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[December 16, 2002](#)--The NOAA Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary today released the first image of historic shipwrecks, the schooners *Frank A. Palmer* and *Louise B. Crary*. The two vessels were bringing coal to Boston when they collided and sank together 100 years ago this week. Side scan sonar images clearly show the hulls of the two large sailing vessels still locked at their bows. The wrecks are off the Massachusetts coast located within the boundaries of the sanctuary managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

[December 10, 2002](#)--New nautical charts delivered after December 1 will depict the waters of the NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary as an area to be voluntarily avoided by ships greater than 1,600 tons, said National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) sanctuary officials. Although voluntary, the measure is expected to keep large commercial ships further offshore to reduce the threat of oil spills at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and for the outer Washington Coast. NOAA is an agency of the Commerce Department.

[November 26, 2002](#)--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary has released three new side-scan sonar images of the coastal steam ship *Portland*, which rests on the sea floor of the sanctuary. The ship sank November 27, 1898, during the infamous "Portland Gale of 1898" with the loss of all 192 passengers and crew.

[November 13, 2002](#)--Deputy Secretary of Commerce Sam Bodman joined with shipping industry representatives today to announce that the department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has taken historic steps through the International Maritime

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Organization (IMO) to create the first U.S. zone to protect coral from anchors, groundings and collisions from large international ships. The zone, known as the Florida Keys' Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, is more than 3,000 square nautical miles and is one of only five such areas in the world.

November 7, 2002--In an effort to determine the amount of pollution the heavy rains wash into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, more than 24 volunteers worked with sanctuary staff and the Coastal Watershed Council early this morning to collect water samples from the rain's "First Flush" at Capitola and Santa Cruz, Calif. An additional 31 volunteers stand ready in Monterey and Pacific Grove to collect samples once the rains hit Monterey County later today. Based on the findings from 19 collection sites, education programs can then be designed and prioritized to reduce the pollution flowing into the sanctuary. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary is managed by Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

November 4, 2002--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is seeking applicants for a Citizen At-Large representative on the Sanctuary's Advisory Council. One member and one alternate will be chosen for the council position. The general public is welcome to apply and candidates selected should expect to serve until February 2005. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

October 17, 2002--Archaeologists and conservators from Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and The Mariners' Museum have recovered a wide array of artifacts that range from clothing to cannon parts after weeks of digging through more than four feet of 140-year-old silt that filled the USS *Monitor* gun turret. The Civil War gun turret was recovered from the bottom of NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary on Aug. 5, 2002, during a 41-day expedition that brought the turret to The Mariners' Museum for further excavation and conservation.

September 12, 2002-- The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced today that Hawaii Governor Benjamin J. Cayetano has approved a revised final management plan that guides the operation of NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary in state waters for the next five years.

September 9, 2002--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) today announced Christopher T. Mobley will become the manager of NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary on Nov. 1, 2002.

September 5, 2002--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a series of free weekend community events focused on promoting coastal awareness, ocean exploration and environmental stewardship throughout the month of September.

August 29, 2002--The U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) today confirmed the final resting place of New England's most sought after and mysterious wreck, the steamship *Portland*. All 192 passengers and crew were lost in the Nov. 27, 1898 storm. The wreck is located within NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, off the coast of Massachusetts.

August 28, 2002--Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) will continue a unique collaboration with Dr. Robert Ballard (discoverer of the *Titanic*, *PT109*) and his scientific team from the Institute for Exploration (IFE) in a mission to explore and document the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve off the coast of Alpena, Mich.

August 5, 2002--Today, at 5:55 p.m., the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U. S. Navy succeeded in raising the world's first armored revolving gun turret from the wreck of the famous Civil War ironclad USS *Monitor*, which rests below 240 feet of water 16 miles southeast of Cape Hatteras, N.C., in the "Graveyard of the Atlantic." Also recovered today were the vessel's two large Dahlgren cannons.

July 19, 2002--Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary will celebrate its 10th anniversary at Stage Fort Park in Gloucester, Mass., on Saturday with a free festival of exhibits and family activities. The 842-square-mile sanctuary of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is home to many species of marine mammals, seabirds and fish, including the endangered northern right whale.

July 15, 2002-- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) researchers revealed initial findings today from a recent expedition to a shipwreck [*Pac Baroness*] near NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary off Point Conception, Calif. NOAA is an agency of the Commerce Department.

July 10, 2002--Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is seeking applicants for nine Sanctuary Advisory Council seats. The seats available are for non-governmental members and include business/commerce, citizen-at-large, commercial shipping, conservation, fishing, native Hawaiian, ocean recreation, tourism and whale watching positions.

July 8, 2002--Wreckage was completely cleared today from the USS *Monitor's* famous and historic gun turret for the first time in 140 years. A team of U.S. Navy divers and scientists from the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration succeeded in removing a section of hull and armor belt that has covered the turret since the warship sank on New Year's Eve 1862 off Cape Hatteras, N.C.

July 3, 2002--Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is seeking applicants for eight Sanctuary Advisory Council seats. The seats available include the conservation, sport diving, sport fishing, education and research positions.

July 2, 2002--Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary has invited educators from around the country to get out of their classroom and into the Gulf of Mexico for a week-long educators' underwater exploration workshop, "Down Under, Out Yonder." The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) manages the Flower Garden Bank Sanctuary, which organizes this popular annual event.

June 28, 2002--The Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary is opening its management plan review for public comment July 1 - October 18. The plan is found on the sanctuary's Web site and a public meeting schedule will soon be posted.

June 27, 2002--The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Navy and The Mariners'

Museum have begun the process of recovering the USS *Monitor's* revolving gun turret and cannons from the wreck of the famous Civil War ironclad that rests below 240 feet of water in the Atlantic off Cape Hatteras, N.C. The site is designated a NOAA national marine sanctuary.

June 25, 2002-- One of the most famous coral reefs in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, severely damaged in 1984 when a ship ran aground, is getting a helping hand toward recovery. The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has begun the restoration of the freighter Wellwood grounding site at Molasses Reef off Key Largo.

June 24, 2002--The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary has contracted with AMS Planning & Research of Petaluma, Calif., to conduct a comparative feasibility study of potential locations for a new marine sanctuary visitor education center. Funding for the \$150,000 contract comes from the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which manages the sanctuary.

JUNE 6, 2002--On June 11th scientists and resource managers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will start probing the depths of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary as the final leg of a two month excursion into new underwater environments. The program is called Sanctuary Quest: West Coast Expedition 2002, and is run by the sanctuary program of NOAA's National Ocean Service. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

JUNE 4, 2002-- Sailor, educator and marine mammal researcher Carol Keiper of Benicia, Calif., has been named Chair of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and Joe Smith, Board member with the West Marin Chamber of Commerce from Marshall, Calif., has been named Vice Chair. The council is composed of private sector and government representatives who provide advice and recommendations to the Sanctuary Manager for the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), on issues affecting the 398-square nautical mile Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

JUNE 4, 2002 --Commercial fisher Barbara Emley of San Francisco has been named Chair of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) for Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, and Bob Breen, a marine reserve naturalist from Montara, has been named Vice Chair.

The council is composed of private sector and government representatives who provide advice and recommendations to the Sanctuary Manager for the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), on issues affecting the 937 square nautical mile Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.

MAY 23, 2002--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the state of Michigan announced the hiring of Jefferson J. Gray as manager of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve in Lake Huron. Gray begins his work with the Sanctuary in Alpena, Mich., on July 15, 2002. As manager for the nation's first Great Lakes Sanctuary, Gray will oversee monitoring and preservation of the shipwrecks and other significant cultural resources in Thunder Bay.

MAY 22, 2002-- State waters of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary reach a higher level of protection on June 19, 2002, when a No Discharge Zone (NDZ) designation takes effect. Under rules published today by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), boaters must pump out their sewage or make sure their marine sanitation devices (MSDs) cannot discharge overboard while in state waters.

MAY 20, 2002-- The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve took a great leap forward in its ability to explore and preserve our nation's maritime history with a new partnership with the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL) to share use of GLERL's research vessel, the R/V *Shenehon*. Both the Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve and GLERL are managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

APRIL 23, 2002--On April 24th, a group of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists and resource managers will start probing the depths of five Pacific Coast national marine sanctuaries on a 60-day excursion into new underwater environments. The program, called Sanctuary Quest: West Coast Expedition 2002, is run by the sanctuary program of NOAA's National Ocean Service. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

APRIL 22, 2002--The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced today that a team of divers led by a NOAA archaeologist has identified a mystery wreck in

the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary as a former Canadian warship. NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program officials plan to nominate the site to the National Register of Historic Places.

APRIL 21, 2002-- Three Florida Keys residents were honored today as "Environmental Heroes" by Scott B. Gudes, Deputy Under Secretary with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), at the annual Earth Day celebration at Cheeca Lodge. George Hommell, Jr., Fran Ford, and Dr. Steve Dimse were recognized for their continuing efforts to protect the environment in the Florida Keys. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

APRIL 18, 2002-- More than 120 trained volunteers will spend Saturday, April 20 testing the quality of stream water in 11 major watersheds that run into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary as part of the third annual "Snapshot Day" event sponsored by the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

APRIL 4, 2002-- The Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary off the coast of Georgia will sponsor the 4th annual Gray's Reef Ocean Fest on April 13, on Savannah's River Street at Rousakis Plaza. The Ocean Fest mixes educational activities and family entertainment to raise awareness of the sanctuary's ecosystem and the ocean environment of Georgia's Low Country.

MARCH 15, 2002-- The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is announcing today four interrelated actions to protect marine life and the pristine condition of the ecosystem of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. The agency's aim is to maintain strong protections for the nation's largest coral reef area and begin the process for designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as a National Marine Sanctuary.

FEBRUARY 19, 2002--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary dedicated their new research vessel R/V *Joe Ferguson* in a ceremony today at the University of Georgia's Marine Education Center and Aquarium dock on Skidaway Island, Ga. National Geographic Society Expeditions Leader Joe Ferguson perished along with four students, their teachers and National Geographic Society staff on the aircraft that struck the Pentagon on Sept..

[JANUARY 2, 2002](#)--The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council will meet in a special workshop Thursday, January 17th, 2001 to address concerns about dolphin and whale strandings in the Keys. The public is encouraged to attend the workshop, scheduled for 1 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Marathon Garden Club, 5270 Overseas Highway, Gulfside.

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[Jan. 7, 2005](#) --Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, managed by the U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is seeking applicants for four Sanctuary Advisory Council seats.

[Jan. 3, 2005](#) --The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS) is seeking applicants to fill sanctuary advisory council seats representing research, conservation, maritime activity, education and community-at-large interests. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

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DECEMBER 1, 2001--The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has obtained a \$15,000 settlement against two Florida men charged with dumping materials into Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary waters to create illegal habitat to attract lobsters.

NOVEMBER 4, 2001--The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) announced today the appointment of Michael Ian Weiss, former Special Advisor to the Assistant Administrator National Ocean Service, as NMSP Deputy Director effective November 5, 2001.

NOVEMBER 1, 2001--The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced today the beginning of a joint management-plan review for Cordell Bank, Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries. These three California sanctuaries and their communities will jointly evaluate regulations, boundaries and strategies for management and operations.

OCTOBER 30, 2001--The U.S. Department of Commerce has awarded its Gold Medal in Heroism to LCDR Mark H. Pickett for "his exemplary courage and heroism in saving the lives of two U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) employees after the capsizing of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary *R/V Ballena* on November 4, 2000."

OCTOBER 19, 2001--The public is invited to attend a 2001 Ocean User Workshop to learn about regulations pertaining to safe and responsible whale watching. Representatives of federal and state agencies will be on hand to discuss regulations intended to protect the endangered humpback whale in Hawaiian waters.

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OCTOBER 1, 2001--The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) marked the successful completion of two groundbreaking ocean exploration missions and honored U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings for his support of ocean science during a waterfront celebration event October 1, 2001 in Charleston, S.C.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2001--A *Time* magazine Hero-of-the-Planet, a vice-president of a major marine research company, and an owner of one of Boston's largest marine commuter vessel companies are among the 21 accomplished individuals who will help guide management of the Gerry E. Studds/Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in Maine.

SEPTEMBER 25, 2001--The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary celebrates its 9th anniversary at the annual Santa Cruz Shark Festival on Sunday, September 30, 2001.

AUGUST 30, 2001--Explorers from the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will voyage to the South Atlantic's deep sea canyons and important underwater habitats during a month-long mission to study unique coral banks and important fishing areas.

JULY 10, 2001--The National Ocean Service, an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), received initial approval for an international measure that furthers existing protection for the Florida Keys.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02 R449
December 16, 2002

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**FIRST IMAGE OF HISTORIC SHIPWRECKS RELEASED
ON 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF *PALMER-CRARY* SINKING**

The NOAA Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary today released the first image of historic shipwrecks, the schooners *Frank A. Palmer* and *Louise B. Crary*. The two vessels were bringing coal to Boston when they collided and sank together 100 years ago this week. Side scan sonar images clearly show the hulls of the two large sailing vessels still locked at their bows. The wrecks are off the Massachusetts coast located within the boundaries of the sanctuary managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

According to the *Crary* captain's testimony as reported by the *Boston Globe* and *Herald* immediately following the accident, a miscalculation on the part of the *Crary*'s first mate, who was at the helm, led to the unfortunate collision during the clear evening of December 17, 1902. The bow of the *Crary* plowed into the port side of the *Palmer*, leaving both vessels fatally damaged. Reports show that the vessels disappeared from view quickly, with some crew unable to abandon the ships before they sank.

Out of the 21 crew members from both schooners, only 15 made it into one of the *Palmer*'s lifeboats. Among the lifeboat group, four died from exposure and one committed suicide by jumping overboard. Lack of communications prevented rescuers from learning of the crash, and the lifeboat drifted for four days until a fishing boat spotted it off Cape Cod.

The *Palmer* was the largest four-masted schooner ever built (274.5 ft.) while the *Crary* was a similarly sized five-masted vessel (267 ft). Both vessels were colliers (coal carriers), which plied regular routes between the coal-producing region in the mid- Atlantic and the energy-dependent northeast. In 1902, a record December cold snap and a series of coastal storms created a serious energy crisis in the Boston area. The *Palmer*, based out of Portland, Maine, and the *Crary* out of New York City were two of a fleet of vessels that were bringing coal to the beleaguered city.

The *Palmer-Crary* shipwrecks were originally located by John Fish and Arnold Carr of American Underwater Search and Survey (AUSS) over 13 years ago in their search for the steamship *Portland*, however good images were not available at that time. As with the *Portland* wreck, the AUSS team generously provided the wreck coordinates to the NOAA Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. A series of summer and fall research cruises were used to image both wreck sites.

The location of the wrecks within the sanctuary's boundaries provides protection unavailable in other federal and international waters off Massachusetts. Sanctuary regulations prohibit moving, removing or injuring, or any attempt to move, remove or injure any submerged cultural or historical resources, including artifacts and pieces from shipwrecks. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to civil penalties.

Congress designated the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in 1992 as "an area of special national significance." Virtually the size of the state of Rhode Island, the sanctuary stretches between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in federal waters off of

Massachusetts. The sanctuary is renowned as a major feeding area for marine mammals, particularly humpback whales, and supports an ecosystem of diverse wildlife. For more information and images of the shipwrecks, please contact Anne Smrcina at the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system. For more information, please visit the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Web page at: <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-R446
Dec. 10, 2002

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**EXPANDED AREA TO BE AVOIDED IMPLEMENTED AT THE
NOAA
OLYMPIC COAST NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY**

Less Large Ship Traffic Will Reduce Oil Spill Threat

New nautical charts delivered after December 1 will depict the waters of the NOAA Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary as an area to be voluntarily avoided by ships greater than 1,600 tons, said National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) sanctuary officials. Although voluntary, the measure is expected to keep large commercial ships further offshore to reduce the threat of oil spills at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and for the outer Washington Coast. NOAA is an agency of the Commerce Department.

The United Nation's International Maritime Organization, a London-

based body that regulates ocean-going shipping, has modified the existing Olympic Coast "Area To-Be Avoided" (ATBA). An ATBA is an area that certain classes of ships should avoid because navigation is particularly hazardous or where it is exceptionally important to avoid environmental impacts within the area. Smaller vessels engaged in allowable activities in the sanctuary, such as fishing, are not affected by the new measure.

"This new designation is a good example of a voluntary measure that really works," said NOAA Olympic Coast sanctuary superintendent Carol Bernthal. "As the recent oil spill off Spain reminds us, prevention is the key to dealing with oil spills. The new chart designation is a warning flag around this area. The maritime industry recognizes this as a prudent precaution to safeguard their ships and the environment."

The idea to keep large commercial vessels outside the area came from industry representatives advising the U.S. Coast Guard and Washington State on North Puget Sound risk management.

"This shows government and industry working as partners," said Bob Bohlman, a representative of the Marine Exchange, an industry group. "We worked together with the sanctuary staff and the Coast Guard to develop the ATBA, and we see it as a necessary protection for waters of the sanctuary."

The new ATBA designation includes two changes. First, it increases the size of the existing ATBA to the north and west to provide a greater margin of safety around Duntze and Duncan rocks and Tatoosh Island. Second, the ATBA applies to ships greater than 1,600 gross tons, regardless of their cargo. These ships carry large amounts of bunker fuel, which, if spilled, would be extremely harmful to the unique, valuable, and sensitive marine life within Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

"This new ATBA measure also considers the safety of other mariners," said George Galasso, Olympic Coast Sanctuary staff member that developed the proposal. "By aiming the measure at larger ships, we ensured that smaller vessels would not be routed further offshore in heavy seas."

The sanctuary, the U.S. Coast Guard and Canadian Coast Guard will monitor ATBA compliance and will continue an education and outreach campaign to the maritime industry, distributing informational charts and informing ship owners when their vessels enter the area.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system. For more information about the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and the ATBA designation, please visit: <http://www.ocnms.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOAA 02 R444

November 26, 2002

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**STELLWAGEN BANK SANCTUARY RELEASES NEW SHIPWRECK
IMAGES**

ON 104TH ANNIVERSARY OF *PORTLAND* LOSS

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary has released three new side-scan sonar images of the coastal steam ship *Portland*, which rests on the sea floor of the sanctuary. The ship sank November 27, 1898, during the infamous "Portland Gale of 1898" with the loss of all 192 passengers and crew.

The new images were created by a Klein Sonar Associates Model 5000. The Salem, N.H. company operated the equipment and provided ship time to the sanctuary for an October mission to the shipwreck site. The images clearly show the side-by side smoke stacks and the diamond-shaped metal walking beam that provided power to the side paddle wheels. These images may be viewed at <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>.

The October mission was a follow-up to a late July/early August 2002 joint research mission. Stellwagen Bank Sanctuary and the National Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut mapped and shot video of the wreck. The video and side-scan images from the two missions provide visual documentation to earlier work by American Underwater Search and Survey. Although artifacts displaying the ship's name could not be found, a team of independent marine archaeologists confirmed the identification based on the evidence provided by the side-scan and video images. NOAA funds six research centers around the country through its National Undersea Research Program.

The location of the wreck within the sanctuary's boundaries provides protection unavailable in other federal waters off Massachusetts. Sanctuary regulations prohibit moving, removing or injuring, or any attempt to move, remove, or injure any submerged cultural or historical resources, including artifacts and pieces from shipwrecks. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to civil penalties.

Congress designated the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in 1992 as "an area of special national significance." Virtually the size of the state of Rhode Island, the sanctuary stretches between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in federal waters off Massachusetts. The sanctuary is renowned as a major feeding area for marine mammals, particularly humpback whales, and supports an ecosystem of diverse wildlife.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, please visit: <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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NOAA 02-152

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**FLORIDA KEYS CORAL REEFS FIRST IN U.S. TO RECEIVE
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION**

One of Only Five Sensitive Sea Areas in the World

Deputy Secretary of Commerce Sam Bodman joined with shipping industry representatives today to announce that the department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has taken historic steps through the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to create the first U.S. zone to protect coral from anchors, groundings and collisions from large international ships. The zone, known as the Florida Keys' Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, is more than 3,000 square nautical miles and is one of only five such areas in the world.

Starting Dec. 1, ships greater than 50 meters (164 feet) in length

transiting the zone will be held to internationally accepted and enforceable rules. The rules direct ship captains to avoid certain areas within the zone altogether and abide by three no-anchoring areas within the zone. All nautical charts produced worldwide will now show the Florida Particularly Sensitive Sea Area and address, these protective measures. More than 40 percent of the world's commerce passes through the Florida Straits each year. Ten large ship groundings have occurred in the zone since 1984 and coral damage by rogue anchoring by large ships or freighters has occurred 17 times since 1997.

"This rare international form of protection now awarded to fragile Florida Keys coral reefs is an example of how federal resource managers can work closely with industry to protect vulnerable natural resources while simultaneously supporting shipping and economic growth. Both ship trade and the tourism tied to the Keys coral reefs have vital economic significance to the state and region," said Deputy Secretary of Commerce Samuel W. Bodman at a news conference held in the Commerce Building in Washington, D.C. "This protective status makes the international shipping community aware of the coral reefs and increases compliance with domestic measures already in place to protect the area, while not hindering trade and commerce."

NOAA received strong support from the state government of Florida while applying for official status of the protective zone, as well as from U.S. shipping interests, which have been complying with similar domestic protective policy for years now.

"The State of Florida recognizes the importance of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and the protections that already exist on a national scale," said Florida Governor Jeb Bush. "This is yet another step to insure that our international shipping community is aware of the protections we have put in place for this unique ecosystem. Florida has an important natural resource that must be protected."

Also speaking at the news conference in support of these measures was Joe Cox, president of the Chamber of Shipping of America, which represents 21 U.S. based shipping companies said, "It is imperative that the maritime industry support environmental protection initiatives that maintain the ability to continue efficient, effective and environmentally responsible marine transportation," he said. "The free flow of commerce and protection of our marine environment demand nothing less."

NOAA and the U.S. delegation worked on behalf of the State of Florida

to submit a proposal to the IMO to designate the marine area that stretches from Biscayne National Park to the Tortugas and encompasses all of NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The IMO is a United Nations Specialized Agency that is responsible for issues relating to international shipping.

The waters around the Florida Keys and the Tortugas are some of the most heavily trafficked shipping areas in the world. Over the years, ships have caused damage to the coral reef ecosystem through anchoring, groundings, collisions and accidental or operational discharges of harmful substances.

To gain approval for a protected sea area, a nation must identify maritime interest compliance measures with which the IMO can direct ships to comply. For the Florida Keys' Particularly Sensitive Sea Area these measures are four "areas to be avoided" that prevent large ships from traveling too close to the coral reef. This amendment to the northernmost area to be avoided was developed in response to comments by mariners operating in the area because of the risk of collisions that could result in devastating pollution to the reefs.

Yet another measure declares three mandatory no-anchoring areas that protect fragile reefs in the Tortugas. While protecting the fragile coral against the significant destruction that can be caused by the dragging and swinging of large anchors, this measure also takes into account the interests of shipping and commerce by continuing to allow ships to navigate through this area.

While these measures are in place domestically, adoption by the IMO means these areas will appear on international charts, thus increasing mariner awareness and compliance. For instance, although the no-anchoring zones protecting the deep reefs of the Tortugas have been in place since 1997 and appear on NOAA nautical charts, many foreign-flagged vessels travel the area and carry non-NOAA charts that do not identify this zone. Thus, while anchoring incidents have declined since 1997, NOAA continues to document violations.

The four other particularly sensitive sea areas are the Great Barrier Reef, Australia; the Sabana-Camaguey Archipelago, Cuba; Malpelo Island, Colombia; and the Wadden Sea proposed by Denmark, the Netherlands, and Germany.

NOAA and the State of Florida, through a co-trustee agreement, manage the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The

congressionally designated sanctuary was signed into law Nov. 16, 1990 by President George Bush. It protects 2,896 square nautical miles stretching from Biscayne Bay to the Tortugas, and encompasses some of this nation's most significant marine resources.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the sanctuary program is in the process of designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as a sanctuary. For more information about the Florida Keys sanctuary, please visit <http://www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov/>.

NOAA Ocean Service (NOS) manages the sanctuary program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-R440
November 7, 2002

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**RAIN CAUSES NOAA's MONTEREY BAY SANCTUARY STAFF
AND
"FIRST FLUSH" VOLUNTEERS TO SAMPLE RUNOFF ALONG
COAST**

In an effort to determine the amount of pollution the heavy rains wash

into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, more than 24 volunteers worked with sanctuary staff and the Coastal Watershed Council early this morning to collect water samples from the rain's "First Flush" at Capitola and Santa Cruz, Calif. An additional 31 volunteers stand ready in Monterey and Pacific Grove to collect samples once the rains hit Monterey County later today. Based on the findings from 19 collection sites, education programs can then be designed and prioritized to reduce the pollution flowing into the sanctuary. The Monterey Bay Sanctuary is managed by Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

This is the third year for the volunteer-based "First Flush" monitoring event to help determine the effects of months of accumulated litter, oil, chemicals and other pollutants washed off city streets and flushed through storm drains into the Monterey Bay Sanctuary. The rain water samples, collected by Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network, will be analyzed for oil and grease, metals, nutrients, bacteria, sediment and toxicity. Runoff is a large source of pollution throughout the country.

"This event provides valuable information to resource agencies and makes the point that even people who live miles away from the Bay may be polluting the sanctuary, without realizing it," said Sanctuary Superintendent William J. Douros.

The volunteers, working with sanctuary staff, have been on-call since late September awaiting the rains. The groups mobilized at 2:00 a.m. in Santa Cruz County to monitor storm drain discharges which will help in identifying areas with high pollutant loads.

Unlike household sewage, storm drain pollution is not cleansed by sewage treatment plants.

"Each year more dedicated citizens participate in the "First Flush" event to help the sanctuary staff collect valuable water quality data along California's Central Coast," said Bridget Hoover, Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network Coordinator. "The event raises public awareness about water quality issues affecting watersheds that drain into NOAA's Monterey Bay Sanctuary."

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network is a consortium of approximately 20 citizen monitoring groups that monitor the health of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

The network was established in 1997 and has since provided support, training, and a central forum and database for citizen monitoring programs. "First Flush" is a collaborative effort involving the network and the Coastal Watershed Council. Funding is provided by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, and the cities of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Capitola and Santa Cruz. For more information about the sanctuary and this event, please visit <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov/monitoringnetwork/events.html>

Managed by the NOAA, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along 276 miles of central California coast and encompasses over 5,300 miles of ocean area. Renowned for its scenic beauty and remarkable productivity, the sanctuary supports one of the world's most diverse marine ecosystems, including 33 species of marine mammals, 94 species of seabirds, 345 species of fishes and thousands of marine invertebrates and plants. For more information, please visit: <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov>.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to eventually incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOAA 02 r442

November 4, 2002

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**MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SEEKS
CITIZEN AT LARGE REPRESENTATIVE FOR SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is seeking applicants for a Citizen At-Large representative on the Sanctuary's Advisory Council. One member and one alternate will be chosen for the council position. The general public is welcome to apply and candidates selected

should expect to serve until February 2005. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Applicants are chosen based upon their expertise and experience including community and professional affiliations, philosophy regarding the conservation and management of marine resources, and the length of residence in the area affected by the sanctuary.

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) was established in March 1994 to assure continued public participation in the management of the sanctuary. Serving in a volunteer capacity, the SAC's 20 voting members represent a variety of local user groups, as well as the general public, plus seven local, state and federal governmental jurisdictions. Since its establishment, the SAC has played a vital role in advising the sanctuary and NOAA on critical issues and is currently focused on the sanctuary's development of a new 5-year management plan. The SAC meets bimonthly in public sessions located throughout the 276-mile boundary of the sanctuary.

A SAC member application package may be obtained by contacting (831) 647-4201. Application packages are also available at the sanctuary Web site: <http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/>. Applications will be available through Nov. 27, 2002. Completed applications should be mailed to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, 299 Foam Street, Monterey, Calif. 93940 no later than Dec. 11, 2002.

Managed by NOAA National Ocean Service (NOS), the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along 276 miles of central California coast and encompasses over 5,300 miles of ocean area. Renowned for its scenic beauty and remarkable productivity, the sanctuary supports one of the world's most diverse marine ecosystems, including 33 species of marine mammals, 94 species of seabirds, 345 species of fishes and thousands of marine invertebrates and plants.

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system.

NOS is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through research to better understand weather and climate-related events and to manage wisely our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, NOS and the NMSP, please visit <http://nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 17, 2002

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**POCKET KNIVES, WOOL COAT, KEY, COINS, AND SILVERWARE
SOME OF MANY ARTIFACTS RECOVERED DURING
EXCAVATION INSIDE MONITOR'S TURRET**

Archaeologists and conservators from Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and The Mariners' Museum have recovered a wide array of artifacts that range

from clothing to cannon parts after weeks of digging through more than four feet of 140-year-old silt that filled the USS *Monitor* gun turret. The Civil War gun turret was recovered from the bottom of NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary on Aug. 5, 2002, during a 41-day expedition that brought the turret to The Mariners' Museum for further excavation and conservation.

"The objects we are recovering, along with their locations within the turret, provide more insight into the sequence of events that occurred the night the *Monitor* sank," said John Broadwater, manager of NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary and director of the turret excavation. "Over the next few months, we will complete the excavation, then remove the two 11-inch Dahlgren guns and their carriages from within the turret."

As the excavation team of NOAA and Museum archaeologists, scientists and conservators painstakingly searched the depths of the turret for artifacts, they recovered the skeletons of two *Monitor* sailors buried in the silt. The remains, originally discovered during the recovery expedition, were carefully removed and were sent to the Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii, where scientists hope to identify each individual.

Since excavation efforts began in early August, archaeologists have discovered a number of artifacts that tell the human side of the *Monitor's* story in its legendary battle with the CSS *Virginia* on March 9, 1862. Some of the artifacts recovered include three silver spoons, a silver fork, two bone or ivory knife handles, fragments of a wool overcoat, a key, coins, a variety of uniform buttons, a hard rubber Goodyear comb, a gold ring, three shoes, one boot, fragments of a wooden cabinet and cannon implements such as worms, a sponge, rammers, brass and wooden blocks, and coal.

"The artifacts we are finding in the turret have been absolutely amazing," said The Mariners' Museum Conservator Wayne Lusardi. "We are literally digging through an inverted time capsule from 1862. These artifacts are slowly revealing to us and the world what life was like on one of the most historic naval vessels in this country's history."

The turret joins hundreds of other artifacts recovered from the *Monitor*, which are undergoing conservation at The Mariners' Museum. The vessel's engine, condenser, propeller, and propeller shaft are now on exhibit within the Museum's *Monitor* Conservation Area. The turret is expected to take 12 to 15 years to conserve.

In 1987, The Mariners' Museum was designated by the federal government as the custodian of the artifacts and archives of the *USS Monitor*. As custodian, The Mariners' Museum is charged with housing artifacts and providing conservation, interpretation and education. These efforts will be greatly enhanced in 2007 when The Mariners' Museum, in collaboration with NOAA, will open a new \$30 million *USS Monitor Center*. The *USS Monitor Center* will be home to the priceless artifacts recovered from the historic ship and a worldwide resource for exhibitions, conservation, research and education related to the *Monitor* and the larger story of the naval history of the Civil War.

More information about the sanctuary and its ongoing recovery efforts can be found online at <http://monitor.noaa.gov>. Information about the history of the *Monitor* and conservation and exhibition of the vessel's artifacts and archives can be found online at <http://www.monitorcenter.org>. NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve would bring the total to 14.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards.

To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>. The Mariners' Museum, an educational, non-profit institution accredited by the American Association of Museums, preserves and interprets maritime history through an international collection of ship models, figureheads, paintings and other maritime artifacts. The Museum is open from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. daily. Closed Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For information, call (757) 596-2222 or (800) 581-7245, or write to The Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, Va. 23606. The Museum can be reached on the World Wide

Web at <http://www.mariner.org>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-R431
September 12, 2002

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**NOAA's HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK SANCTUARY
MANAGEMENT PLAN RENEWED FOR FIVE YEARS**

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced today that Hawaii Governor Benjamin J. Cayetano has approved a revised final management plan that guides the operation of NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback

Whale National Marine Sanctuary in state waters for the next five years.

The reauthorization is the result of a strong community-based review process and includes the possibility of sanctuary protection for additional species, such as monk seals and sea turtles, within the next five years. No new regulation or boundary changes are proposed. Marine sanctuary management plans are reviewed and reauthorized in five year increments.

"We welcome our continued partnership with the state of Hawaii in protecting its marine resources and rich ocean heritage," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "Governor Cayetano shares the belief that NOAA's sound stewardship of Hawaii's ocean life benefits the nation as a whole."

The Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHWNMS) includes areas around the islands of Maui, Lanai, and Molokai, and parts of Oahu, Kauai and the Big Island. The sanctuary's goal is to promote comprehensive and coordinated management, research, education and long-term monitoring for the endangered humpback whale and its habitat.

Humpback whales rely on Hawaii's islands as their migratory winter home, where they breed, calve and nurse.

During the public review process, the sanctuary received valuable input from the community and incorporated it into the final revised plan which sets sanctuary operations over the next five years. In response to overwhelming public comments received to protect additional resources, the process to include new species and habitats has been accelerated and better detailed in the final management plan.

Over the past five years, through conferences and other activities, the sanctuary has promoted Hawaiian's leadership in marine science, community-based conservation and eco-tourism. Additionally it has developed the Maui Sanctuary Education and Visitor Center, supported more than 20 scientific research projects focused on Hawaii's marine resources, and fostered Native Hawaiian cultural awareness. The new management plan has the support of the Sanctuary Advisory Council, the State Department of Land and Natural Resources and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. More information about the sanctuary and the plan is available on the Hawaiian Islands

Humpback National Marine Sanctuary website: <http://www.hihwnms.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve would bring the total to 14. NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-R429
September 9, 2002

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NEW MANAGER HIRED FOR NOAA'S CHANNEL ISLANDS SANCTUARY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) today announced Christopher T. Mobley will become the manager of NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary on Nov. 1, 2002.

As manager of NOAA's Channel Islands Sanctuary, Mobley will oversee monitoring and preserving one of the nation's most significant coastal resources. NOAA's Channel Islands sanctuary, designated in September 1980, encompasses the waters surrounding San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa and Santa Barbara Islands.

"We are pleased to have Chris join NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program in managing California's treasured resources", said Daniel J. Basta, director of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program. "Chris has the experience and leadership skills to make the Channel Islands Sanctuary a national model for protecting its distinctive resources and fragile ecosystems."

A great variety of plants, animals and fish thrive in the protected and managed sanctuary as a result of a combination of fertile warm and cool currents. Additionally, the sanctuary sponsors a range of programs designed to promote public awareness of marine issues.

"The Channel Islands have been special to me ever since my first research dives there 20 years ago. I look forward to working with the sanctuary staff, the Sanctuary Advisory Council, involved agencies, stakeholders, and community members. This is an incredible opportunity," Mobley said.

Most recently, Mobley has worked on policy, funding and administration of Pacific salmon recovery efforts as NOAA Fisheries' Pacific Salmon Coordinator for the last three years. Mobley has a strong background in coastal resource management, research, public outreach and interagency coordination.

During his career, Mobley has had extensive experience in building partnerships and collaborating with state and federal agencies, local government, tribes, businesses, non-profit organizations and user groups. He has participated in numerous research projects along the California coast, including kelp diving off of San Miguel Island, archeological diving near Santa Cruz Island, field cruises in the Gulf of the Farallones and rockfish dive surveys in Mendocino and Sonoma counties. Mobley received a B.A. in Biology from Dartmouth College, an M.S. in Oceanography from the University of Washington and an MBA from Sonoma State University.

He began his NOAA career in 1987 as a commissioned officer in the NOAA Corps serving aboard the NOAA Ship *Malcolm Baldrige* as deck officer, working diver and shipboard computer manager. He then

worked for 10 years in NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) field office in Santa Rosa, Calif., focusing on the conservation and restoration of marine and freshwater fish habitat.

Current Sanctuary Manager LCDR Matt Pickett is completing his 20-month assignment at the sanctuary through December 2002. A NOAA Corps officer and pilot, LCDR Pickett will be reporting to Silver Spring, MD in January 2003 where his aviation services are required to support other NOAA functions. He has been selected as the Chief, Remote Sensing Division-Flight Program and will be piloting citation jets on photogrammetry and remote sensing missions.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NOAA Sanctuaries) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NOAA Sanctuaries is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system. For more information about NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, visit: <http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA-02-R429
September 5, 2002

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MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

CELEBRATES 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a series of free weekend community events focused on promoting coastal awareness, ocean exploration and environmental

stewardship throughout the month of September.

Managed by NOAA, an agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary was designated Sept. 18, 1992, as "an area of special national significance." It is the largest marine sanctuary in the nation, stretching along 276 miles of central California coast and encompassing more than 5,300 miles of ocean area.

Renowned for its scenic beauty and remarkable productivity, the sanctuary supports one of the world's most diverse marine ecosystems, including 33 species of marine mammals, 94 species of seabirds, 345 species of fishes and thousands of marine invertebrates and plants.

"The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary exists to conserve this unique environment now and for the future for all who care about, enjoy and make their living from the sea," said sanctuary Superintendent William Douros. "During the past 10 years, with the work of many partners, we have accomplished a great deal and we look forward to applying what we have learned as we work to update our management plan over the next year."

To kick-off the month-long celebration, NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary has also launched a new, enhanced web site where the public can learn more about the Sanctuary and its efforts to conserve ocean and coastal treasures. The public is encouraged to visit the new site at <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov>.

September anniversary celebration activities for the Sanctuary include the following:

- San Simeon Celebration, Saturday, Sept. 7, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Kayak tours, ocean fair, beach barbecue and formal dedication of a new sanctuary interpretive exhibit at Hearst Castle Visitor Center. For more information call (805) 927-2145.
- Half Moon Bay Celebration, Saturday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Ocean fair, formal dedication of a new sanctuary field office and state parks visitor center grand opening. For more information call (650) 712-8909.
- Monterey Celebration, Saturday, Sept. 21, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Ocean fair, boat rides, environmental games, concert by Linda Arnold,

acclaimed children's performing artist. For more information call (831) 647-4255.

- Santa Cruz Celebration, Saturday, Sept. 28, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Ocean fair, live sharks, children's treasure hunt and puppet show, live music and formal ceremonies with dignitaries. For more information call (831) 420-1630.

"We are certainly grateful to local communities, our Sanctuary Advisory Council and other agencies for joining with us to solve management issues, educate the public and conduct vital research and monitoring programs," Douros said. "Together we have made a difference."

NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary natural resources include the nation's largest kelp forest, and one of North America's largest underwater canyons (reaching a water depth of 2 miles). The sanctuary also supports a variety of commercial and recreational activities including fishing, boating, diving, surfing, kayaking and whalewatching.

The NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs.

Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to eventually incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02 R428
August 29, 2002

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LOCATION OF THE PORTLAND WRECK CONFIRMED BY NOAA

Famed steamship rests in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary

The U.S. Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) today confirmed the final resting place of New England's most sought after and mysterious wreck, the steamship *Portland*. All 192 passengers and crew were lost in the Nov. 27, 1898 storm. The wreck is located within NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, off the coast of Massachusetts.

In a late July and early August joint research mission, NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the National Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut, mapped and shot video of the wreck lost in the "Portland Gale of 1898." The video and side-scan images from the mission provide visual documentation to earlier work by American Underwater Search and Survey.

"We are excited to be able to bring some closure to one of New England's most mysterious shipwrecks," said Dr. Craig MacDonald, NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent. "The story of the Steamship *Portland* and its fatal last run from Boston to Portland, Maine, has intrigued maritime historians for years due to the wide-ranging reported sightings of the ship during the storm. This mission allows us to start putting some answers to the questions about its loss."

The location of the wreck within the sanctuary's boundaries provides protection unavailable in other federal waters off Massachusetts. Sanctuary regulations prohibit moving, removing or injuring, or any attempt to move, remove, or injure any submerged cultural or historical resources, including artifacts and pieces from shipwrecks. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to civil penalties.

"While the sanctuary has been most associated with whales and whale watching, it also serves as a steward of the submerged historical and cultural resources within its boundaries," said Dr. MacDonald. "We are extremely proud that our first dedicated mission to search and explore has produced such exciting results. Future missions hold promise for similarly rewarding finds."

The expedition to confirm the location and identity of the *Portland* involved many organizations and a range of technologies. Discovery of the wreck site was first reported in 1989 by a team from a Massachusetts firm that specializes in locating lost objects at sea. John Fish and Arnold Carr of American Underwater Search and Survey announced their find but were unable to produce high quality photographs for evaluation and verification.

Production of a high quality map of the region by the U.S. Geological Survey, using multi-beam and side-scan sonar technologies, indicated more than 50 anomalies in the sanctuary, including a target at the Fish/Carr site. The detailed map allowed scientists and marine archaeologists to deploy other imaging equipment to get more detailed

close-up views on the July and August research cruises.

"Side-scan images from the research vessel *Connecticut* and the NOAA ship *Ferrel* showed that the wreck sits upright on the seafloor, with its hull largely intact but much of its superstructure gone," said primary investigator Ben Cowie-Haskell of the sanctuary. Wreckage from the vessel found along Cape Cod beaches in the days after its loss included pieces from its upper decks. "All passengers and crew were lost, but the exact number has never been determined due to the lack of a passenger list on shore," said Haskell. "The latest estimate is 192 individuals lost, with only 38 bodies recovered as they washed up on Massachusetts beaches between Truro and Monomoy."

Remotely operated vehicle (ROV) operations from the R/V *Connecticut* in July produced high quality video footage of the wreck that showed some of the distinctive features of this type of coastal passenger steamship, including a steam release vent, rudder assembly, paddle guard, paddle wheel hub and overall length. The observation of these features positively identifies this wreck as the *Portland* as there are no other coastal steamers of this type reported to have been lost in Massachusetts Bay.

Abundant and colorful marine growth, including anemones, tunicates and sponges, cover much of the ship; and cod, redfish, cusk and other fish swim about the wreck. The ROV was able to make these close-up inspections due to the installation of a dynamic positioning system on board the ship which allowed for precision maneuvering, according to Ivar Babb, Director of the National Undersea Research Center at the University of Connecticut.

Although artifacts displaying the ship's name could not be found, a team of independent marine archaeologists confirmed the identification based on the evidence provided by the side-scan and video images.

Congress designated the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in 1992 as "an area of special national significance." Virtually the size of the state of Rhode Island, the sanctuary stretches between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in federal waters off of Massachusetts. The sanctuary is renowned as a major feeding area for marine mammals, particularly humpback whales, and supports an ecosystem of diverse wildlife.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting

scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, please contact the sanctuary at (781) 545-8026, ext. 204 or visit: <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Undersea Research Program (NURP) funds six research centers around the country at major universities. A key strength of NURP is its partnership with the nation's science community. Each of the regional centers is funded by a grant from NOAA. Research projects are chosen based upon peer review. The open, competitive nature of the process ensures that a variety of high quality science projects are undertaken.

The Center for the North Atlantic and Great Lakes is located at the University of Connecticut at Avery Point. This center supports and conducts research in the waters off the northeast coast of the U.S. including the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, Southern New England Bight including Long Island Sound and the Great Lakes.

Other centers in NURP include The National Undersea Research Center for the Caribbean region which is located at the Caribbean Marine Research Center (CMRC) in Tequesta, Florida; The National Undersea Research Center for Hawaii and Western Pacific located at the University of Hawaii with the research program conducted by the University's Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory (HURL); The National Undersea Research Center for the Middle Atlantic Bight located at the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences (IMCS) at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The National Undersea Research Center for the Southeastern United States and Gulf of Mexico is located at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and conducts research in the South Atlantic Bight (North

Carolina to Florida), Florida Keys, and the Gulf of Mexico. The National Undersea Research Center for the West Coast and Polar Regions is located at the University of Alaska-Fairbank's (UAF) School of Fisheries and Ocean Services. The region served by the Center includes a vast area along the western margin of North America (70% of the U.S. continental shelf area) and supports a major portion of the annual U.S. fisheries take and production of mineral resources. For more information about NURP, please visit <http://www.nurp.noaa.gov/>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-112
August 28, 2002

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**THUNDER BAY MARINE SANCTUARY EXPEDITION TAKES TO
THE WATER**

*NOAA, the State of Michigan and the Institute for Exploration Team-Up
in Search*

for Shipwrecks in Thunder Bay

Scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) will continue a unique collaboration with Dr. Robert Ballard (discoverer of the *Titanic*, *PT109*) and his scientific team from the Institute for Exploration (IFE) in a mission to explore and document the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve off

the coast of Alpena, Mich. The expedition runs August 28 through September 10, 2002.

Using IFE's Little Hercules, a remotely operated vehicle (ROV), the Thunder Bay Exploration 2002 expedition team will collect video and still images of known and newly discovered shipwrecks located in last year's expedition. NOAA, HAL and IFE are focusing on Thunder Bay because of its high concentration of wrecks that span more than a century of maritime history.

"Preserved by the waters on which they served, these vessels offer a look back in time when steamers and schooners ruled the Great Lakes," said Jeff Gray, Thunder Bay sanctuary manager. "Our work with IFE will not only provide information about our maritime past, but it will help us ensure that these sites are preserved for future generations."

In June 2001, NOAA and IFE used sidescan sonar technology to search for the deepwater shipwrecks in the sanctuary. Of these targets, 11 are known shipwrecks and three are unidentified wrecks. The team hopes work this season will help identify these sites. It will also investigate limestone sinkholes that may reveal important artifacts and evidence of human habitation by Paleo-Indians during low lake levels 8,000 to 10,000 years ago.

"Many Americans don't even know that we have national marine sanctuaries," said Dr. Ballard. "We are working with NOAA and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) to change that. We are going to explore these sites, as we have so many other important sites around the world. Thunder Bay offers a unique set of possibilities and challenges and opportunities."

This expedition is a continuation of the collaboration between NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program, Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration (located in Mystic, Conn.), including this summer's launch of the Immersion Institute in Mystic, which is the first-ever live video feed from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to the Mystic campus. This program enables visitors to view the underwater world of the Monterey Sanctuary real-time, and is the first of the sanctuaries to be wired.

"This is simply a tremendous opportunity for our state and, really, the entire Midwest," said Dr. William Anderson, director of the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries. "Thunder Bay is brimming

with history and untold stories about the mighty ships that traveled these waters. This sanctuary gives us a chance to preserve, research and understand those stories."

The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve was designated in October 2000 to protect a nationally significant collection of underwater cultural resources. Thunder Bay is the 13th national marine sanctuary and only the second sanctuary to focus solely on the protection of historic shipwrecks. Based on historical records, the sanctuary estimates that 116 shipwrecks lie within the 448 square-mile boundary, although thus far only 40 have been located. The sanctuary is co-managed by NOAA and the state of Michigan. For more information about the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, visit <http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/glsr/thunderbay>.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the National Marine Sanctuary Program is in the process of designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as a sanctuary.

NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

The Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) has five key agencies dedicated to the mission of enriching residents' quality of life by providing access to information, preserving and promoting Michigan's heritage and fostering cultural creativity. The Michigan Historical Center is the lead agency working with the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. HAL's other four agencies include the Library of Michigan, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, and the Michigan Film Office. For more information about HAL, please visit <http://www.michigan.gov/hal>.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Expedition scientists and Thunder Bay representatives are available for interview. B-roll and stills of the expedition are also available.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-099
August 5, 2002

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**NOAA, NAVY RAISE TURRET OF USS MONITOR
CIVIL WAR IRONCLAD FROM GRAVEYARD OF THE ATLANTIC**

Today, at 5:55 p.m., the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Navy succeeded in raising the world's first armored revolving gun turret from the wreck of the famous Civil War ironclad USS *Monitor*, which rests below 240 feet of water 16 miles southeast of Cape Hatteras, N.C., in the "Graveyard of the Atlantic." Also recovered today were the vessel's two large Dahlgren cannons. The retrieval of the turret and cannons marks the end of a multi-year effort by NOAA, the Navy and The Mariners' Museum to preserve key components of the revolutionary ship before sea water corrodes the vessel beyond recognition.

The turret, with the cannons inside, was hoisted from the sea floor by a 500-ton crane aboard the Derrick Barge Wotan, owned and operated

by Manson Gulf Industries. The turret was then secured on the barge's deck for transport to The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va., where conservators will begin the 10-year process to preserve it.

"The successful recovery of the *Monitor's* famous gun turret is the culmination of a NOAA long-range management plan submitted to Congress in 1998," said Dr. John Broadwater, manager of NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary and chief scientist of *Monitor* Expedition 2002. "The turret will remind present and future generations of the *Monitor's* story and of the men and women from NOAA and the Navy who rescued the *Monitor* after 140 years."

"Future generations will not have to rely on paintings and faded photographs to remember the *Monitor*," said Dr. Broadwater. "Her story will now be told through the very icon that made her famous — the world's first armored revolving gun turret."

Prior to the lift, NOAA and Navy teams worked for six weeks to remove a 30-ton section of the *Monitor's* hull plating and armor belt to uncover the turret and its contents, including the ship's two 11-inch smoothbore Dahlgren cannons.

"This is truly a historic day," said Commander Bobbie Scholley, Commanding Officer, Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two and Officer in Tactical Command of *Monitor* Expedition 2002. "The men and women that make up this wonderful *Monitor* team have displayed incredible hard work and dedication over the last six weeks to bring us to this point. I am so proud to have been a part of this team that has made it possible to bring back this important part of our heritage so that it can be preserved and enjoyed by generations to come."

The multi-disciplinary effort is a joint effort between NOAA, the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two (MDSU TWO) and The Mariners' Museum.

More than 200 artifacts have been recovered during the 41-day expedition, including a glass button, hydrometers, working thermometers, an intact lantern chimney and two stanchions. All have been conveyed to The Mariners' Museum for conservation and exhibit. Possible human remains also were recovered from the turret and transported to the U.S. Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii for analysis and identification.

Located in a historically rich area of the United States, the world-

famous Mariners' Museum was designated as the custodian of the artifacts and archives of the USS Monitor by NOAA in 1987. As custodian, The Mariners' Museum is charged with housing artifacts and providing conservation, interpretation and education about the historic ironclad.

"For an institution such as The Mariners' Museum to receive the *Monitor's* historic gun turret, is something that happens once in an institutional lifetime," said The Mariners' Museum President and CEO John Hightower. "This artifact will join over 400 others in the Museum's *Monitor* Conservation Area. In 2007, it will play a major role in the new \$30 million USS *Monitor* Center—a 65,000-square-foot addition to the Museum. The Center will house the artifacts, archives, exhibitions, and human history of the battle of the ironclads in Hampton Roads on March 9, 1862 as well as the *Monitor's* extraordinary recovery from the ocean floor."

In March 1862, the *Monitor*, a Union vessel designed by noted 19th century engineer John Ericcson, took part in the most famous naval battle of the Civil War, clashing with the Confederate ironclad CSS *Virginia* (formerly the Union ship USS *Merrimack*) in a four-hour duel at Hampton Roads, Va. The *Monitor* sank nine months later during a New Year's Eve storm off Cape Hatteras, N.C., and remained lost until 1973.

Since the *Monitor* was discovered, numerous research expeditions have studied the wreck. Earlier missions focused on ways to stabilize the ship's fragile remains before later recoveries of larger and significant components of the historic vessel including the vessel's propeller and 30-ton steam engine, which is currently being conserved by The Mariners' Museum.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary was designated as the first national marine sanctuary in 1975. For more information about the *Monitor*, visit: <http://monitor.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring,

understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-r435
July 19, 2002

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STELLWAGEN BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary will celebrate its 10th anniversary at Stage Fort Park in Gloucester, Mass., on Saturday with a free festival of exhibits and family activities. The 842-square-mile sanctuary of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is home to many species of marine mammals, seabirds and fish, including the

endangered northern right whale.

The celebration will include exhibits about the sanctuary, songs and stories from renowned storyteller Jackson Gillman, sea chanties by Gloucester's own musical group "Stamp and Go with Peter Marston," and children's activities.

"We have accomplished so much over the last ten years, and it is great to celebrate our successes with the community," said sanctuary superintendent Craig MacDonald. "Reflecting on our experiences also helps us prepare for the upcoming management plan review." The sanctuary is planning to revise its 10- year-old management plan and will be conducting a series of public meetings later this year.

The sanctuary celebration will include divers participating in the Great Annual Fish Count (GAFC), an international program that encourages divers and snorklers to identify and count fish in local waters. Coordinated by the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF), this year's fish count will run throughout the month in coastal areas throughout the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, South America and Canada. These fish counts provide valuable information to scientists and resource managers. The GAFC began in 1992 off the coast of California.

In the two years the Stellwagen Sanctuary has helped sponsor the Great American Fish Count, more than 250 divers have been trained to identify and count New England fish species. A free Gulf of Maine fish identification class will be offered at Cape Ann Marina in Gloucester. To learn more, visit <http://www.fishcount.org>.

Congress designated the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in 1992 as "an area of special national significance." Virtually the size of the state of Rhode Island, the sanctuary stretches between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in federal waters off of Massachusetts. The sanctuary is renowned as a major feeding area for marine mammals, particularly humpback whales, and supports an ecosystem of diverse wildlife.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program increases public awareness of sanctuaries by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National

Marine Sanctuary anniversary event or fish identification class, please contact Anne Smrcina at (781) 545-8026, Ext. 204 or visit: <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-r434
July 15, 2002

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**NOAA UNVEILS INITIAL FINDINGS FROM CALIFORNIA
SHIPWRECK VISIT**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) researchers revealed initial findings today from a recent expedition to a shipwreck near NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary off Point Conception, Calif. NOAA is an agency of the Commerce Department.

Working in the NOAA-U.S. Navy project, scientists observed abundant

marine life around the wreck. The wreck of the *Pac Baroness* occurred in 1987 and had not been visited since initial surveys in 1987 and 1988.

The 162-meter commercial motor vessel bulk carrier *Pac Baroness* collided with an auto carrier in 1987 and sank with tanks containing 278,943 gallons of fuel and lubricating oils and 21,000 tons of finely powdered copper concentrate in the cargo holds.

The first remotely operated vehicle (ROV) reconnaissance dives on the wreck were conducted in November 1987 and again in January 1988. Sanctuary Quest, as coordinated by the Channel Islands Sanctuary staff, is the first expedition to visit the site in 14 years.

Working with the U.S. Navy, NOAA researchers used a remotely operated vehicle to take video and still camera images of abundant rockfish and other invertebrates. In addition, researchers collected dozens of sediment samples that will provide a more detailed chemical and biological analysis in the next few weeks. The expedition will allow researchers to map and characterize the site for future missions that will monitor any future ecological impacts and potential threats to marine life.

The reconnaissance dive is part of a larger NOAA exploration cruise known as Sanctuary Quest: West Coast Expedition 2002.

NOAA manages the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary to protect and reserve the unique marine ecology within its boundaries. Assessing this and other sanctuary shipwreck sites will help determine further steps necessary to ensure that the marine ecosystems are protected.

The Navy's 200-foot ROV *Independence* provided researchers with the capability to monitor, survey and film deepwater activities. Originally built for the U.S. Air Force to support the space shuttle operations on the West Coast, the *Independence* operates as an ocean-going worldwide research ship out of Port Hueneme, Calif.

The team of NOAA researchers are from the agency's National Ocean Service, which manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program. NOS is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans.

NOAA sanctuaries seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research,

monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

For more information about the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov/>.

To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and NOAA Sanctuaries, please visit: <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-R433
July 10, 2002

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**HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARY SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is seeking applicants for nine Sanctuary Advisory Council seats. The seats available are for non-governmental members and include business/commerce, citizen-at-large, commercial shipping, conservation, fishing, native Hawaiian, ocean recreation, tourism and whale watching positions.

The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale Sanctuary Advisory Council was established in March 1996 to provide advice and

recommendations on managing and protecting humpback whales. The council is comprised of ten government and 15 non-governmental representatives, and represents community interests and concerns to the sanctuary and NOAA. Non-governmental terms run for two years and members will serve without pay. The council meets on average once every two to four months, depending on issues. Applicants must be Hawai'i residents.

The shallow, warm waters surrounding the main Hawaiian Islands constitute one of the World's most important humpback whale habitats. Approximately two-thirds of the entire North Pacific humpback whale population migrates to Hawaiian waters each winter to engage calving, nursing and breeding activities. The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary is a partnership of NOAA and the Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources.

(A council member application package may be obtained by contacting Amy Glester at (808) 397-2655 or by email at: Amy.Glester@noaa.gov. Application packages are also available at the Sanctuary Web Site: <http://www.hihwnms.nos.noaa.gov>. Completed applications should be mailed to Amy Glester, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, 6700 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Suite 104, Honolulu, Hawaii 96825. Interested persons must submit applications by August 15, 2002.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NMSP is now conducting a sanctuary designation process to incorporate the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into the national sanctuary system.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA2002-086
July 8, 2002

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***MONITOR'S* HISTORIC GUN TURRET CLOSER TO RECOVERY**

Wreckage was completely cleared today from the USS *Monitor's* famous and historic gun turret for the first time in 140 years. A team of U.S. Navy divers and scientists from the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration succeeded in removing a section of hull and armor belt that has covered the turret since the warship sank on New Year's Eve 1862 off Cape Hatteras, N. C.

Removal of the hull section was the first phase of *Monitor Expedition* 2002, with the primary goal of recovering the world's first armored, revolving gun turret, an innovation that can still be seen on today's warships. Even after the turret is recovered, the area will remain an important archaeological site as remaining artifacts are found.

The *Monitor's* famous turret, with its two large Dahlgren cannons inside, is estimated to weigh nearly 150 tons. To gain access to the turret for excavation and recovery, a large portion of the ship's aft hull-structure was removed. Before the lift could be made, Navy divers had to remove tons of debris and coal, then cut through thick layers of iron and wood hull-structure.

"It is very gratifying for me to see the Navy's planning and training being rewarded with this success," said Navy Capt. Chris Murray, Naval Sea Systems Command representative for the expedition. "I am confident that we will return from the expedition with the turret."

With the turret exposed, divers can install the 57,000-pound lifting frame, or "claw," and begin excavating the interior of the turret, which is completely filled with silt. Following excavation, the turret will be raised, placed on the support barge, and transported to The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va., for conservation and exhibition.

"With the hull removed, we can now turn our attention to our primary reason for being here, the recovery of the turret," said Navy Cmdr. Bobbie Scholley, commanding officer, Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two and officer in tactical command of *Monitor Expedition 2002*. "There is still a lot of work to do before we raise the turret, so we'll celebrate the completion of this milestone and then begin the excavation of the turret's interior."

"As the hull section lifted away from the turret, I felt that I was watching the opening of a sea chest filled with someone's keepsakes from the *Monitor*," said John Broadwater, manager of NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary and NOAA's expedition chief scientist. "As I viewed the lift on video with Navy personnel in the dive control van, the excitement was palpable."

The U.S. Navy's Naval Sea Systems Command and Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two are providing the personnel and equipment for the expedition, assisted by a \$6.5 million grant from the Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program and \$600,000 from NOAA.

The *Monitor* was designated as the first national marine sanctuary in 1975. NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000

square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the NOAA Sanctuaries is currently considering the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve for sanctuary designation.

For more information on the *Monitor* expedition, please visit the following Web sites: NOAA's *Monitor* Expedition 2002 Web site at <http://monitor.noaa.gov>, the NAVSEA website at <http://www.navsea.navy.mil>, the Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two at <http://www.cnsl.spear.navy.mil/mdsu2> or The Mariners' Museum website at <http://www.mariner.org>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service manages the NOAA's Marine Sanctuaries, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards.

To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the NOAA Sanctuaries, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA-R422
July 3, 2002

CONTACT:

Becky Shortland
Council Coordinator
Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary
(912) 598-2345

**NOAA'S GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is seeking applicants for eight Sanctuary Advisory Council seats. The seats available include the conservation, sport diving, sport fishing, education and research positions.

The Gray's Reef Sanctuary Advisory Council was established in August 1999 to provide advice and recommendations on management and protection of the sanctuary. The council, through its members,

also represents community interests and concerns to sanctuary management and NOAA.

Gray's Reef, designated a National Marine Sanctuary in 1981, contains one of the largest nearshore, live-bottom reefs off the Southeastern United States, encompassing approximately 17 square nautical miles. The sanctuary supports an abundant reef fish and invertebrate community. Loggerhead sea turtles, a threatened species, use Gray's Reef year-round for foraging and resting. The reef rests within the known winter calving ground for the highly endangered northern right whale.

A council member application package may be obtained by calling Council Coordinator Becky Shortland at (912) 598-2345 or by e-mailing her at Becky.Shortland@noaa.gov. Completed applications should be mailed to: Reed Bohne, Sanctuary Manager, Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, 10 Ocean Science Circle, Savannah, GA 31411. New, or reappointed representatives for each seat selected by the sanctuary will begin their terms in the fall. Interested persons must submit a letter of application to the Sanctuary by July 31.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit: <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>. More information on the sanctuary is available at www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA02-r421
July 2, 2002

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**TEACHERS CHOSEN FOR UNDERWATER WORKSHOPS IN
NOAA'S FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARY**

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary has invited educators from around the country to get out of their classroom and into the Gulf of Mexico for a week-long educators' underwater exploration workshop, "Down Under, Out Yonder." The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) manages the Flower Garden Bank Sanctuary, which organizes this popular annual event.

"Our goal for the workshops is to offer teachers firsthand experience

with exploration and research. You cannot find that kind of background in a textbook," said Shelley DuPuy, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary education coordinator. "Not only do the teachers get hands-on training, they get to interact with educators from all over. They exchange ideas that result in new classroom dynamics. This has a direct impact on the students and that is what is most important."

Beginning July 12, there will be two workshops held in the Sanctuary, which lies 100 miles off the coasts of Texas and Louisiana, aboard a 100-foot converted oil and gas operations crew boat equipped for scuba diving. Each workshop will have about 18 educators each. During the dives, the teachers will count fish and other animals, monitor transects photos and conduct general observations on the status of the coral reef environment. More important, they develop a curriculum that they will share with their students back home.

"Down Under, Out Yonder 2002" workshops offer classes on introductory and advanced levels. During classroom, teachers are given a crash course in marine biology and research/scientific methods that they use during the three-day cruise in the Sanctuary.

"One of the reasons that this program is so successful is because the underwater world holds a natural mystery that keeps kids' attention for a long time," said Sarah Bernhardt, education specialist and organizer of the annual Sanctuary workshop.

Sponsorship for the program this year was provided by the Gulf of Mexico Foundation through the funding of BP/Amoco, Nuefield Exploration, the Shell Foundation and Sea Space.

The "Down Under Out Yonder" 2002 Participants are as follows:

July 12-17 Workshop

Joan Bourque, Freelance teacher, Cornville, Ariz.

Gregory Burns, Pineville High School, Pineville, La.

Bill Crowley, Archer City High School, Archer, Texas

Robert Duin, James Madison High School, San Antonio, Texas

Mary Fordham, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto, Houston, Texas

Emily Large, Eagle Valley High School, Eagle, Colo.

Loretta Lawrence, Coral Shores High School, Islamorda, Fla.

Jo Monday, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto, Houston, Texas

Thomas Oglin, Dallas Aquarium at Fair Park, Rowlett, Texas

Steve Pittman, Union Intermediate High School, Tulsa, Okla.

Suzanne Rippetoe, Branch Crossing Jr. High, The Woodlands, Texas

Jacquelyn Scherer, James Madison High School, San Antonio, Texas

June Stockbridge, Oak Creek School, Cornville, Ariz.

Woody Ward, Woodward Academy, Union City, Ga.

Nancy Wilkins, Dickinson Elementary, Sugarland, Texas

Jennifer Shaffer, Salem Lutheran School, Houston, Texas

Carrie Robertson, Texas State Aquarium, Corpus Christi, Texas

July 27-31 Workshop

Risha Bove, Texas State Aquarium, Corpus Christi, Texas

W.D. "Pete" Bryant Klein, Oak High School/North Harris College,
Cypress, Texas

Michael Christian, Klein Oak High School, Houston, Texas

Bob Cox, Comstock School, Lockhart, Texas

Janene Fowler, Branch Crossing Jr. High, The Woodlands. Texas

Deanna Gallier, Texas State Aquarium, Corpus Christi, Texas

Marlene Horace, Clearview High School, Houston, Texas

James R. Jones, Grant Middle School, Corpus Christi, Texas

Patricia Kesling-Wood, Farrington High School, Kaneohe, Hawaii

Lydia Locke, Nubian Dive Club, Sanctuary Volunteer, Houston, Texas

Robert Roach, Bethune Academy, Houston, Texas

George Ruelens, Claremont Elementary, Willow Street, Pa.

Kathy Smith, J.P. Elder Middle School, Ft. Worth, Texas

Mike Smith, North Crowley High School, Ft. Worth, Texas

Ellen/Talitha, Young, Woodward High School, Woodward, Okla.

Wilfred Williams, Austin, Texas

Lani Muilenberg, Houston ISD, Houston, Texas

The National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the National Marine Sanctuary Program is currently considering the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve for sanctuary designation. For more information about the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.flowergarden.nos.noaa.gov/>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit: <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-R420
June 28, 2002

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Stephanie Balian
NOAA Ocean Service
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**STELLWAGEN BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
OPENS COMMENT PERIOD FOR MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW**

The Gerry E. Studds Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary is opening its management plan review for public comment July 1 - October 18. The plan is found on the sanctuary's Web site and a public meeting schedule will soon be posted.

The sanctuary, administered by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA), is undergoing a review of its management plan to assess priorities, review programs

and evaluate compliance with its legal obligation to protect the valuable marine resources. This is a routine procedure prescribed in the sanctuary's charter and is an opportunity to address current management issues.

Congress designated the sanctuary in 1992 as "an area of special national significance." Virtually the size of the state of Rhode Island, the sanctuary stretches between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in federal waters off of Massachusetts. Its boundaries include Stellwagen Bank, all of Tillies Bank and Basin, and the southern portions of Jeffrey's Ledge.

The sanctuary is renowned as a major feeding area for marine mammals, particularly humpback whales, and supports a population of diverse wildlife. It is characterized by a unique seafloor topography of varied habitats and oceanscapes and is the final resting place an estimated 100 sunken ships. With such concentrations of diverse resources near the estimated 6 million people of the greater Boston metropolitan area, the sanctuary attracts extensive commercial, recreational, scientific and educational interests.

The State of the Sanctuary Report has been produced to prepare the public for the upcoming comment period on the sanctuary management plan. For a copy of the report, contact the management plan review coordinator at Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, 175 Edward Foster Rd., Scituate, MA 02066. Copies can be downloaded from the sanctuary Web site at <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>. A list of dates, times and locations for the public meetings will also be available on the sanctuary Web site.

To submit comments, you may: 1) mail them to the address above; 2) fax them to (781) 545-8036; 3) e-mail them to sbnmsplan@noaa.gov or 4) attend the upcoming meetings in September 2002. Comments should be addressed to the attention of the Management Plan Coordinator.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, NMSP is currently considering the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve for sanctuary designation. For more information about the Gerry E. Studds

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://stellwagen.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA Ocean Service is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-081
June 27, 2002

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Justin Lyons, The Mariners' Museum
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**NOAA, NAVY, THE MARINERS' MUSEUM
BEGIN EFFORTS TO RAISE USS *MONITOR*'S TURRET**

The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Navy and The Mariners' Museum have begun the process of recovering the USS *Monitor*'s revolving gun turret and cannons from the wreck of the famous Civil War ironclad that rests below 240 feet of water in the Atlantic off Cape Hatteras, N.

C. The site is designated a NOAA national marine sanctuary.

The turret and cannons recovery is the final phase of a multi-year project to recover key components from the *Monitor* before sea water corrodes the vessel beyond recognition.

"NOAA and its partners have developed a very sound plan for recovering the turret and its cannons," said John Broadwater, manager of NOAA's *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary and chief scientist of the recovery operation. "NOAA is grateful for the opportunity to work with the fine team assembled this year. It will be our summer's work to recover this unique part of our nation's maritime heritage so it may be preserved for future generations."

This multi-disciplinary effort will consist of scientists, engineers, historians, conservators and divers, many who have participated in *Monitor* expeditions in the past. The operation is being conducted by NOAA, the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit TWO (MDSU TWO), and The Mariners' Museum.

"The whole *Monitor* Expedition 2002 Team has been planning for this for more than six months. Now we can finally put all the planning and preparations into practice for one of the most exciting underwater missions a Navy diver could hope for. In addition to training over 150 Navy divers in deep ocean diving and recovery procedures, we also get the immense satisfaction of bringing a piece of our naval heritage back for everyone to enjoy," said Commander Bobbie Scholley, Commanding Officer, Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit TWO and Officer in Tactical Command of *Monitor* Expedition 2002.

The turret recovery effort, known as *Monitor* Expedition 2002, is the most intricate and difficult of the *Monitor* recovery expeditions. The *Monitor's* world famous revolving gun turret, with its two large Dahlgren cannons inside, is estimated to weigh nearly 150 tons. To gain access to the *Monitor's* turret for excavation and recovery, a large portion of the ship's remaining hull structure must be removed. The deck area over the turret is covered with tons of debris, and the likelihood of finding significant artifacts in that debris is great.

A \$6.5 million grant to NAVSEA from the Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program makes *Monitor* Expedition 2002 possible. NOAA also is providing \$600,000 in funding. Diving and recovery operations will take place from the 300-foot Derrick Barge *Wotan*, owned and operated by Manson Gulf Industries, which is

equipped with a 500-ton crane. The more than 100 Navy personnel will dive around the clock, seven days a week throughout the 45-day expedition. A remotely operated vehicle (ROV) will allow NOAA and Navy personnel to observe and direct on-site tasks.

Once recovered, the turret will be transported by barge to The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va.

"This summer, one of the great icons of Civil War technology will be delivered to The Mariners' Museum for conservation and public display," said John Hightower, museum CEO and president. "For generations, the *Monitor's* extraordinary revolving turret has been seen in books, paintings, prints, even playing cards, representing America's first remarkable steps toward the iron age at sea. Few ever thought that the original, long-lost gun turret itself would ever be located, much less recovered and placed on public view. It is an awe-inspiring moment for lovers of history, particularly Civil War and maritime history."

The turret will join the engine and other artifacts currently accessible to museum visitors who can watch the ongoing conservation process that could take between five and ten years. In 2007, The Mariners' Museum, in partnership with NOAA, will open the USS *Monitor* Center on Museum property, the primary repository for materials and exhibitions related to the historic ship.

Since the *Monitor* was discovered, numerous research expeditions have studied the wreck. A 1998 NOAA management plan shifted the agency's focus from studying ways to stabilize the ship's fragile remains, to recovering some of the larger and significant components of this historic vessel. In 1998, NOAA and the Navy recovered the ironclad's propeller. In 2001 the group recovered the *Monitor's* 3-ton steam engine, which is currently being conserved by The Mariners' Museum.

The *Monitor* was designated as the first national marine sanctuary in 1975. NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) conducts scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs in 13 sanctuaries of more than 18,000 miles of ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, NMSP is currently considering the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve for sanctuary designation. For more information on the National Marine Sanctuary Program, visit <http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/>. For more information on the *Monitor* Expedition, please visit

the following Web sites: NOAA's *Monitor* Expedition 2002 Web site at <http://monitor.noaa.gov>, the NAVSEA website at <http://www.navsea.navy.mil>, the Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two at <http://www.cnsl.spear.navy.mil/mdsu2> or The Mariners' Museum website at <http://www.mariner.org>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service, visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-r417
June 25, 2002

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NOAA REPAIRS DAMAGED CORAL REEF
Work at Upper Keys Grounding Site Should Speed Recovery

One of the most famous coral reefs in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, severely damaged in 1984 when a ship ran aground, is getting a helping hand toward recovery. The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has begun the restoration of the freighter Wellwood grounding site at Molasses Reef off Key Largo.

"We're excited that we now have the resources to begin repairing the damage to one of our most beautiful coral reefs," said Sanctuary Superintendent Billy Causey. "In the 18 years since the freighter *Wellwood* ran aground, the damaged reef has not regenerated. We believe the restoration work should help put the reef on the road to recovery."

The *Wellwood*, a 122-meter freighter registered in Cyprus, ran aground in approximately 18 feet of water on Molasses Reef in the former Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary on August 4, 1984, and remained there for 12 days. The grounding destroyed 5,085 square meters of living coral and injured 644 meters of reef framework, caused widespread destruction of bottom-dwelling organisms and displaced fish and other mobile marine life.

In December of 1986, the *Wellwood* Shipping Company, the Hanseatic Shipping Company and Christopher Vickers settled with the federal government for \$6.275 million paid over 15 years. The amount includes a civil penalty, as well as response, assessment, and restoration costs.

NOAA is working with the construction contractor, Underwater Engineering Services, Inc., to place 22 modules at 14 locations on the grounding site. The modules are preformed concrete casts that are used to rebuild the foundation of the reef. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary "Reef Doctor" Harold Hudson designed the modules to replicate the older spur and groove formation of the grounding site as closely as possible and provide the maximum amount of habitat for fish, coral and other marine life. Hudson and other sanctuary staff members built the modules by hand over the summer of 2001, using small limestone boulders, a special composite rebar, concrete and sand.

When the project is complete, the Sanctuary will install a permanent buoy marking the restoration site. Snorkelers and divers will be welcome to view the completed work, following the guideline "look, but don't touch," to allow marine life to settle and grow on the modules. Visit <http://www.restorereef.nos.noaa.gov> for project details, updates and pictures.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP), established in 1972 by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, is administered by NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS). The goal of the Sanctuaries Act is to set aside

and manage areas for resource protection, research, enhanced public education, and compatible public and private uses. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, NMSP is currently considering the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve for sanctuary designation. For more information on the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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NOAA 02-r418

June 24, 2002

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**NOAA's MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
BEGINS SEARCH FOR VISITOR CENTER SITE**

***Seacliff State Beach, Cities of Monterey and Santa Cruz
Considered***

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary has contracted with AMS Planning & Research of Petaluma, Calif., to conduct a comparative feasibility study of potential locations for a new marine sanctuary visitor education center. Funding for the \$150,000 contract comes from the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which manages the sanctuary.

Sanctuary staff, working with local governments, will identify three locations for the consultants to evaluate. These sites will meet preliminary requirements — places with ocean views in

popular, high foot traffic waterfront areas. The team of consultants will study each site to determine potential opportunities and constraints for a sanctuary visitor center. Aspects such as infrastructure requirements, visitor demographics, estimated costs, geotechnical feasibility and permit feasibility will be included in the consultants' final report. The final report is expected in spring 2003.

"I'm happy that we're able to start this important analysis with help and input from our regional communities," said William J. Douros, Monterey Bay sanctuary superintendent. "Our existing management plan, now a decade old, directs the sanctuary to develop one or more visitor centers. We now have the funds to begin that planning process."

One of the locations under consideration is Seacliff State Beach in Aptos. California State Parks, who own and manage Seacliff State Beach, have offered Seacliff as a potential site for a Sanctuary visitor center somewhere on their property. Another site to be evaluated is in the city of Monterey, and the third is in the Santa Cruz waterfront area. The exact locations for these last two sites are still being discussed by Sanctuary and city staff.

The Sanctuary and its consultants will be seeking public input and guidance from local and state agencies and community members as the feasibility study is carried out.

The visitor center concept envisioned by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is an interactive interpretive center highlighting the natural and cultural resources of the marine sanctuary, the roles that citizen stewardship can play in marine resource protection, and the National Marine Sanctuary System.

The center will also serve as an orientation or "welcome" center to distribute information on nearby opportunities to experience the marine sanctuary and learn more about the ocean. Ideally, the center will include exhibit space, aquaria, a teaching lab, a public meeting room and a small public resource library.

The team of consultants chosen for the job has many years of facility planning experience. AMS Planning & Research will provide project management and lead the economic feasibility and visitation studies. Nolan, Zinn, and Associates from Watsonville, Calif., will provide geologic analysis. Strelow Consulting in Santa Cruz has local expertise in environmental planning. Pacific Legacy of Albany, Calif., will serve as cultural resource experts, and architects Fletcher, Farr, Ayotte will

do some preliminary physical planning and cost estimates.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. In addition, the National Marine Sanctuary Program is carrying out the designation process for converting Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve into a sanctuary. For more information about the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://montereybay.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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NOAA 02-040
June 6, 2002

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**SANCTUARY QUEST 2002 LAUNCHES OLYMPIC COAST
MISSION JUNE 11-20**
***NOAA'S EXPLORATION OF DEPTHS OF ITS WEST
COASTMARINE SANCTUARIES CONTINUES FROM GRAY'S
HARBOR TO PORT ANGELES***

On June 11th scientists and resource managers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will start probing the depths of Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary as the final leg of a two month excursion into new underwater environments. The program is called Sanctuary Quest: West Coast Expedition 2002, and is run by the sanctuary program of NOAA's National Ocean Service. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

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Using the research tools of the NOAA ship *McArthur* and a U.S. Navy remotely operated vehicle (ROV), the Olympic Coast mission will depart from Gray's Harbor for 10 days, returning to Port Angeles on June 20.

A public Open House will be held on the Port Angeles City Pier Thursday afternoon, June 20, with tented displays and complimentary admission to the Arthur Feiro Marine Life Center.

Expedition scientists have been conducting exploration and research that started April 29 in the deep waters of California's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and will conclude with the exploration of Washington's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

The expedition to date has explored three NOAA marine sanctuaries: Channel Islands, Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank, all located along the California coast. A planned mission in Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary was canceled due to repair work on the NOAA ship *McArthur*, the expedition's science platform. A 175-foot Class III ship that conducts the agency's oceanographic research and assessments along the Pacific Coast, the NOAA ship *McArthur* has a complement of three officers, 19 crew members and 13 scientists, including rotating personnel from the sanctuaries.

The use of the ROV continues work that began with the NOAA / National Geographic Society Sustainable Seas Expedition in 1999 and 2000. The ROV provided by the U.S. Navy has monitoring and surveying capabilities and a camera for deep-water videography.

"During Sanctuary Quest we are observing and collecting data in deep underwater habitats that we know little about and have never explored before," said Daniel J. Basta, director of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program.

"Our scientists will compare these relatively undisturbed underwater areas with those that have been altered by human activity. These results will have direct application to management issues and will contribute to the ongoing research and data collection within the sanctuary program," said Basta. "We will also investigate ship wrecks as cultural resources and for their potential impact on the marine environment."

Sanctuary Quest is part of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program's ongoing exploration of the country's 13 national marine

sanctuaries, a system of marine areas designated by Congress to protect and preserve their extraordinary biodiversity, ecological integrity and cultural legacy.

The expedition also examines the role and function of the sanctuaries in protecting and conserving marine resources that exist in a much larger natural ecosystem.

"We are working to understand how the sanctuaries function as a system," said Basta. "The area of this expedition represents a small part of a much larger, very dynamic ecosystem. This research is an example of how the National Marine Sanctuary Program integrates science with management of resources within a much larger ecosystem. The observations and data are critically needed to make sound management decisions."

The expedition joins a number of agencies and organizations in partnership. Mission participants include the U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Services Center, the U.S. Geological Survey, the California Department of Fish and Game, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and many other academic and private institutions.

The public can follow mission explorations by visiting (<http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/>).

The National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. In addition, the National Marine Sanctuary Program is in the process of designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as a sanctuary. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.ocnms.nos.noaa.gov/>.

NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit: <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOAA R-414

June 4, 2002

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**CAROL KEIPER NAMED CHAIR OF SANCTUARY ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR CORDELL BANK NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY**

Sailor, educator and marine mammal researcher Carol Keiper of Benicia, Calif., has been named Chair of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and Joe Smith, Board member with the West Marin Chamber of Commerce from Marshall, Calif., has been named Vice Chair. The council is composed of private sector and government representatives who provide advice and recommendations to the Sanctuary Manager for the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), on issues affecting the 398-square nautical mile Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

The community-based council assures ongoing public involvement in

management decision making while at the same time expanding the public's awareness about the Sanctuary and the challenging marine resource management issues it faces. The council's six voting members and four alternates represent a variety of local groups and the general public. Quarterly meetings are open to the public.

SAC Chair Carol Keiper represents the research community on the council. An avid sailor and educator for more than 20 years, she has led natural history trips to Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones Marine Sanctuaries. Keiper has contributed to gathering baseline data on the physical, biological, and chemical oceanography of the Sanctuary.

Vice Chair Joe Smith, representing the Community-at-Large, serves on the Board of Directors with the West Marin Chamber of Commerce and as a volunteer for the West Marin Senior Services. He had served with the U.S. Navy and traveled extensively abroad with a special interest in island ecosystems.

Remaining SAC members include Thomas Lambert of Sebastapol (conservation seat), Jim Bybee of Santa Rosa (government seat), Richard Powers of Bodega Bay (maritime activity seat), and Doreen Moser of San Anselmo (education). Alternate members include Josh Churchman of Bolinas, Daniel Cohen of Bodega Bay, Bill McMillon of Sebastapol, and Kathy Soave of Corte Madera. Council members have been appointed competitively by NOAA and will serve three-year terms.

Designated in 1989, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary is located about 52 miles northwest of the Golden Gate Bridge at the edge of the continental shelf. Upwellings of nutrient rich ocean waters and the bank's topography create one of the most biologically productive areas on the West Coast.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program, established in 1972 by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, is administered by NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS). The goal of the sanctuaries act is to set aside and manage areas for resource protection, research, enhanced public education and compatible public and private uses.

Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOS manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOAA R-413

June 4, 2002

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**BARBARA EMLEY NAMED CHAIR OF SANCTUARY ADVISORY
COUNCIL FOR GULF OF THE FARALLONES NATIONAL MARINE
SANCTUARY**

Commercial fisher Barbara Emley of San Francisco has been named Chair of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) for Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, and Bob Breen, a marine reserve naturalist from Montara, has been named Vice Chair. The council is composed of private sector and government representatives who provide advice and recommendations to the Sanctuary Manager for the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA), on issues affecting the 937 square nautical mile Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.

The community-based council assures continued public input to management decision making while at the same time expanding public awareness about the Sanctuary and the challenging marine resource management issues it faces. The council's eight voting members and six alternates represent a variety of local groups and the general public. Quarterly meetings are open to the public.

Representing maritime activity, Sanctuary Advisory Council Chair Barbara Emley started fishing commercially in 1985. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association (PCFFA).

She also represents the Crab Boat Owners Association of San Francisco at the Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Group.

Vice Chair Bob Breen, education seat, has worked at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in Moss Beach as a Naturalist since 1969. He has more than 32 years experience in outdoor and environmental education and volunteer coordination and is a NOAA "Environmental Hero."

Remaining SAC members include Richard Charter of Bodega Bay and Bob Wilson of Tiburon (conservation seats), Brian O'Neill of San Francisco (government seat), James Kelley of Montara (research seat), Mick Menigoz of Novato (maritime activity seat), and Harlan Henderson of Sacramento (community-at-large). Alternate members include Brenda Donald and Peter Grenell of El Granada, Mark Dowie and Don Neubacher of Pt. Reyes, Gwen Heistand of Lagunitas and Karen Reyna of San Francisco.

Designated in 1981, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary is located west of the Golden Gate Bridge. The sanctuary encompasses a large expanse of Pacific Ocean, nearshore tidal flats, rocky intertidal areas, wetlands, subtidal reefs, and beaches.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration, and educational programs. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Gulf of the Farallones

National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.gfnms.nos.noaa.gov/>.

"NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-064

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NEW MANAGER HIRED FOR GREAT LAKES

SANCTUARY AND UNDERWATER PRESERVE

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the state of Michigan announced the hiring of Jefferson J. Gray as manager of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve in Lake Huron. Gray begins his work with the Sanctuary in Alpena, Mich., on July 15, 2002. As manager for the nation's first Great Lakes Sanctuary, Gray will oversee monitoring and preservation of the shipwrecks and other significant cultural resources in Thunder Bay. NOAA is an agency of the Commerce Department.

"Jeff's talents will ensure the success of the Sanctuary's federal/state partnership," said Michigan Governor John Engler. "His experience is an excellent fit for this Sanctuary."

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve was designated in October 2000. The designation established a partnership between NOAA and the state of Michigan for the cooperative management and protection of Thunder Bay's cultural resources. As partners, NOAA and the state of Michigan work with local agencies as well as private and nonprofit organizations to protect these resources, develop educational activities centered on Lake Huron's maritime heritage and conduct research to further identify and interpret the area's shipwrecks. For more information, please visit: www.tbnms.glerl.noaa.gov.

"We are pleased to have Jeff join the National Marine Sanctuary Program in managing some of the nation's most treasured cultural resources," said Daniel J. Basta, director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program. "Jeff has the experience and leadership skills to make the Thunder Bay Sanctuary a national model for interpreting and protecting shipwrecks."

Gray has a strong background in research, management, and protection. Serving as State Underwater Archaeologist at the Wisconsin Historical Society since 1998, Gray managed a statewide cultural resource program and developed and implemented the Wisconsin Maritime Trails system. He also acted as a scientific diver and lab technician for NOAA's National Undersea Research Center in Key Largo, Fla. in addition to conducting other archaeological work in North Carolina, Wisconsin, the Dominican Republic, Chile and Greece. Gray also has extensive experience developing partnerships among and working with government agencies, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and user groups. In particular, he worked with these entities to interpret Wisconsin's maritime history and preserve underwater archaeological sites. Gray has published numerous articles in the field of Great Lakes underwater archaeology. He serves on numerous associated boards and committees.

Gray received a B.A. in Anthropology and Archeology from Wisconsin's Beloit College and a M.A. in Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology from North Carolina's East Carolina University.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program, established in 1972 by the

National Marine Sanctuaries Act, is administered by the National Ocean Service (NOAA Ocean Service). The goal of the Sanctuaries Act is to set aside and manage areas for resource protection, research, enhanced public education and compatible public and private uses. Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

NOAA Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02 063
May 22, 2002

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NO DISCHARGE ZONE TO PROTECT SANCTUARY WATERS

New Rules Take Effect June 19, 2002

State waters of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary reach a higher level of protection on June 19, 2002, when a No Discharge Zone (NDZ) designation takes effect. Under rules published today by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), boaters must pump out their sewage or make sure their marine sanitation devices (MSDs) cannot discharge overboard while in state waters.

"Now that we are making progress in dealing with local wastewater and stormwater management and restoring historic water flows from the Everglades, the NDZ designation provides an opportunity for the boating community to step up to the plate and do their part to help restore the quality of our nearshore waters," said Sanctuary Superintendent Billy Causey. "At the request of the Sanctuary's Water Quality Steering Committee, we will soon propose rules to establish a No Discharge Zone protecting federal waters of the Sanctuary as well."

Current regulations prohibit dumping untreated sewage into state waters, but allow the discharge of treated sewage from Type I and Type II marine sanitation devices. These systems chop up solid waste and use chemicals to eliminate many bacteria and viruses, but they do not eliminate nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous and other pollutants that contribute to poor water quality.

While EPA scientists estimate that nutrients from vessel discharges account for only 3% of the total nutrients in Sanctuary waters, nutrients and other pollutants from vessel discharge constitute a significant source of water pollution in harbors, marinas and other areas with poor circulation.

"Coral reef ecosystems depend on clear, nutrient poor water to thrive," said Causey. "By eliminating another source of nutrients in the waters of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, we can easily relieve one more problem facing our already stressed marine environment"

The new rule does not require boaters to retrofit their vessel with a holding tank, but boaters who choose not to install and pump out holding tanks must ensure that their Type I or II MSD cannot discharge overboard while in state waters of the Sanctuary. Discharge of gray water (such as water from the galley and shower) remains legal in most areas.

The Sanctuary's Water Quality Steering Committee and the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners asked Florida Governor Jeb Bush to seek the NDZ designation for all state waters of the Florida

Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Governor Bush supported the proposed designation and, on December 7, 2000, he sent a letter to the EPA requesting this action. The EPA published the proposed rule for comment on July 26, 2001. Of 1,050 comments received, nearly 97% supported the designation as a necessary step in improving water quality in the Florida Keys.

Although the designation does not require EPA to ensure adequate availability of pump-out facilities, a survey by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection found adequate coverage in the most heavily populated areas of Monroe County, with 29 operating pump-out stations, two mobile pump-outs and several more pump-outs in the planning stages. Marinas that want to install pump-out stations or mobile pump-out boats can apply for grants of up to 75% of the project cost from the Clean Vessel Act Grant Program. Since 1996, CVA grants totaling approximately \$520,000 have funded 18 pump out facilities in the Florida Keys.

A working group led by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and composed by representatives of federal, state and local governments, local environmental groups, and the Marine Industries Association, is currently developing an implementation plan for the NDZ. This plan will include a public outreach and education program, a strategy to fund and develop adequate pump-out services in the Keys, and an enforcement strategy for implementation of the NDZ.

Designated in 1990, the Sanctuary protects 2,896 square nautical miles of spectacular coral bank and patch reefs, hardbottom communities, seagrass meadows and mud and sand bottom , stretching from Biscayne Bay to the Tortugas. The Sanctuary works with the EPA, the State of Florida and local municipalities to implement a comprehensive water quality protection program.

The Florida Keys Sanctuary is one of 13 National Marine Sanctuaries. The National Marine Sanctuary Program is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

For more information on the No Discharge Zone designation and how to comply, call 305.743.2437 or visit the Sanctuary's web site at <http://www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov>.

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NOAA02-r416

May 20, 2002

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**GREAT LAKES MARINE SANCTUARY GAINS SUMMER
RESEARCH VESSEL**

Will Support Mission to Uncover Lake Huron's Shipwrecks

The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve took a great leap forward in its ability to explore and preserve our nation's maritime history with a new partnership with the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL) to share use of GLERL's research vessel, the R/V *Shenelon*. Both the Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve and GLERL are managed by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The R/V *Shenelon*, scheduled to travel from Muskegon to Alpena the week of May 13, will be docked behind the Federal Building on the

Thunder Bay River from May to September each year.

During those months, the *Shenehon* will support activities of both the Sanctuary and GLERL. Its duties include deploying the Sanctuary's new mooring buoys, gathering baseline data on the shipwrecks, supporting the Institute for Exploration summer expedition, and conducting Great Lakes research.

"Having the *Shenehon* in Alpena for the summer allows the sanctuary to carry out many of its summer projects," said Acting Sanctuary Manager Ellen Brody. "The partnership with GLERL that allowed this to happen is a win-win situation."

GLERL recently finalized a lease agreement with the University of Michigan to operate the R/V *Laurentian* in Muskegon, which allowed the *Shenehon* to move to Alpena for the summer.

Built in 1974 at Leavenworth, Kansas, the 65-foot-long, 75-ton *Shenehon* has supported environmental research and educational needs throughout the Great Lakes region. With a crew of two and accommodations for three scientists, the ship can travel at 10 knots. The ship was commissioned and officially named the *Shenehon* in Detroit on June 25, 1965. She bears the name of *Francis C. Shenehon*, distinguished Chief Civilian Engineer from 1906 to 1909 at the Lake Survey Center, a precursor to NOAA.

The Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve was designated in October 2001 to protect a nationally significant collection of underwater cultural resources. GLERL's mission is to conduct integrated, interdisciplinary environmental research in support of resource management and environmental services in coastal and estuarine water, with special emphasis on the Great Lakes.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program, established in 1972 by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, is administered by NOAA Ocean Service. The goal of the sanctuaries act is to set aside and manage areas for resource protection, research, enhanced public education and compatible public and private uses.

Today, 13 national marine sanctuaries encompass more than 18,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources. For more information about the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and Underwater Preserve, visit <http://www.glerl.noaa>.

[gov/glsr/thunderbay/](http://www.nos.noaa.gov/glsr/thunderbay/).

NOAA Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOAA Ocean Service and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-040
April 23, 2002

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**NOAA EXPLORES DEPTHS OF ITS FIVE WEST COAST
MARINE SANCTUARIES ON 60-DAY SANCTUARY QUEST 2002**

On April 24th, a group of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) scientists and resource managers will start probing the depths of five Pacific Coast national marine sanctuaries on a 60-day excursion into new underwater environments. The program, called Sanctuary Quest: West Coast Expedition 2002, is run by the sanctuary program of NOAA's National Ocean Service. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

Using the research tools of the NOAA ship *McArthur* and a U.S. Navy remotely operated vehicle (ROV), expedition scientists will embark on

five ocean missions that start in the deep waters of California's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and end in Washington's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary 60 days later.

The mission will explore three other NOAA marine sanctuaries in Monterey Bay, Gulf of the Farallones, and Cordell Bank, all located along the California coast. The use of the ROV continues work that began with the NOAA / National Geographic Society Sustainable Seas Expedition in 1999 and 2000. The ROV provided by the U.S. Navy has monitoring and surveying capabilities, a manipulator for sample collection, and a camera for deep-water videography.

"During Sanctuary Quest we will observe and collect data in deep underwater mountains, canyons, and volcano habitats that we know little about and have never explored before," said Daniel J. Basta, director of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program.

"Our scientists will compare these relatively undisturbed underwater areas with those that have been altered by human activity. These results will have direct application to management issues and will contribute to the ongoing research and data collection within the sanctuary program," said Basta. "We will also investigate ship wrecks as cultural resources and for their potential impact on the marine environment."

Sanctuary Quest is part of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program's ongoing exploration of the country's 13 national marine sanctuaries, a system of marine areas designated by Congress to protect and preserve their extraordinary biodiversity, ecological integrity and cultural legacy.

The expedition's science platform is the NOAA ship *McArthur*, a 175-foot Class III ship that conducts the agency's oceanographic research and assessments along the Pacific Coast. A complement of three officers, 19 crew members and 13 scientists will carry out the expedition, including rotating in personnel from each of the five sanctuaries.

The expedition also examines the role and function of the sanctuaries in protecting and conserving marine resources that exist in a much larger natural ecosystem.

"We are working to understand how the sanctuaries function as a system," said Basta. "The area of this expedition represents a small

part of a much larger, very dynamic ecosystem. This research is an example of how the National Marine Sanctuary Program integrates science with management of resources within a much larger ecosystem. The observations and data are critically needed to make sound management decisions."

The expedition joins a number of agencies and organizations in partnership. Mission participants include the U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Services Center, the U.S. Geological Survey, the California Department of Fish and Game, Moss Landing Marine Lab, the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, and many other academic and private institutions.

Sanctuary Quest: West Coast Expedition 2002 investigates Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary April 24-May 4, Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary May 5-15, Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary May 16-25, Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary May 26-June 5, and Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary June 10-20.

The public can follow mission explorations by visiting <http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/>).

NOAA Ocean Service (NOS) manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02 r409
April 22, 2002

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**Archaeologists Identify "No-Name Wreck" off Islamorada
Former Canadian Warship "Remarkably Intact"**

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced today that a team of divers led by a NOAA archaeologist has identified a mystery wreck in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary as a former Canadian warship. NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program officials plan to nominate the site to the National Register of Historic Places.

In the summer of 2001, members of the Association of Underwater Explorers (AUE) dove an unnamed wreck, located in 230 feet of water off Islamorada, and reported it to sanctuary officials as a shipwreck of potential significance.

Beginning in October 2001, AUE members joined NOAA, National Undersea Research Center (NURC) and East Carolina University (ECU) staff for a series of archaeological surveys, led by NOAA project archaeologist Tane Casserley. NURC provided diving support for the operations, which were partially funded by a grant from the PADI Foundation, and the State of Florida consulted with NOAA in developing the research design.

Based on ceramics recovered from the site, measurements of the ship's length and beam and the distinctive ram bow, Casserley has been able to identify the ship with a high degree of certainty as the steamer *Queen of Nassau*, formerly the *Canadian Government Ship (CGS) Canada*.

"We intend to nominate the *Queen of Nassau* to the National Register because of her significant history, archaeological resources and site integrity," said Sanctuary Upper Region Manager LCDR Dave Score. "The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is very dedicated to protecting this 100-year-old shipwreck and will continue efforts to document and monitor this site."

Marven Moore, manager of collections for the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in Nova Scotia, describes the *Queen of Nassau/CGS Canada*, one of Canada's first naval vessels, as "the flagship of the embryonic Canadian Navy at the time, symbolic of the evolution of Canada from a dominion within the British Empire to a sovereign nation."

"The opportunity for archaeologists and marine historians to glean information from a wreck that is so remarkably intact is very rare," said Moore.

Vickers Maxim and Sons Ltd. in Barrow in Furness, England built the *Canada* in 1904 as a one-of-a-kind small cruiser for the Canadian Fisheries Protection Service. Known as the fastest ship in the fisheries protection fleet, the vessel became Canada's first naval training ship and later was commissioned in the newly formed Canadian Navy. The *Canada* spent World War I conducting convoys and naval patrols.

In 1919, the *Canada* was decommissioned, and in 1924, the Canadian government sold the vessel to Barron Collier, a wealthy Florida landowner, who renamed it the *Queen of Nassau*. When the aged ship proved too slow for service as a an inter-island cruise ship, Collier made plans to sell it to Mexican interests, but the ship sank in 1926 en route to its final inspection in Tampa, after developing a leak.

Since the survey team's initial dives on the wreck site, key artifacts may have been altered, and artifacts not previously in plain view lay uncovered. In addition, parts of the ship's structure appear to have sustained anchor damage.

In light of the perceived site disturbance, archaeologists working for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary recovered several artifacts deemed to be threatened, including ceramics, a mast light and a lantern top and base. In accordance with the programmatic agreement between the sanctuary and the State of Florida, the Florida Division of Historic Resources is conserving the artifacts, which will be put on display in the Florida Keys to educate the community about the region's cultural heritage.

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act charges the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary with managing archaeological and historical resources in its waters to protect the public's interest. Disturbing, removing or possessing artifacts without a permit is illegal and punishable by a maximum civil penalty of \$119,000 per violation. For more information on submerged cultural resources in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, visit <http://www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS) and the State of Florida manage the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. NOS is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02 r411
APRIL 21, 2002

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COMMERCE OFFICIAL HONORS KEYS RESIDENTS AS ENVIRONMENTAL HEROES

Ford, Hommell, and Dimse Recognized at Cheeca Lodge Earth Day Celebration

Three Florida Keys residents were honored today as "Environmental Heroes" by Scott B. Gudes, Deputy Under Secretary with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), at the annual Earth Day celebration at Cheeca Lodge. George Hommell, Jr., Fran Ford, and Dr. Steve Dimse were recognized for their continuing efforts to protect the environment in the Florida Keys. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

"These citizens exhibit continued stewardship in protecting the Florida Keys Sanctuary's natural resources," said Deputy Under Secretary Gudes. "Their commitment in raising public awareness is something

we should all emulate."

Hommell is a long-time Keys fishing guide and the general manager of World Wide Sportsman sporting goods store and Bayside Marina in Islamorada. In July 2000, Bayside Marina became the first in the Florida Keys recognized under the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Clean Marina Program, which certifies marinas that operate in an environmentally conscious manner.

In 2002, World Wide Sportsman joined the Florida Keys Seagrass Outreach Partnership, a coalition of public and private groups working to increase awareness of the importance of seagrass and reduce boating impacts to this critical habitat. Hommell agreed to host the organization's first Florida Seagrass Festival on the grounds of World Wide Sportsman.

Hommell is also a founding member of Bonefish and Tarpon Unlimited, which supports projects and research that help support healthy bonefish and tarpon fisheries.

"George Hommell does more than talk about protecting the environment being good for business, he leads by example," said Sanctuary Superintendent Billy Causey, who nominated Hommell. "Under Mr. Hommell's direction, World Wide Sportsman has taken the lead in teaching boaters and anglers how to be good environmental citizens."

Fran Ford was named an Environmental Hero in recognition of her extensive volunteer work in support of the environment, particularly through her work with Florida Keys Audubon and the Monroe County Environmental Education Advisory Council.

"Fran Ford has helped the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary achieve its environmental stewardship mission by her long-term involvement in environmental education," said Sanctuary Education Program Assistant Joy Tatgenhorst, who nominated Ford. "Fran lives with an environmental consciousness."

Ford's contributions include working to award environmental education scholarships to students and environmental education grants to teachers, leading the annual migrating bird count in Key West, and purchasing birding books to donate to Monroe County libraries.

Dr. Steve Dimse is an emergency room physician who was named an

Environmental Hero in recognition of his efforts toward supplying NOAA with a large number of real-time citizen weather observations that are being used in NOAA's research and operational activities in Florida and other parts of the country.

"Steve Dimse has contributed his own time and money to develop an Internet server that collects several hundred thousand weather observations from citizen weather stations every month and makes these reports available to NOAA," said Russ Chadwick of NOAA's Forecast Systems Laboratory in Boulder, CO., who nominated Dimse. "Not only does Steve send these data to NOAA, he also operates a web site so that anyone can access these and other types of data, and his web site gets over 2 million hits a month!"

Dimse's contributions include development and continuing operation of his www.findu.com server and his work to acquire weather data used by Florida NWS Weather Forecast Offices, by Kennedy Space Center in support of launch operations, and by the National Hurricane Center for hurricane prediction and tracking.

NOAA, an agency of the Department Commerce, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-r410
APRIL 18, 2002

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**NOAA AND VOLUNTEERS TEST WATER QUALITY OF
MONTEREY BAY AREA STREAMS ON EARTH DAY WEEKEND**

More than 120 trained volunteers will spend Saturday, April 20 testing the quality of stream water in 11 major watersheds that run into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary as part of the third annual "Snapshot Day" event sponsored by the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Volunteers will test 110 streams stretching from San Mateo to San Luis Obispo counties measuring dissolved oxygen and pH levels, conductivity, turbidity, and temperature. Collected water samples will

also be sent for laboratory analysis of nutrients and bacteria levels.

"NOAA is the leading government science and environmental manager of our oceans and coastal areas," said Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, USN (ret.), NOAA's administrator and under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere. "We appreciate and value the efforts of the many Monterey Bay Snapshot Day volunteers who help take the pulse of the coastal streams that play a role in the health of their sanctuary."

The event is designed to raise public awareness about water quality issues affecting watersheds that drain into NOAA's Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

"Snapshot Day is popular and helpful. With each successive year of data we get useful information on the health of the streams that flow into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary", said Sanctuary Superintendent William J. Douros.

"It provides a one-day snapshot of the quality of the water entering the sanctuary. We'll compare this year's data with previous snapshot data and other water quality information from other agencies and citizen watershed groups to help identify problem areas that need additional monitoring and attention," said Douros.

For a detailed look at previous year's Snapshot Day results, check out the Snapshot Day Report on the Network's website at http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov/monitoring_network/events.html.

Snapshot Day is funded by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary's Water Quality Protection Program, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California State Parks Foundation. The event is organized by the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network, which includes 20 volunteer groups, the Coastal Watershed Council, the California Coastal Commission, and The Ocean Conservancy.

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary Citizen Watershed Monitoring Network facilitates the work of volunteer monitoring groups by providing guidance, technical training, equipment, and database development. The Coastal Watershed Council, a regional non-profit organization, is committed to the preservation and protection of coastal watersheds through education, research and restoration. The Ocean Conservancy, a national nonprofit organization, focuses on protecting ocean

ecosystems, global abundance and diversity of marine wildlife.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program is managed by NOAA Ocean Service. NOAA Ocean Service is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02 r408

CONTACT:

Cathy Sakas

(912) 598-2345 April 04, 2002

OCEAN FEST 2002 AT GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

The Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary off the coast of Georgia will sponsor the 4th annual Gray's Reef Ocean Fest on April 13, on Savannah's River Street at Rousakis Plaza. The Ocean Fest mixes educational activities and family entertainment to raise awareness of the sanctuary's ecosystem and the ocean environment of Georgia's Low Country.

Gray's Reef is one of 13 national marine sanctuaries run by the National Ocean Service of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA is an agency of the Department of Commerce.

"Ocean Fest is a fun way to encourage education and understanding about the ocean and the sanctuary's surrounding environment," said

Cathy Sakas, NOAA's Gray's Reef Sanctuary education coordinator. "We want to help children and adults appreciate this important part of our community."

Festivities will begin at noon when local organizations conduct hands-on ocean environment activities for all ages. Visitors can enjoy Plaza dockside boat tours aboard the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography's research vessel Savannah. Local bands will provide live entertainment throughout the day including rock-and-roll from Call the Cops and toe-tapping golden oldies from The World Famous Crabettes. An annual Kid's Art and Poetry Contest will showcase the talents of local elementary students and ribbons will be awarded to the winning entries. Ocean Fest festivities end at 5:00 p.m.

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, designated in 1981, is one of the largest near-shore sandstone reefs in the southeastern United States. Because of the diversity of marine life, Gray's Reef attracts sport fishing and diving vessels from along the Georgia coast.

Named in recognition of Milton B. Gray, a biological collector and curator at the University of Georgia Marine Institute, who studied the area during the 1960s, it's located 32 kilometers (17.5 nautical miles) off Sapelo Island, Georgia.

Sanctuary boundaries protect 17 square miles of open ocean. Sandstone outcroppings and ledges up to ten feet in height separate the sandy, flat-bottomed troughs in a reef that combines temperate and tropical qualities. The rocky platform, some 60 to 70 feet below the Atlantic Ocean's surface, is wreathed in a carpet of attached organisms and is known locally as a "live bottom habitat." This flourishing ecosystem provides not only vertical relief, but also a solid base for the abundant invertebrates to attach to and grow upon. Grouper, black sea bass, mackerel, and angelfish and a host of other fish are attracted by the reef.

Like the national parks, marine areas identified for their biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural legacy could now receive protection through the National Marine Sanctuary Program. The program, administered by NOAA, was created in Title III of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972.

Three decades later, the national marine sanctuaries are found in the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and off the coast of American Samoa. They include breeding and feeding grounds of whales, sea lions,

sharks, and sea turtles; significant coral reefs and kelp forest habitats; and the remains of the U.S. Monitor, a Civil War ironclad sunk off the coast of North Carolina.

Today thirteen national marine sanctuaries protect more than 18,000 square miles of ocean and coasts. For more information about the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary visit <http://www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov>. Information on the other national marine sanctuaries is also available at the NOAA homepage.

NOAA's Ocean Service (NOS) manages Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, and is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
NOAA R02-404
March 15, 2002**

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NOAA MOVES TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTIONS FOR NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Ocean Agency Unveils Four Actions to Protect Corals, Designate Reserve as National Marine Sanctuary

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is announcing today four interrelated actions to protect marine life and the pristine condition of the ecosystem of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. The agency's aim is to maintain strong protections for the nation's largest coral reef area and begin the process for designating the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (Reserve) as a National Marine Sanctuary.

"The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, which contain approximately 70

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percent of the nation's coral reefs, will be protected under this comprehensive proposal," said retired Navy VADM Conrad Lautenbacher, Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere. "It's a great opportunity to safeguard this vibrant coral reef ecosystem for long-term environmental and economic benefits."

Designating the Reserve as a National Marine Sanctuary would enable comprehensive and coordinated management of the area. The Reserve would be the nation's 14th National Marine Sanctuary, becoming part of a system of sanctuaries around the country.

"The National Marine Sanctuaries are our nation's best vehicles for marine protection, in terms of ecosystem management, research, education and enforcement," said Robert Smith, NOAA's Reserve Coordinator for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Reserve. "Public input is critical to planning for the future of this remote and fragile marine wilderness. From the outset, the public will be participants in considering how best to conserve biological, historical and cultural resources of global significance for future generations."

The first set of actions is aimed at providing long term management of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands marine resources. They include:

- Initiating the process for designating the Reserve as a National Marine Sanctuary
- Issuing the draft Reserve Operations Plan for public comment

The sanctuary proposal begins with a public scoping process that solicits information and comments from the public on the range and significance of issues related to the designation and management of the proposed sanctuary. The results of this scoping process will assist NOAA in drafting a management plan and an environmental impact statement. Scoping will be held for 60 days with public meetings beginning in April.

Under the Sanctuaries Act, the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council will have an opportunity to develop draft fishery regulations as part of the sanctuary designation process.

The executive order creating the Reserve calls for a Reserve Operation Plan, which provides a guide for management of the Reserve during the sanctuary designation process. The draft plan addresses priority issues such as marine debris, cultural resources

and enforcement. The draft Reserve Operations Plan is now available for public review and comment for sixty days. The final plan is expected shortly thereafter.

Other measures include:

- Release of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's Coral Reef Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan (CREFMP) for public comment
- Release of a final rule concerning the harvest of precious corals

The Coral Reef Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan seeks to foster sustainable use of coral reef ecosystem resources in an ecologically and culturally sensitive manner; minimize adverse human impacts on coral reef ecosystems through establishment of marine protected areas; and provide for sustainable participation by fishing communities in the ecosystem fisheries. It was approved by the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council in June 2001, and is the first ecosystem-based fishery management plan to be developed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Its release for public comment is the third step in developing a broad ecosystem-based management approach to the marine assets of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

Some provisions of the CREFMP appear to be in conflict with the management regime for the Reserve and may require further action. The public has until 5 p.m. on May 18, 2002, to comment on the proposed plan to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries).

The fourth part of the ecosystem-based strategy is a series of six management measures developed by the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council that update the council's regulations implementing the Fishery Management Plan for Precious Corals. The measures set gear restrictions, size limits and definitions governing the harvest of precious- coral resources. Additionally, as required by the management regime for the Reserve, the harvesting of precious coral from the Reserve will be prohibited. The regulations will become effective April 17, 2002.

"Currently, there is very little harvesting under way in this pristine part of our marine environment," said Charles Karnella, director of the NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Area Office. "These management

measures will help keep this area the valuable resource it is today."

Comments on the proposed sanctuary designation and draft Reserve Operations Plan may be submitted to NOAA at any of the public scoping meetings, or in writing to the following address:

Aulani Wilhelm, 6700 Kalaniana'ole Highway, #215, Honolulu, Hawaii 96825; or via email at nwhi@noaa.gov.

Written comments on the proposed Coral Reef Ecosystems Fishery Management Plan may be sent to:

Dr. Charles Karnella, Administrator; Pacific Islands Office, NOAA Fisheries; 1161 Kapiolani Blvd. Suite 110; Honolulu, HI 96815.

NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources through scientific research, management, enforcement, and conservation of our marine mammals and other protected marine species and their habitat. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries, please visit <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOS balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards. To learn more about NOS, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOAA 02-403
FEBRUARY 19, 2002

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NEW NOAA RESEARCH VESSEL NAMED AFTER SEPT. 11 VICTIM

NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Holds Dedication Ceremony

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary dedicated their new research vessel R/V Joe Ferguson in a ceremony today at the University of Georgia's Marine Education Center and Aquarium dock on Skidaway Island, Ga. National Geographic Society Expeditions Leader Joe Ferguson perished along with four students, their teachers and National Geographic Society staff on the aircraft that struck the Pentagon on Sept. 11.

"The new vessel will greatly improve our research capabilities and allow the staff to spend more time on the water protecting sanctuary resources," said Dan Basta, director of NOAA's National Ocean

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Service's National Marine Sanctuary Program. "Naming the vessel in Joe's honor is our small gesture to remember those that were lost on Sept. 11."

A former Coast Guard patrol boat converted for scientific and educational programs, the R/V Joe Ferguson will be the primary research vessel for NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. With a cruising speed of 26 knots, the vessel will be used to support patrols of the sanctuary, maintenance of buoys, reef fish and habitat assessments, water quality monitoring, as well as assist local scientists in individual projects. The vessel will soon be re-powered with new engines and made ready for full use in the Spring.

Joe Ferguson, director of the National Geographic Society Education and Outreach Program and Ann Judge, director of the Society's travel office, were accompanying the three teacher-student pairs on an educational trip to the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary near Santa Barbara, Calif., as part of a society-funded marine research project known as Sustainable Seas Expeditions. The Sustainable Seas Expeditions is a five-year project of underwater exploration and discovery, with special emphasis on the nation's thirteen national marine sanctuaries. In 1999, the expedition spent two weeks exploring NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

The students and their teachers, all from Washington D.C., had been selected to participate in one of the exploration education events. Teacher James Debeuneure and student Rodney Dickens were representing Ketcham Elementary School; teacher Sarah Clark and student Asia Cottom were from Backus Middle School; and teacher Hilda Taylor and student Bernard Brown were from Leckie Elementary School. All the students were 11-year-old sixth graders.

"The staff at Gray's Reef felt it was important to name the vessel in Joe's honor in recognition of all he has done to educate students about the marine environment and America's ocean treasures," said Reed Bohne, manager of NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.

NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, located 17 nautical miles off the Georgia coast, was designated in 1981 to focus education, science, and conservation efforts within an area containing one of the largest sandstone reefs in the southeastern United States. Due to seasonal mixing of warm tropical waters from the south and cold, nutrient rich waters from the north, Gray's Reef is a biological hot spot containing a rich diversity of marine life.

NOAA's National Ocean Service manages Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. NOAA Ocean Service is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving, and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean Service balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats and mitigating coastal hazards.

For more information on NOAA's Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary and the Sustainable Seas Expeditions, please visit the Sanctuary Program's Web site at - <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/>.

For more information on the National Geographic Society, please visit &endash; <http://www.nationalgeographic.com>.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 2, 2002

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SPECIAL SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL WILL MEET TO EXAMINE CONCERNS OVER DOLPHIN & WHALE STRANDING RESPONSE

The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council will meet in a special workshop Thursday, January 17th, 2001 to address concerns about dolphin and whale strandings in the Keys. The public is encouraged to attend the workshop, scheduled for 1 p.m. to 9:30 p. m. at the Marathon Garden Club, 5270 Overseas Highway, Gulfside.

"Our Sanctuary Advisory Council has proven that it can provide a neutral forum for forging solutions on tough issues such as sponging and lobster mini-season," said Sanctuary Superintendent Billy Causey. "We are asking them to look at the facts and assure the community that our local stranding network is doing everything possible to give stranded dolphins and whales the best possible chance of survival."

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has primary responsibility for protecting dolphins and whales under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). The Sanctuary also has a responsibility to protect dolphins and has stepped forward to assist its sister agency in responding to concerns that have been raised about

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stranding response in the Keys.

The MMPA outlines procedures for stranding response and gives NMFS responsibility for overseeing regional response networks. The Florida Keys are part of the Southeast Regional Marine Mammal Stranding Network. Four organizations hold letters of agreement with NMFS to respond to strandings in the Florida Keys. Three are based in the Florida Keys and one is based in Miami with local Keys volunteers.

At the meeting, a series of panels will present information on the legal, scientific, and field response aspects of marine mammal strandings. Sanctuary Advisory Council members will have an opportunity to ask questions of presenters after each panel.

From 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., the Sanctuary Advisory Council will hear public comment related to dolphin and whale stranding response. After a working dinner, the SAC will reconvene at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the public comments, discuss any valid concerns regarding stranding response in the Keys, and if necessary, make recommendations for improvement.

A professional facilitator will lead the meeting, and all participants will be required to abide by a code of conduct announced at the start of the meeting. The meeting will not address strandings of other marine mammals, such as manatees or dolphin and whale topics other than strandings.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program, established in 1972 by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, is administered by NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS) and protects a network of 13 special marine and freshwater areas.

For a complete agenda and fact sheets on dolphin and whale strandings, visit the Sanctuary's web site at <http://www.fknms.nos.noaa.gov> or call (305) 743-2437.

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