveraging internal expertise and partnerships around the topics of offshore wind and aquaculture. NART developed a transferable process that regions can use to assess internal connections and opportunities to inform improved cross-office collaboration. As a result of

the workshops, the region is piloting a North Atlantic Aquaculture Team and an Offshore Wind Team that build on existing regional connections to enhance the ability of the region to dynamically work together and respond to emerging issues in these areas.

*NOAA's investment in the expansion of offshore wind energy fosters sustainable economic development while providing a science-based approach to support our Nation's infrastructure.*





*The Regional Collaboration Network puts a priority on Congressional engagement to raise awareness of NOAA's capabilities and the importance of partnerships in addressing local issues.*

## **CONGRESSIONAL, LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE ENGAGEMENT**



## NART CONNECTS WITH CONGRESSIONAL STAFF IN THE REGION

- The North Atlantic Regional Team (NART) coordinated multiple engagements with congressional staff to highlight the value of NOAA's mission:
- The NART assembled NOAA staff and partners to share highlights of NOAA's diversity, equity, inclusion and justice activities in Massachusetts with the district staff of Sen. Markey (D-MA). Examples were centered on workforce development, equitable access, community resilience and environmental education.
- The NART organized a visit by the NOAA Administrator to meet with Rep. Espaillat (NY-13) and Rep. Torres (NY-15), their staff and local partners working on the Urban Waters Federal Partnership site on the Bronx and Harlem Rivers. A follow-up briefing for Rep. Torres (D NY-15) showcased NOAA's satellite data and efforts to make them more usable by the Bronx community.
- The NART created an opportunity for NOAA's climate services staff and partners to brief Rep. Sherrill (NJ-10) on inland climate issues.

Rep. Espaillat (NY-13) and Dr. Spinrad visited the High Bridge in March to discuss the progress made on the Harlem River through the Urban Waters Federal Partnership.



Rep. Espaillat's environmental justice boat tour of the Harlem River as part of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership included a cross-NOAA team assembled by the NART. Pictured (from left) are: Shakila Merchant, NOAA's Center for Earth System Sciences and Remote Sensing Technologies (CESSRST) at City College of New York (CCNY), Lillit Genovesi, New York Sea Grant, Nicole Bartlett, NART, Scott Lundgren, NOAA's Office of Response & Restoration, Kiah Matthews, Florida Southeastern University/Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions Intern, and Tarendra Lakhankar, CESSRST/CCNY.



## STATE REPRESENTATIVE AND NOAA DISCUSS THE BLUE ECONOMY IN FLORIDA

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team hosted a discussion with Representative Kelly Skidmore-FL and her office staff to inform them about NOAA's current investment in Florida and grant programs that support Blue Economy efforts. Representative Skidmore had introduced a bill to create an Office of the Blue Economy in Florida. The Team successfully facilitated valuable connections with individuals and programs including NOAA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, NOAA Fisheries, and National Sea Grant Office. The informative session raised awareness of NOAA's involvement in the Blue Economy and opportunities for support for activities in Florida.

The New Blue Economy offers economic and environmental opportunities at the state and federal levels.

## WEST HOLDS CONGRESSIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON EXTREME HEAT

In 2021, the Pacific Northwest experienced an unprecedented extreme heat event, with multiple days of record-breaking temperatures. The West Regional Collaboration Team organized a congressional roundtable to inform local congressional representatives about how NOAA and its partners are preparing the Region for future heat events through improved service delivery, especially for underserved and vulnerable populations. Approximately ten congressional staff attended the roundtable and expressed gratitude to learn about resources and to be connected with local experts on extreme heat.

The Team gathered municipal, county, state, and tribal organizations as well as NOAA panelists to discuss recent extreme heat events and strategies, tools, and opportunities to help communities prepare more effectively for future extreme heat events.



## GREAT LAKES REPRESENTS NOAA VIRTUALLY AT DAY ON CAPITOL HILL



Great Lakes Team educated and advocated for the Lakes at the Annual Great Lakes day on the Hill.

The Great Lakes Team participated in the regionally organized Great Lakes Day on the Hill. This is an annual opportunity to interact with the members of Congress and inform them about current NOAA work, tools and services that impact their constituents, and advocate for the lakes. Meetings were held with staff from Senators Baldwin-WI, Stabenow-MI, Peters-MI, and Braun-IN. The Team also met with Representatives Meijer (MI-3), Dingell (MI-12), Higgins (NY-26), Katko (NY-24), Stefanik (NY-21), and Lawrence (MI-14). Some of the topics covered were urban flooding issues, NOAA observational capabilities, experimental forecasting, harmful algal blooms, and invasive species.

## NOAA LEADERSHIP DRAWS ON ALASKA TEAM FOR WHITE HOUSE LEVEL ARCTIC EFFORTS

With the reinstated Northern Bering Sea Resilience Area and Northern Bering Sea Task Force, NOAA programs and offices play critical roles, and the Alaska Regional Collaboration Team has been instrumental in assembling efforts relevant to the task force including fisheries, research, marine shipping, pollution, marine debris, and oil spills. The regional team is contributing to the development of the top line NOAA messages both as members of the the NOAA Arctic Executive Committee and as an effort in the Team's Annual Operating Plan. The Team provided a crucial Alaskan perspective about national arctic policies and operations by presenting regional emerging issues to NOAA's Arctic Executive Steering Committee and Line Office leadership.



President Biden reinstated [Executive Order 13754](#) "to enhance the resilience of the northern Bering Sea region by conserving the region's ecosystem, including those natural resources that provide important cultural and subsistence value and services to the people of the region."

## PACIFIC ISLANDS TEAM INFORM WHITE HOUSE GUEST ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES

Pacific Islands hosted a visit from Erika Moritsugu, Deputy Assistant to the President and Asian American and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Senior Liaison, and Krystal Ka'ai, the Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. The Team

informed visiting leaders about most current NOAA programs and initiatives tied to the [President's Executive Order 14031 on Advancing Equity, Justice, and Opportunity for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders](#). As the leaders visited He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve, the Team facilitated important discussions around climate, environmental justice and food security issues in the Region.



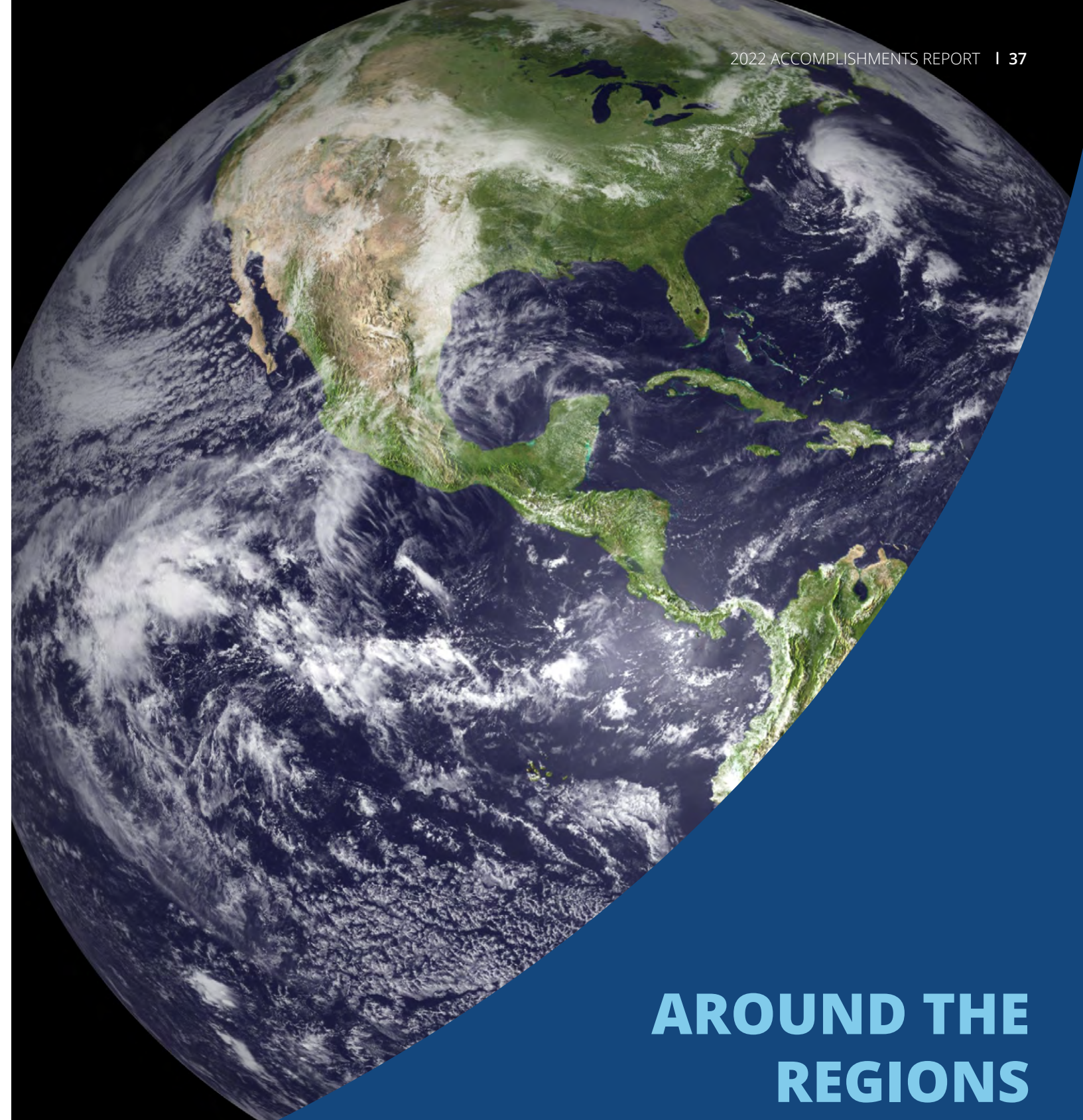
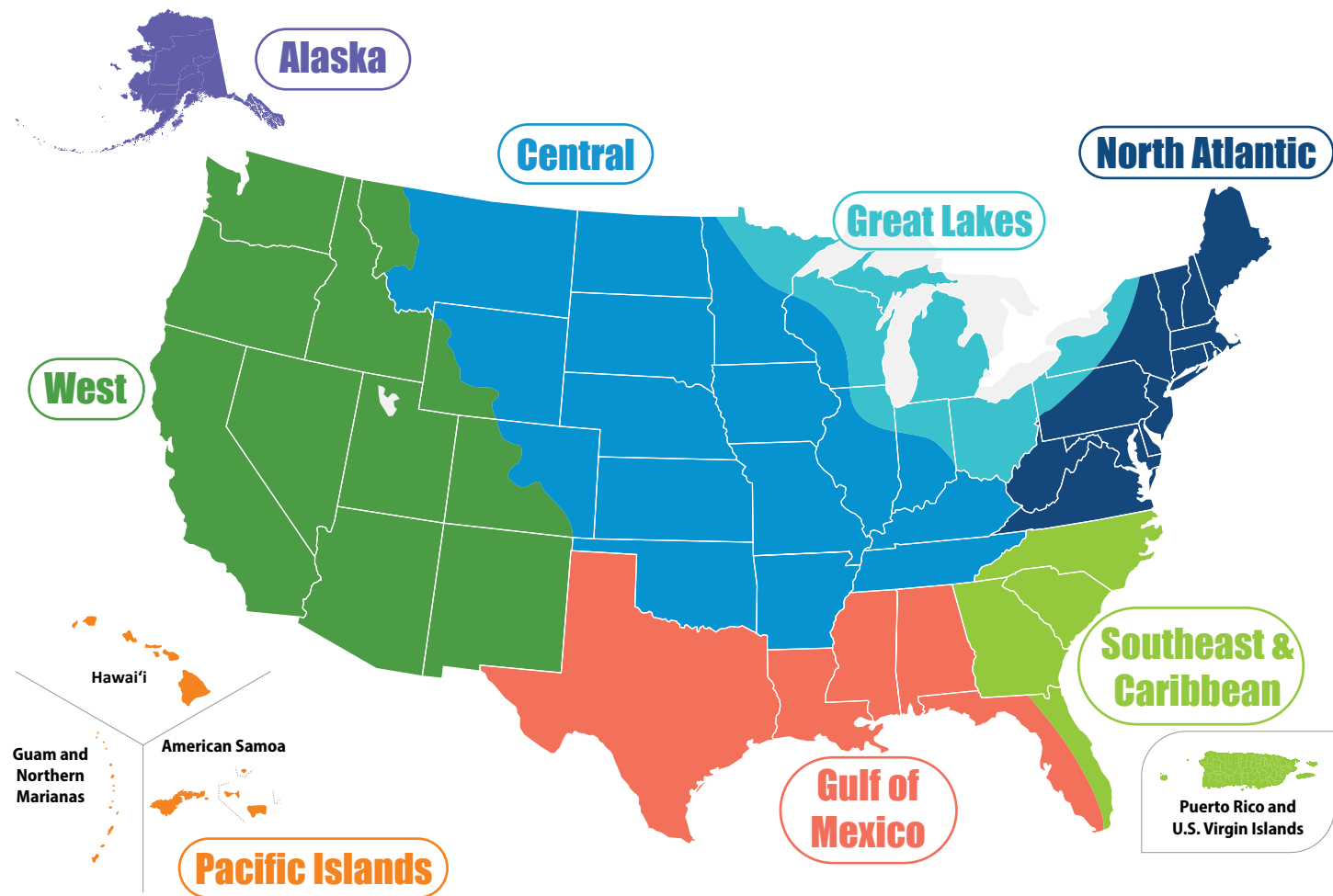
Kāko'o 'Ōiwi executive director, Kanekoa Kukea Shultz and NOAA staff Jean Tanimoto, Kirsten Leong, and Pua Kamaka, hosted Erika Moritsugu, Krystal Ka'ai, and staff on a tour of the He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve during their visit to Hawai'i in July 2022.

## Regional Video Releases

NOAA carries out its mission of science, service and stewardship for every community in the United States. The mission is to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, ocean, and coasts, to share that knowledge and information with others and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

The NOAA mission has a different flavor in each of the eight regions of the country. NOAA tunes its mission to particular geographies with wide varieties of natural resources, weather patterns, regional priorities and public safety challenges.

Each Team created a video highlighting NOAA's work in the Region to create a weather and climate ready nation, strengthen the Blue Economy and promote diversity in our workforce and incorporate equity into all that NOAA does in its service to communities. These eight videos were featured on NOAA social media channels as part of NOAA Virtual Summer Film Festival. NOAA Regional Videos can be viewed on [Regional Collaboration website](#) or by accessing Youtube via interactive map below.



## AROUND THE REGIONS

## ■ ALASKA

### Alaska Team Represents NOAA at High Profile National and International Fora

The Team members participated in the Arctic Encounter Symposium, Department of Energy ArcticX, and U.S. Coast Guard Senior Leader Arctic Orientation and raised awareness of emerging and exacerbating climate change impacts in Alaska and the Arctic.

### NOAA Alaska Connects with U.S. Military at Alaskan Command Arctic Symposium

The Team informed Department of Defense leadership about climate and ecosystem drivers for Arctic security and highlighted NOAA's role in the National Strategy for the Arctic Region.

### Alaska Team Shapes First Ever Cross-NOAA Arctic Budget Requests

Leveraging membership on the NOAA Arctic Executive Committee Alaska Team members guided the development of Arctic Specific budget requests for Fiscal Year 2024 and the Inflation Reduction Act, and coordinated 2022 Disaster Supplemental Appropriation requests.

### Advancing Alaska Native Relations

Team members took part in the development of the White House policy on Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge, the Bering Task Force and InterTribal Advisory Council meetings, and additional governance and protocols training.

## ■ CENTRAL

### Central Team Connects NOAA Staff

To increase awareness of research, initiatives, and programs, the Team continued the popular "Three Minute Thesis Webinar" series to showcase experts from NOAA line offices through focusing attention on crucial topics: Drought, NOAA's Hydrology Efforts, NOAA's Uncrewed Systems, and Extreme Heat. The team also shares valuable resources via the NOAA Central Region Snapshot, a region-wide "internal" communication.

### Central Team Gathers in Seattle and Develops a New Team Priority

Team members gathered in-person to reconnect and identify regional needs and related activities for FY23. An emerging theme is the critical importance of valuing and supporting NOAA's staff well-being.

### Regional Climate Resources in 2 Clicks

The Team developed [a new resource](#) to provide quick access to popular drought and climate information, foster connections with regional climate partners, educate through webinars with experts about climate related impacts, and share the latest on the NOAA Climate and Equity Regional Pilots.

### Central Team Organizes a Collaborative Review of Research to Operations Processes

The Team initiated a working group, representing key OAR and NWS perspectives, to engage in an objective review of the process within the NWS to acquire, validate, and prioritize field requirements. The results will describe the overall effectiveness of the process and suggestions for improvement or alternative processes to support innovation.

## ■ GREAT LAKES

### Strengthening Connections within Climate Community in the Great Lakes Region

To enhance interaction between National Weather Service Forecast Offices in the Great Lakes Region and increase awareness about NOAA's climate data services and tools, the Great Lakes Regional Team partnered with the Midwestern Regional Climate Center to host a Climate Focal Point Workshop.

### Great Lakes Hosts Successful Cross NOAA Emergency Response Tabletop Exercise

Keeping the Great Lakes safe and clean involves response from several NOAA offices. To improve coordination and communication across NOAA, the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration team hosted a workshop and tabletop exercise on emergency response in the Great Lakes region.

### Great Lakes Team Funds a 50-year Great Lakes Trends Snapshot

To mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between the United States and Canada, the Team supported development of a Great Lakes Climate Retrospective that provides an overview of lake level, precipitation, water temperature, and ice trends over the last 50 years.

### Great Lakes continues to lead NOAAs work under the GLRI

The Great Lakes Team has continued to coordinate this important multi-agency initiative by distributing more than \$330m in funding for more than 450 NOAA projects under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) since 2010.

## ■ NORTH ATLANTIC

### North Atlantic Regional Coordinator Interviewed on Fox Weather

NOAA held its first-ever virtual [Summer Film Festival](#) featuring [regional videos](#), and the Team's coordinator spoke about how NOAA's mission plays out in diverse ways across the country.

### North Atlantic Brings NOAA Staff to Climate and Equity Pilot Location

Regional Team Coordinators were invited to experience the culture and the challenges facing the historically marginalized community of Bridgeport, CT. NOAA connected with community leaders, visited historic sites and applied lessons learned in their own regions.

### North Atlantic Team Sponsors Student Internships

The Team was proud to sponsor another round of interns, crossing a variety of programs and partners - from the Northeast Regional Climate Center, New York Sea Grant's Community Engaged Internship Program, and NOAA's Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions.

### Tribal Assessment Results Shared

The results of a team-sponsored third-party assessment of NOAA-tribal relations in the North Atlantic will guide efforts to better connect and serve tribal nations in the region.

## ■ SOUTHEAST & CARIBBEAN

### 3rd Caribbean Climate Change Conference Explores Impacts and Solutions

With support from the Team, experts in government, private sector, universities, and nonprofits participated in the Conference and shared information on climate impacts, adaptation, and mitigation measures in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

### Team Produces Popular Annual Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team hosted an annual [Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series](#) to increase awareness among emergency managers and broadcast meteorologists of new products and services provided by NOAA.

### The Southeast and Caribbean Team Improves Cross NOAA Coordination of Disaster Resilience Efforts

The Regional Team, with input from NOAA offices across the region, prepared the [Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean](#) that identifies roles, responsibilities, and resources related to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

### Sharing information among Uncrewed System Operators

Following up from a successful “Drones in the Coastal Zone Workshop” in FY21, and working with partners across the region, the regional team supported scholarships to uncrewed system training and the creation of a Drones in the Coastal Zone Community of Practice.

## ■ GULF OF MEXICO

### NOAA Gulf of Mexico Webinars Educate NOAA Staff and Partners

The Team organized a series of virtual Regional Forum Webinars to increase awareness in the Region and build connections with other agencies and organizations. These webinars have become a powerful educational tool and included a variety of topics ranging from innovations in the New Blue Economy to community disaster recovery efforts.

### Gulf of Mexico Team makes NOAA data and resources more accessible

The Team connected NOAA's Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA) with Louisiana groups to provide two “ERMA 101” sessions that highlighted valuable information resources available in ERMA and how to access them in case of future emergencies. The Team scheduled these virtual sessions to introduce community, parish, and state staff to ERMA data.

### Gulf Team Represented NOAA at the Gulf of Mexico Conference

The Team presented a poster and moderated informative discussions during two conference sessions. The Team also contributed to the One-NOAA display booth in partnership with the NOAA RESTORE Science Program.

### Gulf of Mexico Team Engages in Cross Agency Collaboration

The Team co-chairs the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Federal Working Group, a venue to share information and learn about key priorities across agencies in the Region. Team members and other NOAA staff play key roles across all aspects of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, collaborating to achieve goals within the Governors' Action Plan IV for Healthy and Resilient Coasts.

## ■ PACIFIC ISLANDS

### Pacific Islands Connects partners to Discuss Climate Change Risks in the Region

To connect agencies, organizations and institutions working towards reduction of climate-related risks and supporting sustainable development, the Team planned and facilitated the Pacific Islands Climate Change Forum.

### B-WET Hawai'i Includes Indigenous Local Knowledge as Competition Criteria

In response to needs in the Hawai'i community and Executive Order 13985 on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, the Hawai'i B-WET team worked to include Indigenous Local Knowledge as one of the NOAA Priority Content Areas for the competition. This created funding opportunities for community organizations educating students and teachers through place-based learning and including cultural knowledge systems into their programming with the support from community partnerships.

### Building a network for climate change education

The Inouye Regional Center Education and Outreach Coordinator and other NOAA line office staff convened the Hawai'i Climate Change Hui, a climate change community of practice, to facilitate climate change conversations and engagement opportunities for educators in Hawai'i.

### NOAA and Partners in the U.S. Territories explore funding opportunities under Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

The Team helped convene a workshop bringing together federal agencies and U.S. territorial representatives to discuss funding opportunities made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to assist the territories of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands in building resilient economies and communities.

## ■ WEST

### Cohort 2 of the NOAA West Leadership Program is on!

The West Regional Collaboration Team launched Cohort 2 of its popular Leadership Program in October 2022. Participants will learn about leadership from NOAA leaders, and develop diverse capstone projects that address complex regional issues and are linked to the NOAA West priorities.

### NOAA West Fosters Connections to Disproportionately Impacted Communities

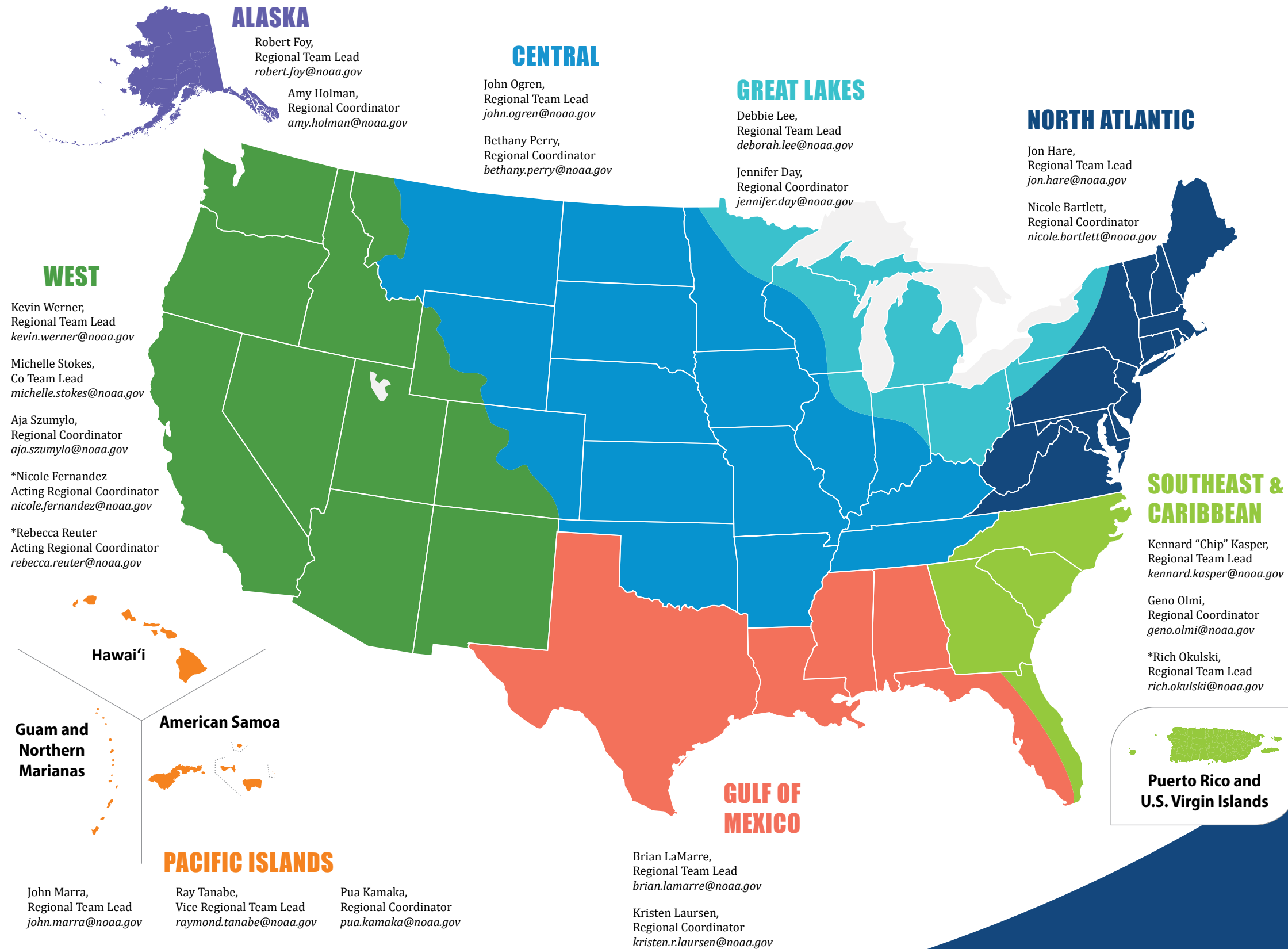
NOAA West organized and hosted Native American Heritage Month Webinar as part of a series showcasing NOAA programs/work supporting underserved communities. Panelists presented on land acknowledgements, legal basis for tribal relationships, weather forecasting for Navajo Nation, and proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary.

### Team Releases Regional Climate Resilience Toolkit

NOAA West developed regional sections for [Northwest and Southwest Climate Resilience Toolkit](#) providing a wealth of information on climate impacts in the region.

### NOAA West Convenes Regional Partners on Offshore Wind

NOAA West gathered representatives from across line offices to discuss interests and opportunities to coordinate on offshore wind development efforts on the West Coast. The team is continuing to explore the role it can play in internal coordination, especially as we engage with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and other federal, state, tribal, and other partners.



**LINE OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES**

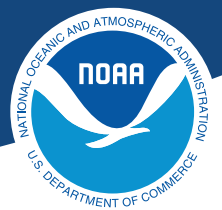
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**OUR NETWORK**



NOAA Regional  
Collaboration  
**NETWORK**