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Federal Agencies Join Forces to Get a Grip on El Nino Impact

Properly assessing the impacts of powerful storms associated with El Nino, which have brought unprecedented erosion to the United States West Coast, is an enormous task. NASA, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are combining efforts to provide public officials with the tools they need to accurately assess coastal erosion.

The goal of the joint project between the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility, NOAA's Coastal Service Center, Charleston, SC and USGS Centers for Coastal Geology, St. Petersburg, FL and Menlo Park, CA. is to produce a highly detailed map of the West Coast from Washington state to Southern California.

"The focus of this month's survey will be on erosion of coastal cliffs in the same areas we surveyed before," said Asbury Sallenger, Jr., senior scientist, USGS Center for Coastal Geology, St. Petersburg, FL. "The rapid speed of data acquisition and very high data density makes an airborne scanning laser system ideal for pre- and post-storm assessment of the coastal condition."

"The cooperative effort between USGS, NASA, and NOAA using this technology will provide in detail the impact of El Nino at a scale never acquired before," said Sallenger.

The mapping, which started April 8, is being performed with the NASA Airborne Terrain Mapper (ATM) flown on a NOAA Twin Otter aircraft. The ATM collects 3,000 to 5,000 spot elevations per second as the aircraft travels over the coast at approximately 150 feet per second. Using the ATM and a Global Positioning System satellite receiver, researchers have been able to survey the beach elevations to an accuracy of four inches.

"The use of the NASA instrumentation will provide cost effective and highly accurate mapping of the beach erosion which is of great interest and concern to coastal communities," said John Brock, Coastal Remote Sensing Program Manager with NOAA. "Due to the high human and economic costs associated with El Nino, this type of information will help to support sustainable coastal



The ATM installed on the NOAA Twin Otter aircraft.

development and improved coastal management."

A pre-El Nino baseline survey of 625 nautical miles (1,000 kilometers) of the Pacific Coast conducted in October 1997 included three regions. The southern region extended from the U. S. and Mexican border to Santa Barbara, CA. The central region extended from Monterey to Point Reyes, CA., and the northern region extended from Cape Blanco, Oregon to Port Grenville, WA. A similar type of survey to measure beach erosion was conducted along the East Coast of the United States in October 1996, September 1997 and February 1998.

NASA is responsible for the operation of the ATM and the initial processing of the data. Mission planning and the follow-on processing of the survey information and its conversion into a format that can be directly used by different state and Federal agencies will be jointly done by NASA, USGS and NOAA.

Information on the Airborne Topographic Mapper, 1998 West Coast Beach Mapping, can be found on the NASA Internet home page at URL: <http://aol.wff.nasa.gov/aoltm/projects/beachmap/98results/>

Coffee on April 15



Wallops employees, civil service and contractor, are invited to attend the monthly morning coffee with Wallops managers from 8 to 9 a.m., April 15 in the cafeteria.

Wallops Shorts.....

Teams Travel

Wallops personnel have arrived at White Sands Missile Range, NM to support the launch of two Taurus-Orion sounding rockets.

Personnel from the Observational Science Branch are supporting the Ocean Color -Estuarine Habit Project. Approximately five missions will be flown on a NOAA Twin Otter aircraft from Wallops over the Atlantic shelf and slope waters adjacent to New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and Virginia. A survey of the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays also will be made. The aircraft departed Wallops April 5 to conduct missions from Charleston, SC., Savannah, GA., Gulfport, MS., and Tampa, FL.

A second NOAA Twin Otter aircraft also departed Wallops, April 5, with Observational Science Branch personnel to conduct a West Coast Beach Mapping Mission. (Additional information in accompanying article.)

Fire Department Responds

The Wallops Fire Department responded to a call for mutual aid, April 8, from Accomack County 911 Center. Personnel responded with a crash truck and foam to an accident on the Saxis Road (VA).

On April 10, Wallops emergency medical technicians responded to a call from the Navy for an emergency medical condition. The patient was transported from Navy housing to Shore Memorial Hospital, Nassawadox, VA.

Thanks

Most of the Wallops personnel supporting the Coqui Dos II Campaign have returned from Puerto Rico. Thanks for a job well done and a successful 8 for 8 out of 11 planned sounding rockets. Welcome Home!

Center Director's Colloquium

Title: The Office of Science and Technology Policy's Division's Agenda

Speaker: Dr. Arthur Bienenstock, Associate Director for Science Executive Office of the President Office of Science and Technology Policy

When: April 21, 1998, 10 - 11:30 a.m.

Where: NASA Wallops Channel 6

Description: Dr. Bienenstock will describe the roles of OSTP and its Science Division, as well as some of the Division's immediate and long-term concerns.



Frank Voss Retires

by Steve Currier

Frank G. Voss retired March 31, 1998, after completing more than 29 years of service to NASA. Voss began his career with RCA in 1961 repairing and calibrating test equipment at Air Force installations throughout Europe. In 1963, he returned to the U. S. as group leader on the Tiros Satellite Tracking Station at Wallops. In 1969, Voss joined NASA in Mobile Radar, assuming the responsibilities of the mobile radar team and the mobile radar systems at Wallops and remote locations. He was part of the first Peru Campaign in 1975, Project Antarqui in Punta Lobos.

In 1978, Voss was transferred to the Aeronautical Control Center and in 1981 began working in the Range Control Center. He was selected Assistant Section Head of Radar, later to become the Section Head. He was responsible for providing radar support to all projects supported by Wallops Flight Facility, those conducted at Wallops and remote locations as well.

Voss's leadership and technical expertise have been instrumental in providing excellent radar support to range users at Wallops and around the world. He will be missed by all those who have worked with him.

Monthly Weather Summary *by Jim Buchanan*

The warm, wet winter weather pattern attributed to El Nino continued into March. At 46.4 degrees Fahrenheit, the average temperature for the month was almost two degrees above normal. The average high for March of 54 degrees is only one half degree above normal. Average lows for the month of 39 degrees, 3.2 degrees warmer than normal, helped make the average monthly high above normal. A new record high temperature of 81 degrees was recorded on March 30. The old record of 80 degrees was set in 1963. The average low temperature for the last five nights in March was 56 degrees. There were a total of 15 days that temperatures were warmer than normal. On March 29 the temperature was 21 degrees above the average for that date.

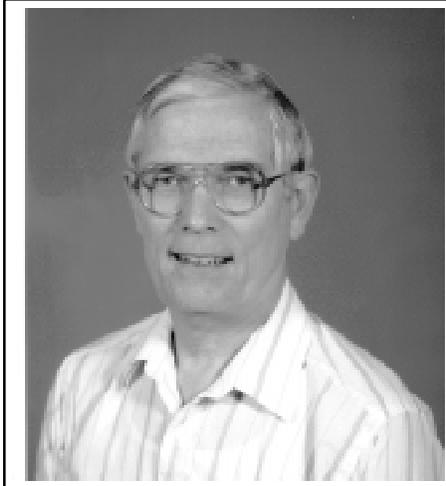
Rainfall was measured on 11 days with a total of 4.25 inches for the month, which is .5 inches above



normal. The maximum amount recorded in a 24-hour period was on March 17 and 18.

With warm, spring weather already in place, what will May have in store? Normally during May, nighttime temperatures are as warm as the average March daytime temperature of 53 degrees. It is not unusual to get a stray cool evening during May. Last year there were three record lows set; 44 degrees on May 14, 42 degrees on May 28 and 41 degrees on May 29. The average high for the month is 71 degrees. The record of 97 degrees was set on May 31, 1991. There are normally 10 days with measurable precipitation for an average rainfall of 3.19 inches.

As El Nino continues to enhance weather associated with frontal systems, spring thunderstorms may be stronger than normal and produce more rain than is normal.



Charles Vaughn Retires

by Dave Clem

Charles R. Vaughn retired March 28, 1998, after completing over 30 years of service to NASA. Vaugh graduated from Case Institute of Technology with a Bachelors degree in physics and received a Masters degree in astronomy from Columbia University.

Vaugh began his government career in 1965 at the NASA Electronics Research Center, Cambridge, MA. and transferred to Wallops in 1970. As a member of the Observational Science Branch, he participated in a wide range of research projects. These included Radar Ornithology, Radar Entomology, Airborne Remote Sensing for Ecology, Airborne Laser Altimetry and Georeferencing, Ocean Color Sensing, and Ocean Wave Spectrometry. Vaugh also served as advisor to Wallops on environmental activities and policy.



Becky Savage Retires

by Nicole Turner

Rebecca S. Savage retired from the Facilities Management Branch on March 31, 1998 after completing more than 35 years of government service.

In 1961, Savage began her federal career at the Federal Bureau of Investigation as a member of the secretarial pool. She was assigned to J. Edgar Hoover's personal steno pool, then as secretary to the Special Agent in charge of Interstate Transportation. She transferred to NASA Headquarters in 1965 as a clerk-stenographer in the Office of Advanced Research and Technology and then was secretary to Astronaut Rusty Schweickart.

Savage came to NASA Wallops in 1979 as branch secretary in the Fiscal Office. She was secretary to the Assistant Director of Management Operations and received a promotion to resources analyst. In 1995, Savage transferred to the Facilities Management Branch, as a resource analyst, where she remained until retirement.

After retirement, Savage plans to spend quality time with her grandchildren and travel more.

Her friends and co-workers will certainly miss her can-do attitude and wish her a gratifying retirement.

Terry's Special 4-Sale Cheap



First 1998 WEMA/MAC Monthly Tail Gate Sale Wednesday, April 15 Starts @ 11:30 The Flag Court Parking Lot Across From The Cafeteria

All civil service, contract and tenant employees are invited to set up and "sell their stuff"!!! Clean your closet, attic or barn this weekend and GET RID OF THA-STUFF!!! If you haven't used it or worn it for over a year, THEN SELL IT!!!

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Editor
Photography
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Betty Flowers
Optical Section
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