



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**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.

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



**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.

[\(top\)](#)

Revised July 25, 2002 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease2001.html>



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Releases



[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.

[PRESS  
RELEASES  
2004](#)

[PRESS  
RELEASES  
2003](#)

[PRESS  
RELEASES  
2002](#)

[PRESS  
RELEASES  
2001](#)

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



Revised January 07, 2005 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases.html>



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



NOAA 01-R431  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DECEMBER 1, 2001

**CONTACT:** Cheva Heck  
(305) 292-0311  
(305) 304-0179

## NOAA Receives \$15,000 Settlement in Illegal Lobster "Condo" Case

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.

"The \$15,000 settlement in this case sends a strong message that we will no longer tolerate dumping trash into the ocean for any purpose," said Bill Causey, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary superintendent. "Our already stressed marine environment can't support a practice that results in thousands of illegal, unstable structures on the sea floor, destroying natural habitat and changing the normal life cycles of spiny lobster, the basis of the most economically important fishery in the Florida Keys."

On June 13, 2001, a Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

officer apprehended Alex R. Canalejo and Randall B. Sterling, both of Key West, Fla., dumping PVC pipes and other material into sanctuary waters northwest of Key West. NOAA attorneys had sought \$75,000 in civil penalties against the two for placing 25 structures.

In the settlement, Canalejo and Sterling admit to placing nine of the twenty-five structures charged. They paid \$11,250 at the time of the settlement and will pay the balance of the \$15,000 in monthly installments over two years. In addition, the two will each serve five years probation and agree not to participate in commercial lobster fishing in any manner during that time.

If either of the two fails to make a payment, engages in commercial lobstering or violates any federal marine resource law or regulation enforced by NOAA during the probation period, the remainder of the \$75,000 civil penalty originally sought in the case will come due.

NOAA obtained a \$2,000 civil penalty in a similar case in October 2001 and other cases are pending. In the summer of 2001, NOAA launched a project to document and remove these illegal structures, using settlement money from vessel groundings to restore natural habitat. Materials removed from nearly 100 sites include 55-gallon drums, bathtubs, car parts, boat hulls, concrete slabs and fuel tanks, among others.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (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. Visit [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov) to learn more.

NOAA's National Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program. For more information about the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit: <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov>.

Revised December 19, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease12\\_01\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease12_01_01.html)





Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 4, 2001**

**CONTACT:** Matthew Stout  
301-713-3125, ext. 173

## **National Marine Sanctuary Program Announces**

### **Appointment of new Deputy Director**

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.

"Michael offers not only valuable expertise but also a strong commitment to ocean conservation that is needed in this time of rapid growth within the national marine sanctuary system," said NMSP Director Daniel J. Basta. "He has provided valuable assistance to the sanctuaries in areas of particular concern to us including fiber optic cable installations in sanctuary waters, shark feeding, and the development of the Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve operations plan."

Mr. Weiss began his career in NOAA in 1993. Within that time he has

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



received numerous awards and honors for his work with the NMSP on a wide variety of issues. In 2000, he represented the Agency on the President's Council on Environmental Quality. As Deputy Director of the National Marine Sanctuary Program, Mr. Weiss will assist the director in providing oversight and guidance for organizational development and operation of the nation's 13 marine sanctuaries.

NOAA's National Ocean Service manages the National Marine Sanctuary Program. For more information about the National Marine Sanctuary Program, please visit: <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov>.

-30-

-

---

Revised November 08, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease11\\_04\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease11_04_01.html)



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 1, 2001**

**Contact:** Stephanie Balian  
(713) 301-3066

## JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW UNDERWAY FOR THREE CALIFORNIA NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES

### *Series of Scoping Meetings Slated as Part of Public Process*

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.

Periodic management-plan review is required by Congress for all of the 13 national marine sanctuaries to ensure that sanctuaries continue to best conserve, protect and enhance their nationally significant living and cultural resources. The joint review will look at optimum coordination of the management programs at all three sanctuaries. The process, which is expected to take several months, involves the public throughout, with a number of public meetings, hearings and comment periods.

"Active and informed public participation is the critical element of sanctuary management," said Daniel J. Basta, director of NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program. "The National Marine Sanctuary

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



Program incorporates the public as a key resource-management partner and values their input in helping shape and manage marine sanctuaries."

Sanctuary staff will hold a series of public scoping meetings in communities along California's north and central coasts, beginning in Santa Cruz Nov. 28, with the final meeting taking place in San Jose Jan. 17, 2002. Scoping meetings provide an opportunity for the public to make direct comments on issues related to the region and management of the sanctuary's natural and cultural resources as well as overall sanctuary administration. The public comment period will remain open until Jan. 31, 2002. The complete list of scoping meeting times and locations will be available online.

The three sanctuaries, part of the National Marine Sanctuary System, are located adjacent to one another along the shores of north and central California and share many of the same resources and issues. Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 526 square miles of open ocean off Point Reyes, north of San Francisco. Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, at 1,255 square miles, is located off the coast west of the San Francisco Bay area. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary stretches along 276 miles of the central coast and encompasses 5,328 square miles of coastal and ocean waters.

The joint management plan review process begins with the release of State of the Sanctuary reports that provide information about each sanctuary, its significant accomplishments to date and the current resource management issues of concern. The three reports are available online at <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan> or at any of the three sanctuary offices.

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. 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.

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.

---

Revised November 06, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease11\\_01\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease11_01_01.html)



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 30, 2001**

**CONTACT:** Matt Stout  
(301) 713-3125

## **COMMERCE DEPARTMENT AWARDS GOLD MEDAL IN HEROISM TO LCDR MARK PICKETT**

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."

LCDR Pickett received the Gold Medal Award at the 53rd Annual Department of Commerce Awards Program held recently in Washington, DC. The citation states that, after the capsizing, "At significant personal risk, he returned to the icy waters to save the lives of his crew, USGS chief scientist Dr. Guy R. Cochran and USGS electronics/special projects technician Michael E. Boyle.

The *R/V Ballena* was engaged in routine sidescan sonar surveys near the coast when a rogue wave capsized the vessel, briefly trapping the men inside. After deployment and subsequent abandonment of a life raft, LCDR Pickett swam ashore and then returned to bring in both men, saving their lives."

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



LCDR Pickett, a NOAA Corps officer for 18 years, resides in Monterey and is an oceanographer at NOAA's Pacific Fisheries Environmental Laboratory. Donald L. Evans, Secretary of Commerce, grants the Gold Medal--the Department's highest honorary award--for extraordinary achievements in support of the Department's critical objectives. These achievements have a significant beneficial effect on the nation, and sometimes the world.

-30-

---

Revised December 21, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease10\\_30\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease10_30_01.html)





Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 19, 2001**

**CONTACT:** Kellie Cheung  
(808) 587-0365

## **OCEAN USERS WORKSHOPS FOCUS ON SAFE WHALE-WATCHING**

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.

Commercial and recreational boaters and marine business operators are encouraged to attend to learn about the rules that may affect their activities during the whale season.

Humpback whales became a severely depleted species as a result of commercial whaling during the last century. Many laws and policies place restrictions on human interaction with humpbacks. In order to better promote and monitor the species' recovery, portions of waters surrounding the main Hawaiian Islands were established as the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary in 1997.

The workshops are presented by the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, the National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Enforcement, the National Marine Fisheries Service Pacific Islands Area Office of Protected Species Program and the State of Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES





To register, please contact the Sanctuary offices at the numbers provided below. Workshops are scheduled for Maui, O`ahu, Kaua`i and the Big Island (see below for schedule). All sessions are free, but registration is mandatory. Attendees will receive a 2001 Ocean Users Handbook and certificate.

### **MAUI**

Wednesday, Nov. 7th, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Lahaina Intermediate School Cafeteria (Lahaina.)  
Registration: (808) 879-2818

### **O`AHU**

Thursday, Nov. 8th, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Pu`uhale Elementary School Cafetorium (Honolulu)  
Registration: (808) 397-2651

### **KAUA`I**

Tuesday, Nov. 13th, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Lihu`e Public Library Conference Room (Lihu`e)  
Registration: (808) 246-2860

### **BIG ISLAND OF HAWAII**

Thursday, Nov. 15th, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Natural Energy Lab (NELHA) Conference Room (Kona)  
Registration: (800) 831-4888

Revised November 06, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease10\\_%2019\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressrelease10_%2019_01.html)



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 1, 2001**

CONTACT: Carol Meyers  
(202) 265-0188

Jana Goldman  
(301) 713-2483

## **NOAA CELEBRATES OCEAN EXPLORATION MISSIONS; HONORS SENATOR HOLLINGS DURING CHARLESTON WATERFRONT EVENT**

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.

The two ocean exploration missions &endash; "Deep East" and "Islands in the Stream" &endash; studied deep sea corals, methane hydrates (a potential source of energy), coral reefs, and other marine habitats. Using NOAA and other research ships from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, the missions covered an area from Maine to Belize.

"The same bold spirit and drive for discovery and adventure that drove our nation to unfold the mysteries of space are playing out in this

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



mission to uncover the mysteries off of our shores," said U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Sam Bodman. "Thanks to the vision and hard work of NOAA's ocean exploration team, we stand ready to reap the numerous benefits of this virtually untapped resource - our nation's ocean waters."

"Ocean exploration opens up a vast array of possibilities for scientific discovery and advancement," said NOAA Acting Administrator Scott Gudes. "These two missions and others conducted this year have given us a taste for this new uncharted world, and we're eager to build on their promise."

Gudes noted that Ocean Exploration took the work of many people to make it happen, but he especially thanked Senator Hollings. "Senator Hollings is a friend of the ocean and a strong supporter of ocean exploration. His support has been critical in this important first step in ocean exploration," Gudes said.

"Nothing is more appropriate than having NOAA's 'Ocean Exploration Voyages' come to Charleston, a city rich in maritime history and connections with the sea," Senator Ernest F. Hollings said. "The scientists and educators involved in these expeditions are helping to revive a tradition of ocean exploration that we remember from the days of Jacques Cousteau."

"They will surely have exciting stories to tell and experiences to share about the Atlantic coast, including research on the mysterious South Atlantic Bight -- the cradle of Atlantic marine life and the site of yet unexplored marine resources," Hollings said. "I am particularly pleased that NOAA's scientists have been working side by side with South Carolina's scientists and managers, and that they will be sharing their results directly with our teachers and students in South Carolina. I sincerely hope the experience will inspire a passion for ocean exploration, marine science, and coastal conservation that will last for years to come."

Six major expeditions were held this summer covering all of the contiguous U.S. oceanic coastline, from the Lewis and Clark Legacy in the Pacific Northwest, to Islands in the Stream in the Gulf of Mexico, to Deep East from Maine to Georgia. Missions included preserving the U. S. Civil War vessel Monitor, surveying an unexplored underwater canyon, and installing an electronic listening device - a hydrophone - off of the California coast to listen to the sounds of the sea, from whales to ships to earthquakes.

The Office of Ocean Exploration is the result of a report issued by a multidisciplinary panel of experts, which was convened to provide a national plan for ocean exploration. In October 2000, the panel released "Discovering Earth's Final Frontier: A U.S. Strategy for Ocean Exploration." From this document, the Ocean Exploration Initiative was born.

"The time was right for such an effort," said Capt. Craig McLean, director of NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration. "Over the past few decades, we have significantly increased our understanding of the oceans. Advances in ocean exploration technology have revolutionized the way we explore them. We are increasingly aware of our dependence on the oceans for healthy fisheries, clean habitats, and the potential to discover new medicines and answer questions about our environment. Yet, 95 percent of the ocean remains unexplored."

Ocean exploration captures the imagination, which is what this year's missions did for the many people of all ages who shared the excitement and the awe as they traveled along electronically with the explorers. Armchair explorers can travel along without getting wet via the office's website at <http://www.oceanexplorer.noaa.gov>.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (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>.

To read the ocean panel report, visit: [http://oceanpanel.nos.noaa.gov/panel\\_report/ocean\\_panel\\_report.html](http://oceanpanel.nos.noaa.gov/panel_report/ocean_panel_report.html).

[\(top\)](#)

---

Revised November 06, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases10\\_01\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases10_01_01.html)



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**September 25, 2001**

**CONTACT:** Jen Jolly  
(831) 420-1630

Lisa McGinnis, City of Santa Cruz  
(831) 420-5277

## **MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY CELEBRATES 9th ANNIVERSARY AT THE SANTA CRUZ SHARK FESTIVAL**

The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary celebrates their 9th anniversary at the annual Santa Cruz Shark Festival on Sunday, September 30, 2001. The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary extends from Marin County to San Luis Obispo County, encompassing 275 miles of shoreline and 5,322 square miles of ocean. It is home to numerous marine mammals, seabirds, fish, invertebrates, and algae, in a remarkably productive coastal environment. The sanctuary is one of 13 administered by the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

A formal anniversary ceremony with speeches from Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent William J. Douros, U.S. Representative Sam Farr (D-CA), California State Assemblyman Fred Keeley, Santa Cruz Mayor Tim Fitzmaurice will take place at the Wharf

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



Stage from 1 to 1:30 p.m. The celebration will also feature puppet shows, a treasure hunt for kids, hands-on marine education and activity booths and musical entertainment.

The festival will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; the sanctuary anniversary ceremony will take place 1:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Information on the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary may be found at <http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov>.

-30-

---

Revised November 06, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases9\\_25\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases9_25_01.html)





Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**NOAA 01-R421  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 30, 2001**

**CONTACT:** Carol Meyers  
(202) 265-0188

Stephanie Balian  
(301) 713-3066

## **NOAA EXPLORES DEEP SEA AREAS OF GULF STREAM AND SOUTH ATLANTIC**

*Submersibles to be used off Florida and the Carolinas*

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.

NOAA scientists are a part of an expedition that explores our country's national marine sanctuaries and other environmentally significant areas &mdash; or islands &mdash; in the Gulf Stream from Belize to North Carolina. The expedition is known as Islands in the Stream - South Atlantic Bight (IIS-SAB).

NOAA is collaborating with Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution and will use their submersibles, the Clelia and the Johnson Sea-Link, to explore areas from Florida to North Carolina. The mission starts in

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



Ft. Pierce, Fla., on August 29 and culminates October 1 with Ocean Exploration Day in Charleston, S.C.

"NOAA is a leader in ocean exploration. It is our obligation to future generations and a nod to spirited adventurers who preceded us," said Scott Gudes, NOAA's acting administrator. "Untold discoveries may await us. Cures for life-threatening diseases may await us. And keys to a better understanding of the marine and ocean environment await us."

According to Gudes, five specific areas along the Gulf Stream will be explored:

1. The Oculina Reserve off Cape Canaveral, Fla., was once densely covered with ivory tree coral (*Oculina varicosa*). Fishing activities prior to 1994 destroyed two-thirds of the bank. The submersible Clelia and an unmanned Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) will be used to survey and map the areas and observe artificial reef restoration experiments. Images will be obtained to show the comparison between protected and unprotected habitats.
2. Despite being a popular commercial fishing area, little is known about the deep coral banks and rocky outcrops off Georgia known as the Savannah Scarp. Mission scientists will conduct the first submersible dives ever in this area.
3. The area called the Charleston Bump, which contains one of the most popular fishing areas on the Atlantic coast, could be an especially important biological area. The data collected during this mission will help better understand the area.
4. Three distinct and largely unexplored habitats off coastal North Carolina will be explored, including Cape Fear Terrace, an area of deep water *Lophelia* (a coral species) and a system of submerged canyon heads called The Point off Cape Hatteras.
5. Participants will survey the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary and the USS Monitor shipwreck following this summer's engine recovery, as NOAA plans for next year's target: the gun turret. They will prepare an updated site map and conduct flora and fauna inventories.

"Our goal is to better understand the ecological and oceanographic connection between the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean off the southeastern states," said George Sedberry, mission coordinator for the Savannah Scarp leg.

The IIS-SAB mission participants include NOAA's National Ocean Service, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, the Southeast Fisheries Science Center of NOAA Fisheries, NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration, NOAA's National Undersea Research Center at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, NASA, U.S. Geological Survey and Florida State University.

For more information and to follow this history-making expedition, log on at <http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov>.

- 30 -

[\(top\)](#)

---

Revised November 06, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases8\\_30\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases8_30_01.html)



Press Room

Calendar

Sanctuary Watch

# Press Release



**NOAA 01-R418  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JULY 10, 2001**

**CONTACT:** Cheva Heck  
(305) 292-0311

Stephanie Balian  
(301) 713-3066

## **NOAA RECEIVES INITIAL GREEN LIGHT TO EXTEND INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION TO THE FLORIDA KEYS**

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. The measure is intended to reduce threats posed by international shipping activity to coral reefs, seagrass meadows and mangrove forests.

On behalf of NOAA and the State of Florida, the United States submitted a proposal to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to designate the marine area around the Florida Keys as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA). The coral reef ecosystem of the Keys would be the third area in the world selected for this designation, joining Australia's Great Barrier Reef and Sabana-Camaguey Archipelago in Cuba. The PSSA would stretch from Biscayne National Park to the Tortugas encompassing all of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. The IMO is a Specialized Agency of the United Nations that is responsible for issues relating to international shipping.

Sanctuary News

NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES



"Designating the waters around the Florida Keys as a Particularly Sensitive Area brings international recognition of the ecological significance of this region," said Margaret Davidson, Acting Director of NOAA's Ocean Service. "PSSA status will help educate the international shipping community about the sensitivity of coral reef resources to international shipping activities and increase compliance with domestic measures already in place to protect the area."

The waters around the Florida Keys and the Tortugas are one of the most heavily trafficked shipping areas in the world. An estimated forty percent of the world's commerce passes within a day and a half sailing time of Key West. Ships can cause damage to the coral reef ecosystem through anchoring, groundings, collisions, and accidental and operational discharges of harmful substances.

The IMO's Subcommittee on Safety of Navigation approved two measures associated with the PSSA to help protect coral reefs at the international level. The measures include a prohibition against ships anchoring in the North and South areas of the newly-designated Tortugas Ecological Reserve and an area located outside the reserve in the Tortugas Bank.

The second measure is an amendment to the existing Areas To Be Avoided (ATBA) that created buffer areas to keep ships greater than 50 meters in length from the reef tract. An ATBA is an area that all ships or certain classes of ships should avoid because navigation is particularly hazardous or it is exceptionally important to avoid casualties within the area. The amendment will create safer shipping tracts along the ATBA to reduce the potential for collisions or groundings that would threaten the coral reef from spills of oil, fuel and other contaminants.

The approval of these protective measures and PSSA proposal by the Subcommittee on Safety of Navigation is the first step forward in this international process. Final designation of the PSSA and adoption of the associated protective measures will be considered by the IMO when it meets in November 2002.

For more information on NOS, please visit <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>

-30-

[\(top\)](#)

---

Revised November 06, 2001 by [Sanctuaries Web Group](#)

[National Ocean Service](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#) | [NOAA Library](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Off-site Link Disclaimer](#) | [http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases7\\_10\\_01.html](http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/news/pressreleases/pressreleases7_10_01.html)