



NOAA in the North Atlantic



Welcome to the Winter 2010 NOAA North Atlantic Region e-newsletter.

NOAA's North Atlantic region spans from the mountains of Maine to the beaches of Virginia and includes all or part of 12 states and the District of Columbia. Here are highlights of recent activities in our region brought to you by your NOAA North Atlantic Regional Team (NART).

Nor'Ida Tests Chesapeake Inundation Prediction System

The nor'easter that struck the Hampton Roads, Virginia area on November 11-13, 2009, caused extensive flooding and property damage throughout the metropolitan region of 1.8 million people. The storm was dubbed Nor'Ida by some since a typical nor'easter was strengthened by the remnants of tropical storm Ida.

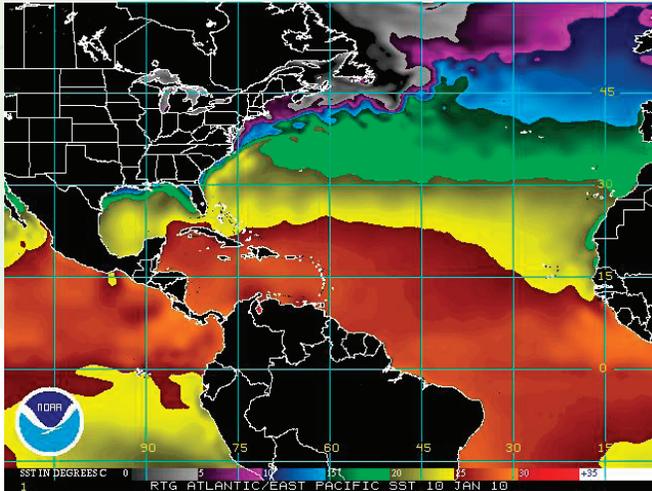
The storm gave NOAA and our partners an opportunity to use the Chesapeake Inundation Prediction System (CIPS), a new demonstration project to improve coastal flooding forecasts for tropical storms and nor'easters. Although the system is currently used by NOAA meteorologists, the goal is to create visualization maps that can be easily used by emergency managers to protect lives and property at risk from flooding.

Nor'Ida produced flooding in Norfolk of 7.75 feet above "mean lower low" water levels (the average of the lowest of the two daily low tides). This was only three inches below the historic 1933 hurricane, which produced the highest water levels on record for the region. CIPS demonstrated the ability to forecast the storm's inundation over land at high resolution.

The development of CIPS was supported by funding provided by NOAA's Integrated Ocean Observing System. Key partners who are working to implement CIPS include the Chesapeake Bay Observing System/ Old Dominion University, NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, University of Maryland, U.S. Geological Survey, WeatherFlow and Noblis.

For more information contact NART Mid-Atlantic sub-regional team lead Anthony Siebers, with the National Weather Service at anthony.siebers@noaa.gov.





NART is co-sponsoring a project to create a regional network in support of climate literacy.

MARCO Hosts Stakeholder Meeting in NYC

MARCO, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Oceans, hosted a stakeholder meeting in New York City on December 9th and 10th. Peyton Robertson, the NART team lead, and several other NOAA representatives attended.

The event brought together stakeholders from five states (New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia) to discuss regional collaboration and to plan ways to move forward in four key priority areas: habitat protection, offshore renewable energy, climate change and water quality. Participants also focused on ways to expand regional communication and coordination.

NOAA will support MARCO through the work of the Ocean Policy Task Force and the NART as well as providing access to NOAA data and programs that can help the states achieve progress in the four key areas identified.

MARCO was created as part of the Mid-Atlantic Governor's Agreement on Ocean Conservation. For more information about NOAA's role in MARCO, please contact Darlene Finch at darlene.finch@noaa.gov

NART Supporting Several Innovative Projects in Fiscal Year 2010

In FY 2010, the NART is undertaking a number of projects to support NOAA priorities in climate and coastal and marine spatial planning, as well as initiatives relating to hazard resiliency, ecosystem-based management and the integration of NOAA's water resource program.

The Climate Literacy Project, which the NART is implementing in partnership with Sea Grant, will build a regional network of NOAA climate ambassadors through a train-the-trainer format. If you are a NOAA employee in the North Atlantic who is asked to speak about NOAA's climate services, this training may be for you. A one-page description of the project is available here: http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI_Capabilities/north_atlantic.html.

The NART will also be coordinating "human use" characterization efforts in New England's ocean and coastal regions, developing a Federal regulatory quick reference guide, and many other initiatives. For more information about all the NART FY10 projects, contact the NART regional coordinator at Nicole.Bartlett@noaa.gov.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are still some "NOAA in the North Atlantic" outreach kits available. These kits contain posters, fact sheets, activity books, pens, brochures and other giveaways that are perfect for your next open house or festival in the region. Help people get to know NOAA through these products at your next public event.

If you would like an outreach kit, contact Nicole Bartlett at nicole.bartlett@noaa.gov.



NOAA Weather Radio Transmitter Moved to NOAA Fisheries Facility in Gloucester

On December 2, 2009 a team of NOAA employees and contractors moved the NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards transmitter from the Gloucester (MA) Coast Guard facility on Eastern Point to the roof of the new NOAA National Marine Fisheries Building in Gloucester. With a call sign of WNG574 and frequency of 162.425 MHZ at 300 Watts, the Gloucester transmitter is one of the very few on the east coast that is devoted to 24/7 marine weather information and other key time-sensitive NOAA information such as Right Whale Alerts.

The new location on top of NOAA Fisheries Northeast Regional Office will provide greater range and immediate access to emergency power. As the weather worsens, timely communication of key warnings, forecasts, and observations from NOAA's National Weather Service becomes more important to those who may be riding out a storm at sea. The presence of emergency power will allow the "voice of the National Weather Service" to be there for those most in need. The dedication and collaboration of multiple NOAA line offices made this service enhancement possible.

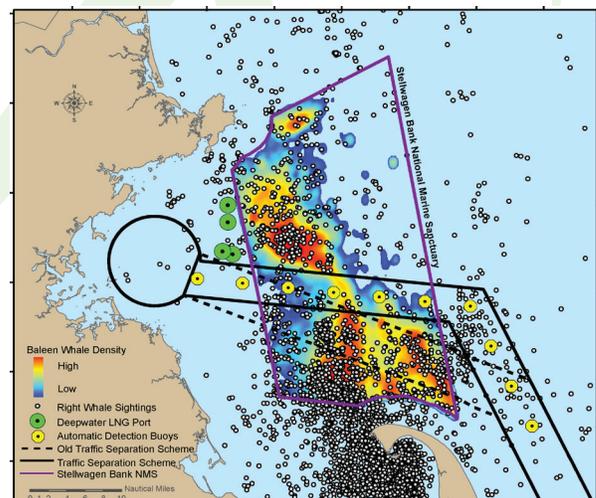
For more information, contact Robert.Thompson@noaa.gov.

NOAA and NROC Host Workshop on Marine Spatial Planning

New England has become a hotbed for marine spatial planning activity and innovative partnerships to encourage integrated ocean use management approaches and improved decision-making. To capitalize on potential synergies among ocean planning efforts within the region and to offer input to the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force, the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) partnered with NOAA to convene a working session on ecosystem-based marine spatial planning on October 26-27, 2009 in Gloucester, MA.

This workshop gathered federal and state agencies and partners to discuss state and regional scale information and decision support tool needs, regulatory efficiencies, improved data access, and strategies for how the New England community could approach development of a regional marine spatial plan called for in the release of the Interim Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Framework.

These discussions with NROC will continue in 2010 and will be a critical place for NOAA to determine its role in light of this new charge. For more information, contact Betsy.Nicholson@noaa.gov



This map depicts the new Boston Traffic Separation Scheme through NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and is an example of marine spatial planning.

NOAA People in the North Atlantic Region

NART Team Member

Betsy Nicholson, is the Northeast Lead for the NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC), and serves as the NART New England subregional lead and the NART Coastal and Ocean Uses Team Lead.

In her current position, Betsy works with the coastal resource management community in New England to match their needs with CSC and broader NOAA information, tools and technical assistance on issues ranging from marine spatial planning to climate change adaptation and land use management practices in the coastal zone. She supports much of NOAA's interests in facilitating regional ocean governance in New England.



Betsy spent the first half of her career in DC, serving NOAA as the NOS rep in the Program Coordination Office staffing NOAA leadership for several years, as well as the NOAA Policy Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce for nine months in 2003. She is happy to have returned to her New England roots, and expects a second child in April.

NART Background

The NART is one of eight regional teams created by NOAA's Regional Collaboration effort. It is composed of 20 members from five line offices and is currently led by Peyton Robertson. Nicole Bartlett is the NART's full-time Regional Coordinator. NOAA employees may obtain more information on team members and activities at: http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI_Capabilities/

NOAA Places in the North Atlantic Region

Cooperative Oxford Laboratory

The Cooperative Oxford Laboratory (COL) is located on the Tred Avon River in the town of Oxford on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Under the leadership of the National Ocean Service's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science and the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources, scientists at COL investigate the role of disease in the distribution, abundance, marketability, and edibility of marine animal resources. COL also works to determine the influence of natural and human-made environmental factors on the occurrence and persistence of diseases, and explore the use of developing and applying histopathological, clinical, biochemical, and microbiological approaches to study diseases of shellfish, marine mammals, sea turtles, and corals.

NOAA's Chesapeake Bay Office is also a partner at the lab, conducting habitat research and modeling that provides information to aid marine resource managers in Maryland and Virginia in their efforts to apply the principles of ecosystem based management.

Exciting things are happening at COL in 2010! NOAA will open a new Environmental Science Training Center there which will promote enhanced environmental literacy for area educators. In addition, a major living shoreline restoration project will be completed at the lab. The project, coordinated by the NOAA Restoration Center, will remove 280 feet of currently hardened shorelines and create 420 restored feet of low marsh and beach habitat which is critical for blue crabs, terrapins, and juvenile fish in the area.



The Cooperative Oxford Laboratory