

# SANCTUARY WATCH

## National Marine Sanctuaries Funding for 2002 Unprecedented

In 2002, the National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) greets its 30<sup>th</sup> year of ocean conservation with an unprecedented budget of \$48.9 million.

“The 30th anniversary represents a major milestone in the evolution of the nation’s Marine Sanctuary System,” said NMSP Director Daniel J. Basta. “It denotes the end of the beginning of demonstrating the value to all Americans of these marine conservation management regimes. The next decade will be critical as the system matures fully to meet the increasing challenges of the coming century.”

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Ocean Service has managed National Marine Sanctuaries since passage of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act in 1972. Unlike the National Park Service, the National Marine Sanctuaries Program has only recently received national attention for its work in preserving and protecting the current system of 13 sanctuaries in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico and Lake Huron.

Over the years, studies have shown that while the National Park Service spent \$16,000 per square mile of land it protected, in comparison the sanctuary system funding allowed only \$2,500 per square mile. In 1992, Congressional funding for the network of national marine sanctuaries was a mere \$5 million. By the time of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the National Marine Sanctuary protected 12 sanctuaries that totaled 18,170 square

*(cont'd pg. 4)*

## Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans & Atmosphere Named

Navy Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher Jr., U.S. Navy (Ret.) was recently appointed as the Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the nation’s top science agency for oceans and the atmosphere.

“For thousands of years, humans have gazed out across the ocean and pondered what lay beyond the horizon. What we recognize today is that what lies below that horizon is just as important as what lies beyond it,” said Under Secretary Lautenbacher, underscoring a message he delivered on Earth Day 2001. “What we don’t know about the oceans can have a profound impact on all of our lives.”

A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Vice Admiral Lautenbacher has served in a broad range of command, operational, and staff billets and holds a Master’s and Doctorate Degree in applied mathematics from Harvard University. Vice Admiral Lautenbacher was most recently the president of the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education, a Washington, D.C., based association of 66 U.S. oceanographic research institutions, universities, laboratories, and aquaria.



### INSIDE.....

- Research Coordinators Strategize New Year 2
- Sanctuaries Greet New Deputy Director 2
- Video Telepresence Brings New Ocean View 2
- Marine Ecosystem Symposium Report 2
- News Splash 3
- Calendar 4



NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES™

1972 ★ 2002

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## Second Annual Research Coordinators Meeting Planned for 2002

For the past two years, the National Marine Sanctuary Program has successfully collaborated with researchers from NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) in conducting studies in the sanctuaries.

On January 29-February 1, the Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research (CCEHBR), one of five centers comprising NCCOS, will host the second annual National Marine Sanctuary Program research coordinators meeting in Charleston, South Carolina. The CCEHBR, will open their facilities at Fort Johnson to allow greater interaction between sanctuary research coordinators and CCEHBR researchers. During the meeting sanctuary research coordinators can learn about the capabilities of CCEHBR and share the scientific information needs of their sites with NCCOS researchers. CCEHBR's Dr. Geoff Scott will lead a short course on water quality monitoring during the meeting.

Other sanctuary projects to be addressed during the meeting include discussion of a science assessment conducted following the 2001 research coordinators meeting, system-wide monitoring, and mission planning.

The assessment was designed to evaluate how current sanctuary science is addressing management information needs today. The assessment will also be used to guide research coordinators and sanctuary partners in science planning.

—Paula Souik

## New Deputy Director Named

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

## Sanctuary Underwater Worlds Now Available through Video Telepresence

Live from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to students on the East Coast more than 2000 miles away—innovative technologies that allow eager minds to explore the ocean floor from the comfort of their classrooms.

This November at a meeting at the Mystic Aquarium in Mystic, Connecticut, National Marine Sanctuary Program Director Daniel J. Basta joined oceanographer and founder of the Institute for Ocean Exploration Bob Ballard at a sneak preview of the latest in ocean education and immersion-based tele-presence technologies.

These live, broadcast-quality images are displayed on a 15-foot screen and produced from a tethered camera that can be driven by an instructor or one of the students.

After exploring the floor of the Pacific Ocean, students become part of a computer generated experience of the Monterey environment and can learn about the different animals and plants of the region.

Next, the students are directed to their personal computer screens to a program that quizzes the students about the environment and asks them to identify different plants and

(cont'd pg. 4)



Bob Ballard and Director Daniel Basta preview the new technology.  
(Photo: Matt Stout)

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 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.



(Photo: Rod E...)

## Florida Keys Marine Sanctuary Gives Ecosystem Report Card

On December 6, 2001, NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary joined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, State of Florida, and others agency partners hosted a symposium, "The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary: An Ecosystem Report Card," for scientists to discuss results from long-term monitoring of coral reefs, seagrasses, and water quality.

During the day long event held in Silver Spring, Maryland, researchers presented findings about ecological effects on deep ocean communities and fish populations within the Sanctuary's 24 fully protected zones.

"The symposium was an overwhelming success. We were able to share the latest results of our monitoring and research program with NOAA managers and a broad-based audience," said Sanctuary Superintendent Billy Causey.

Participants presented a mixed marine report card. The long-term monitoring reports documented declines in live coral over the past five years. Scientists also noted significant large-scale trends in certain nutrients, both increases and a decrease, possibly driven by regional ocean circulation patterns in water quality.

Researchers gave high marks when reporting the effects of fully protected zones on Florida's commercially exploited spiny lobster. Studies show a strong positive response in both body size and abundance in the relatively large ecological reserve off Key West. Some species of commercially caught reef fishes also showed a positive response to full protection, even though it has only been four years since the zoning plan was implemented.

"I think our message was clear. Monitoring the sanctuary's natural resources is critically important to our management objectives." added Causey.

—Brian Keller

**Sanctuary Staff Invited to Contribute to Smithsonian Book**—Brad Barr, Senior Policy Advisor, and Rod Ehler, National Headquarters Staff Economist, are coauthoring a chapter for a Smithsonian Institution Press book, *The Full Value of Parks and Protected Areas: From Economics to the Intangible*.

The book, scheduled for publication in September 2002, will be the first comprehensive look at intangible (i.e., nonmaterial, non-economic) values as they specifically relate to parks and other kinds of protected or special places.

Project editors noted that while the monetary benefits of parks and protected areas are accepted, "the reasons why people care deeply about them usually have little or nothing to do with money."

"The book highlights the social, cultural and spiritual value of sanctuaries and other terrestrial and marine protected areas beyond simply dollars and cents," said Barr.

## Awards

**Gold Medal for Heroism Awarded to Sanctuary Captain**—The U.S. Department of Commerce has awarded its Gold Medal in Heroism to NOAA Corps 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 was on detail to the sanctuary serving as vessel captain of the *Ballena* when the vessel was struck by a rogue wave during routine sidescan sonar surveys of the sanctuary. After a life raft failed to open LCDR Pickett brought both men ashore, saving their lives.

**Sanctuary Senior Policy Advisor Receives Bronze Medal**—Sanctuary Senior Policy Advisor Margo E. Jackson, received a NOAA 2001 Bronze Medal. Jackson, former Deputy Director for NOAA's Office of Coastal Resource Management, worked with other NOAA personnel to recover \$1.4 million in past due payments from a Coastal Energy Impact loan and for restructuring the loan.



NATIONAL MARINE  
SANCTUARIES™

1972 ★ 2002

30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**vision** People value marine sanctuaries as treasured places protected for future generations.

**mission** To serve as the trustee for the nation's system of marine protected areas to conserve, protect, and enhance their biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural legacy.

## February/March Calendar

### Natural events •

In February—peak elephant seal mating season in the Gulf of the Farallones Sanctuary, California. In late February, northern right whales benefit from nutrient rich waters of Gray's Reef Sanctuary during their winter calving period before beginning their northward migration of over 2000 miles to Stellwagen Banks and the Bay of Fundy. In March—scalloped hammerhead and spotted eagle ray schools fill the waters of Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary in the Gulf of Mexico.

**February 20-23** • Twenty-ninth Annual Meeting of the Pacific Seabird Group, Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, Santa Barbara, California. For more information, call 805-884-1773.

**March 9** • Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Symposium, Sanctuary Currents 2002 presents "New Technologies: Revealing the Secrets of the Sea," an annual symposium for researchers, students, and the public. For more information, contact 831-647-4201.

1305 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Tel. 301-713-3125  
Fax 301-713-0404  
<http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov>



## Sanctuary Program Welcomes Increase in Funding *(cont'd from pg. 1)*

nautical miles with a budget of only \$11 million. By 1996, Congress began recognizing that the marine program would need increased funding to achieve its goals, by 1996, and nearly tripled the budget to \$14 million. Three years later, for the first time, Congress allotted a construction appropriation of \$3 million along with its \$23 million operating budget.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program has earmarked some of the funds for the following projects in 2002: Baja to Bering ocean expedition, Management Plan Reviews for sanctuaries in Florida and Hawaii (currently three of the system's California sanctuaries are under review), and vessel acquisition.

## Video Cameras Open up Underwater Sanctuary Worlds *(cont'd from pg. 2)*

animals of the region. The student with the highest score gets the opportunity to run the controls of the live tethered camera.

The Monterey Bay Sanctuary tele-presence is the first step in a project that will link all 13 national marine sanctuaries together into a networked web of live, interactive cameras. The project's ultimate goal is to introduce advanced immersion educational programs under sanctuary waves to visitors on land.

The National Marine Sanctuary Program, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and Bob Ballard's Institute for Exploration are investing in these emerging technologies with the belief that an ocean exploration experience will help communities to better understand the vast and varied marine world and embrace the principles of wildlife protection and conservation.

—Matt Stout

**Sanctuary Watch** is a publication of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Sanctuary Program, Communications and Development Branch.

**Branch Chief:** Matthew Stout  
**Graphic Artist:** Sandra Nitche

**Managing Editor:** Nancy O'Donnell  
**Copy editor:** CDR Scott E. Kuester

The National Marine Sanctuary Program is managed by NOAA's National Ocean Service.