

NOAA deploys new 'smart buoy' off Annapolis

November 11 2009

NOAA deployed the seventh in a series of "smart buoys" to monitor weather conditions and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay today. The buoy, located at the mouth of Severn River near Annapolis, Md., will be used by commercial and recreational boaters to navigate safely and provide data for educators and scientists to monitor the Bay's changing conditions.

Like the other six buoys in the Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System, it will collect weather, oceanographic, and [water quality](#) observations and transmit the data wirelessly to users in near-real time. Observations from the buoys, as well as historical and seasonal information about the Bay and educational resources, are available online at www.buoybay.org.

Bay restoration is a high priority for many area officials and planners, who also recognize the important role scientific data and tracking observations play in restoration efforts.

"This system of high-technology buoys protects lives and property by providing real-time weather, tide, and current information that is also used to improve forecasts and warnings for boaters and neighbors in the Chesapeake Bay. I will keep fighting to put funds in the federal checkbook for critical investments like these that protect boaters, watermen and the Bay," said Sen. Barbara Mikulski, Chairwoman of the Commerce, Justice and Science Committee that funds NOAA.

Deployment of this observational buoy comes just two days after federal agencies made a draft of their strategy to tackle Bay cleanup available for public comment. On Monday, officials released a draft strategy to accelerate Bay restoration in accordance with President Obama's Executive Order on the Chesapeake Bay. These buoys are an essential component of the monitoring and decision-support technologies called for in the strategy.

"I recently introduced legislation that calls for aggressive action to restore the Bay to health and sustainability," said Sen. Benjamin Cardin, a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee. "I particularly want to commend NOAA for its monitoring and observing system in the Bay. This new buoy in Annapolis will be joining other monitors along the Captain John Smith Trail as a way to help Marylanders and all Americans understand and appreciate the unique history, culture and environment of the Bay."

Since 2007, the system's existing buoys have been deployed at the mouths of the Potomac, Patapsco, Susquehanna, and Rappahannock Rivers, and in James River off Jamestown, Va., and in the Elizabeth River off Norfolk.

"The NOAA buoys are an incredible asset for scientists and boaters but also a tool to help educate our next generation of [Chesapeake Bay](#) stewards," said Rep. John Sarbanes. "I am proud to have fought for the resources to deploy and maintain them."

Each of the buoys also marks a site along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.

"We are delighted that the Annapolis buoy will allow modern day-explorers on the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail to learn about the Chesapeake's rich history and its treasured

landscapes," said David O'Neill, President of the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail.

Source: NOAA

Citation: NOAA deploys new 'smart buoy' off Annapolis (2009, November 11) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-11-noaa-deploys-smart-buoy-annapolis.html>

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