



Is It Me - Or Have the Tides Been Higher Lately?

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Back in September 2006, we wrote about how time and tide wait for no (wo)man. Here we are, three years later and I know I have heard it several times this season, "did you see the high tide yesterday? It was REALLY high." And I explained how the full (or new) moon had an effect, etc. But I heard it so often that I did some research. This column is about that.

How Do The Tides Work?

If you are a long-time reader of this paper, this might be a bit redundant - but the tides are largely about gravity. The primary source of the gravitational pull is the Moon (2X) and then the Sun (1X.) When the Moon and the Sun line up, such as in a New Moon (the one we can't see) or a Full Moon, they are working in concert. So, high tides are higher and, as a consequence, low tides are lower. These tides are called Spring Tides.

When we have Quarter Moons, the Moon and the Sun are working against each other. Their gravitational pulls are at right angles to each other, and thus cancel out some of their power. So, high tides are lower and low tides are higher. These tides are called Neap Tides.

These gravitational pulls create the largest wave on Earth - the entire

seabody is pulled up and it follows the pull of gravity around the entire planet. Now it isn't as concentrated as a tsunami, for example, but when you consider that ALL the water on the planet is affected by this immense power, you can see that, taken as a whole, the wave of tides is the largest wave on Earth.

Yeah, So Why Have The Tides Been Higher Lately?

Because while tides are largely about gravity, they aren't solely about gravity. Weather can have a localized effect on tides. High pressure systems can slow the tides from rising simply because the water has to lift something that weighs 14 pounds/square inch (the atmosphere) - except that it is heavier when we have a high pressure zone in play. In contrast, when we have a low pressure system at work, the opposite happens. The atmosphere just weighs less in a particular area. And do you know what we call a system of really low pressure? A hurricane...

And that brings to the fore another factor in tidal heights. Wind. The wind creates waves and more wind creates bigger waves.

And This Means What..?

With that as foreground, guess what? We have been having higher tides up and down the entire Eastern Seaboard. You can read the full report in NOAA technical report, Elevated East Coast Sea Level Anomaly: June-July 2009 but here is the gist of it.

Tides have been higher from as little as 6 inches over the norm to as much as 2 feet over the normal high tide for a given set of circumstances. And the reasons tie into all of the above.

1. All the "crummy" weather we've been complaining about since early Spring has manifested itself in long, sustained winds from the Northeast. Essentially, we've been having a long and somewhat restrained "Nor'easter" for months. But the persistence of the weather over weeks and weeks created some of the rise above normal.

2. Scientists at NOAA also found that a weakening of the Florida Current Transport - an oceanic current that feeds into the Gulf Stream - contributed to this anomaly.

3. In addition to the current change and steady winds, elevated water levels in the latter half of June coincided with a perigean-spring tide, an extreme predicted tide when the

moon is closest to the Earth during a spring tide. In short, we had a very big Spring Tide because we were closer than normal to the Moon, as part of its natural oscillation.

The June-July 2009 sea level anomaly is unique because northeast winds along the coast were not at a multi-year high and the Florida Current Transport was not at its low - two factors that can cause elevated sea levels. However, the coupled effect of these two forces created sea levels that were at the highest levels all along the East Coast. What the study didn't find was that Global Heating (I refuse to call it Warming as that sounds too benign) added more water to the oceans. But all this caught people and communities by surprise because we didn't really have any of the hurricane-like weather that naturally brings us higher tides.

But what you were thinking/wondering about was really happening!

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2009@aol.com or go direct to Lisa Etter, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..." If you'd like a copy of any of the columns cited, email me and I'll send it to you.



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

RFA ASKS COMMERCE SECRETARY FOR COUNCIL APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Reacting to the latest round of appointments to the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC), the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) has asked U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke to consider enacting coast wide changes to the appointment process in order to provide more public review and comment at the state level. "RFA suggests that prior to a Governor submitting a list of individuals to the Office of the Secretary, the prospective list be disclosed in the state register and be made available for public review and/or comment for a minimum of 20 days," said Jim Donofrio, Executive Director of the RFA. "The result would be Governors' lists sent to the Office of the Secretary that have been fully vetted at the state level by representatives of commercial and recreational fishing interests."

In an official letter to Secretary Locke and forwarded to governors and key legislators representing New Jersey, New York, and Virginia, Donofrio said the RFA was frustrated by the recent appointments to the MAFMC, "Specifically, the lack of consultation or input sought from the traditional recreational fishing stakeholders." A political action organization which represents the rights of saltwater anglers in America, RFA cited section 109-479 within the federal fisheries law, the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA), as stating that the governor must, to the extent practicable, consult with representatives of the commercial and recreational fishing interests of the state regarding the appointment of state representatives to fishery management councils.

On June 26, Locke officially announced the appointment of four new members to the MAFMC, two representing the states of Virginia and New Jersey to fill obligatory seats, with the new members appointed from New York and North Carolina appointed to fill At-large seats.

"The lists sent to the Office of the Secretary from the New York, New Jersey, and Virginia Governors, included names of individuals that were and remain completely unknown to the mainstream recreational and commercial fishing communities of the respective states," Donofrio said, adding "it is glaringly apparent that traditional stakeholders were excluded from state level deliberations regarding these appointments and composition of the Governors' lists."

RFA is recommending that the US Department of Commerce and individual governors in each of the coastal state coordinate a more transparent appointment process in the future, thereby allowing potential candidates to be fully vetted within the fishing community as required under federal law.

Tides for Moriches Inlet starting with September 16, 2009

Day	High/Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise/Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Wed. 16	High	5:18 AM	3.3	6:33 AM	Rise	11
16	Low	11:17 AM	-0.1	6:58 PM	Set	
16	High	5:37 PM	3.7		3:51 AM	
16	Low	11:57 PM	-0.2		5:39 PM	
Thur. 17	High	6:11 AM	3.5	6:34 AM	Rise	4
17	Low	12:12 PM	-0.2	6:56 PM	Set	
17	High	6:28 PM	3.7		5:07 AM	
Fri. 18	Low	12:44 AM	-0.4	6:35 AM	Rise	1
18	High	7:00 AM	3.7	6:55 PM	Set	
18	Low	1:04 PM	-0.2		6:21 AM	
18	High	7:16 PM	3.7		6:33 PM	
Sat. 19	Low	1:30 AM	-0.4	6:36 AM	Rise	0
19	High	7:46 AM	3.8	6:53 PM	Set	
19	Low	1:54 PM	-0.2		7:35 AM	
19	High	8:02 PM	3.6		7:00 PM	
Sun. 20	Low	2:13 AM	-0.3	6:37 AM	Rise	1
20	High	8:31 AM	3.8	6:51 PM	Set	
20	Low	2:42 PM	-0.2		8:47 AM	
20	High	8:48 PM	3.4		7:29 PM	
Mon. 21	Low	2:55 AM	-0.2	6:38 AM	Rise	5
21	High	9:17 AM	3.7	6:50 PM	Set	
21	Low	3:28 PM	-0.1		9:58 AM	
21	High	9:36 PM	3.2		8:01 PM	
Tue. 22	Low	3:36 AM	0.0	6:39 AM	Rise	11
22	High	10:04 AM	3.5	6:48 PM	Set	
22	Low	4:13 PM	0.1		11:07 AM	
22	High	10:26 PM	2.9		8:38 PM	
Wed. 23	Low	4:16 AM	0.3	6:40 AM	Rise	19
23	High	10:53 AM	3.3	6:46 PM	Set	
23	Low	5:00 PM	0.4		12:12 PM	
23	High	11:19 PM	2.7		9:20 PM	
Thur. 24	Low	4:59 AM	0.5	6:41 AM	Rise	28
24	High	11:44 AM	3.2	6:45 PM	Set	
24	Low	5:52 PM	0.5		1:11 PM	
Fri. 25	High	12:13 AM	2.5	6:42 AM	Rise	37
25	Low	5:48 AM	0.7	6:43 PM	Set	
25	High	12:35 PM	3.0		2:03 PM	
25	Low	6:53 PM	0.7		11:04 PM	
Sat. 26	High	1:07 AM	2.5	6:43 AM	Rise	47
26	Low	6:53 AM	0.9	6:41 PM	Set	
26	High	1:28 PM	2.9		2:47 PM	
26	Low	7:59 PM	0.8			
Sun. 27	High	2:03 AM	2.4	6:44 AM	Set	56
27	Low	8:04 AM	0.9	6:40 PM	Rise	
27	High	2:23 PM	2.9		12:02 AM	
27	Low	8:58 PM	0.7		3:24 PM	