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**RESEARCHERS TO BROADCAST LIVE FROM SITE OF
HISTORIC USS *MONITOR* WRECK**

A team of researchers are conducting a major mapping expedition this week at the *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary, site of one of the 19th century's greatest naval technological innovations, the Civil War ironclad USS *Monitor*. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Sanctuary Program and the Institute for Exploration (IFE) will offer the public a real-time view of the *Monitor* as researchers describe the expedition on July 19 at 2:00 p.m. EST.

An interactive program from the sanctuary, located 16 miles off North Carolina's Cape Hatteras, will be broadcast live from the University of Rhode Island research vessel *Endeavor*. The public can view the ship-to-shore broadcasts through the Internet at www.oceanslive.org or at Nauticus, The National Maritime Center in Norfolk, Va.

"We are excited that the technology now exists to allow the public to join scientists as they study this important part of America's history," said *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent David Alberg.

During the broadcasts, experts from NOAA and IFE will provide commentary about the history and crew of the USS *Monitor*, technology being used to collect video and still imagery of the site, and current conservation efforts on artifacts recovered such as the *Monitor*'s rotating gun turret that is underway at The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va.

The expedition will collect high-resolution digital still and video imagery that will be used to generate a high quality photo mosaic of the entire wreck site. A photo mosaic is created by combining several or more images into one complete image. Photo mosaics will provide scientists with an accurate picture of the entire wreck site and its surroundings.

Scientists will use the University of Rhode Island's research vessel *Endeavor* as the platform and IFE's robotic vehicle systems *Argus* and *Little Hercules* as the primary tools for data collection during the expedition. These are the same two robotic vehicles used during Robert Ballard's return to the *Titanic* in 2004.

Two 15-minute broadcasts are planned for 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on July 17 and 18. A longer program including an interactive live question and answer period is planned for July 19 at 2:00 p.m. Broadcast times are dependent on weather and ocean conditions.

Scientists and crew from the expedition will then be in port at Nauticus, The National Maritime Center in Norfolk, Va. on July 21. The public is invited to view the research vessel, meet the crew, and see some of the preliminary data collected from 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

For further information on the expedition, please visit the National Marine Sanctuary Program Web site or contact Krista Trono, communications coordinator with the *Monitor* National Marine Sanctuary at (757) 591-7328.

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1975 to protect the wreck of the famed Civil War ironclad, USS *Monitor*, which sank during a storm 16 miles off Hatteras, N.C. in 1862. The sanctuary is managed by NOAA.

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, the sanctuary program manages 13 national marine sanctuaries and one marine national monument that together encompass more than 150,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

In 2007 NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, celebrates 200 years of science and service to the nation. Starting with the establishment of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA. The agency is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and more than 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

On the Internet:

NOAA - <http://www.noaa.gov>

National Marine Sanctuary Program - <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

Monitor National Marine Sanctuary – <http://monitor.noaa.gov>

Follow the Expedition- <http://www.oceanslive.org>