



NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center

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**NOAA RECOGNIZES MICHAEL O'REILLY
AS 2005 ENVIRONMENTAL HERO**

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Dartmouth, MA – The Commerce Department’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will present its 2005 Environmental Hero Award to Michael O’Reilly, Dartmouth Environmental Affairs Coordinator, on June 2.

The award will be presented at 10:30 AM in the John Marland Meeting Room, Third Floor, Dartmouth Town Hall. Speakers at the event will include Timothy Keeney, NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, U.S. Congressman Barney Frank (invited), State Representative John Quinn, and officials from the Dartmouth Conservation Commission and Select Board.

During his 16 years of service, the coastal resources of the Town of Dartmouth and greater Buzzards Bay have benefited from O’Reilly’s knowledge and commitment. As the town’s Environmental Affairs Coordinator, O’Reilly has worked closely with NOAA and other agencies and non-governmental organizations to restore, enhance and protect salt marshes, fish runs, and other environmentally sensitive features in the area. O’Reilly lives in Portsmouth, R.I.

“NOAA and the nation are fortunate to have dedicated people such as Mr. O’Reilly who volunteer so much of their time,” said retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “He sets

a perfect example for others to follow in their communities. America needs more environmental heroes like Michael O'Reilly.”

Similar Environmental Hero awards were presented to 31 other individuals and three organizations this year from across the United States and around the world. The award honors NOAA volunteers for their “tireless efforts to preserve and protect our nation's environment.”

Established in 1996 to commemorate the 26th anniversary of Earth Day, the Environmental Hero award is presented to individuals and organizations that volunteer their time and energy to help NOAA carry out its mission.

“On behalf of the 12,500 men and women working for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, I am pleased to present you with this 2005 Environmental Hero Award,” Lautenbacher wrote in a letter to Michael O'Reilly. “Your dedicated efforts and outstanding accomplishments greatly benefit the environment and make our nation a better place for all Americans.”

Visit the NOAA Earth Day Web site at <http://www.noaa.gov/earthday> to read more about this year's award winners.

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NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to providing and preserving the nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management, and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

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 the nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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