NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contact: Amy Rath, 912-598-2397 May 15, 2015

**MEDIA ADVISORY: NOAA, Georgia Southern University researchers to trace Altamaha River outflow**

A team from Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary and Georgia Southern University will release 50 gallons of a non-toxic fluorescent red dye (rhodamine WT) into the Altamaha River outflow on next week. By tracing the path of the dye, researchers can estimate the extent to which the river delivers dissolved substances, both contaminants and nutrients, north and south along the Georgia coast and to hard-bottom reefs occurring up to 20 miles offshore, including those in the sanctuary.

The researchers will release the highly visible dye from a point south of Wolf Island and will monitor the resulting plume, both visually and with instruments called fluorometers, as it flows along the Georgia coast and offshore.

**WHAT:** Researchers to release dye and drift buoys to better understand the Altamaha River outflow

**WHEN:** May 18 or 19, depending on weather conditions

**WHERE:** Media interested in visiting the research site should contact Amy Rath at amy.rath@noaa.gov

**WHO:** Researchers from Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary and Georgia Southern University

In addition to releasing the dye, the team will deploy two satellite-enabled surface drifting buoys drifters that will provide information on how larger materials, such as dead stalks of marsh grass, may disperse after exiting the Altamaha River estuary. Both the fluorometers and the drift buoys will be clearly marked. If sighted, please do not damage or remove them.

This project was funded by Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the sanctuary is providing logistical support. Educators and the public may follow the drifter tracks in real-time at: http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/drifter/drift_grnms_2015_1.html.

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