



# NEWS FROM NOAA

## NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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### **USHA VARANASI HONORED FOR SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES**

Recognizing 30 years of dedicated service to the nation, the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration named Dr. Usha Varanasi a 2005 recipient of the prestigious NOAA Distinguished Career Award. She will be presented with the Distinguished Career Award March 17 in Washington, D.C.

"The Distinguished Career Award recognizes Dr. Varanasi's work in advancing the goals and mission of NOAA," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "While at NOAA, Dr. Varanasi has ensured that NOAA's science is of the highest quality and is able to meet current and future resource challenges by successfully applying her research to pressing environmental challenges."

Varanasi is science and research director of NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) in Seattle, Wash., a position she has held since 1994, when she became the first woman to lead one of NOAA's nine major field installations for fisheries.

With 30 years of service in NOAA, Varanasi has dedicated much of her career to applying chemistry to critical biological questions, advancing our understanding to inform regulatory, management and public policy decisions. Her research on how marine organisms accumulate and process hydrocarbons - the toxic components of petroleum products - revolutionized the field and led to the development of techniques that could assess seafood safety during the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

The NWFSC conducts research to help conserve and manage living marine resources and their habitats in the Northeast Pacific Ocean. The center's research assists resource managers in making sound decisions that build sustainable fisheries, recover endangered and threatened species, sustain healthy ecosystems and reduce human health risks. The center is particularly active in the Puget Sound region and is currently working to advance scientific efforts that inform policy decisions affecting recovery of salmon and killer whales in Puget Sound.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, 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. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with our federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global Earth observation network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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

NOAA Fisheries: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

Northwest Fisheries Science Center: <http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov>