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**Woods Hole Group Awarded Multi Year Operation and Maintenance Contract to support NOAA PORTS® on the East Coast and Gulf of Mexico**

Woods Hole Group will be working with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (NOAA CO-OPS) for the operation and maintenance of Physical Oceanographic Real Time System (PORTS®) along the East Coast of the USA, and along the Gulf of Mexico coast in Texas and Louisiana. NOAA PORTS® (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports.html>) is a network of sensors in ports and harbors providing access to information improving maritime commerce and safety.

This is a 5 year contract award including NOAA PORTS® Annual Operations and Maintenance Tasks prescribed by NOAA CO-OPS Standard Operating Procedures in the following locations:

- Narragansett Bay (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=nb>)
- New London, CT (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=nl>)
- New Haven, CT (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=nh>)
- New York/New Jersey Harbor (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=ny>)
- Delaware River and Bay (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=db>)
- Upper Chesapeake Bay (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=cn>)
- Lower Chesapeake Bay (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=cs>)
- Charleston Harbor (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=ch>)
- Lake Charles, LA (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=lc>)
- Houston-Galveston, TX (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=hg>)

Woods Hole Group also was awarded the five year Operation and Maintenance Contract to support four NOAA National Water Level Observation Network (NWLON) stations in Texas.

Woods Hole Group will work with its partner, the Conrad Blucher Institute (CBI) for Surveying and Science from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi on the work in Gulf of Mexico. CBI (<http://www.cbi.tamucc.edu/>) has a 20-year history of performing this type of work for NOAA and others. CBI conducts innovative research and encourages scientists, Professional Engineers, and surveyors to develop accurate scientific spatial measurements; and apply technology solutions relevant to the geospatial sciences and issues associated with the Gulf of Mexico region. CBI is home to the largest endowed Geographic Information Science (GISc) program in the United States.

This new work is in addition to the ongoing Operations and Maintenance Woods Hole Group will continue to perform for JXPORTS (<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/ports/index.html?port=jx>), a joint private/public PORTS<sup>®</sup> network. The Jacksonville Marine Transportation Exchange (JMTX) is the private partner and lead operator for JXPORTS. Woods Hole Group designed, installed, and maintains JXPORTS under contract to JMTX, the second largest PORTS<sup>®</sup> installation in the country.

All of these systems provide invaluable information to users of the waterways, including the shipping industry, tug services, military personnel, cruise ships, commercial and recreational fisherman, and academic institutions. These systems provide access to real-time quality controlled data (every 6 minutes) that facilitate safe navigation, and promote greater understanding of the waterway system and its environment for research and engineering purposes. With knowledge of water depths, current speeds and direction, the distance from the water surface to overhead bridge superstructure, and other information, ship pilots can navigate safely and more efficiently. The PORTS<sup>®</sup> systems are intended to reduce the risk of accident and improve maritime commerce. Economic studies also demonstrate that PORTS<sup>®</sup> reduces groundings by 50% and generates more than \$50 million in annual efficiency benefits.

Woods Hole Group is the leading PORTS<sup>®</sup> management expert, currently maintaining more than one hundred PORTS<sup>®</sup> stations along the East Coast and Gulf of Mexico.

Vice President for Scientific Operation, Robert Catalano, says, “Woods Hole Group has a 20 year relationship with NOAA CO-OPS and a reputation for providing a high level of support to NOAA. The confidence that NOAA placed in Woods Hole Group through this multi-year award is a testament to this. NOAA PORTS<sup>®</sup> is a vital data source to maintain the maritime safety our nation’s waterways. We are confident the maritime community will depend on the PORTS<sup>®</sup> data stream for value-added decision-making that will save time and money while improving safety.”

NOAA CO-OPS Director, Rich Edwing says about Woods Hole Group and the overall PORTS<sup>®</sup> program, “The Woods Hole Group is an integral partner for ensuring continuous collection of essential water level and other data at our PORTS<sup>®</sup> for Narragansett Bay, New York/New Jersey Harbor, Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay and River, Pascagoula, and previously for Lake Charles. Through their annual inspections of our systems and during emergency repair situations the Woods Hole Group has demonstrated performance success. We are excited to continue this professional relationship with the Woods Hole Group.”

*About Woods Hole Group:*

*Woods Hole Group is an international, environmental scientific and engineering consulting organization headquartered in Falmouth, Massachusetts. With its breadth of vision and emphasis on a sustainable future global environment, Woods Hole Group provides premier integrated solutions to meet the challenge of environmental problems worldwide. Woods Hole Group's expertise includes: Coastal sciences, engineering and planning; Applied ecological services; and Oceanography & measurement systems. Woods Hole Group celebrated its 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014. For more information, visit [www.woodsholegroup.com](http://www.woodsholegroup.com).*

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