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NOAA STELLWAGEN BANK SANCTUARY SHIPWRECK *PAUL PALMER* LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration today announced that the wreck of the coal schooner *Paul Palmer*, which rests on the seafloor within Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation.

Paul Palmer's historical, architectural and archaeological significance contributed to its listing. In compliance with President Bush's Preserve America Executive Order, NOAA is increasing efforts to inventory, preserve, and protect historic resources in the agency's care, from shipwrecks to historic buildings.

"The schooner's involvement in the coal trade connected it to Americans throughout the East Coast," said Stellwagen Bank sanctuary superintendent Craig MacDonald. "Coal carried in schooners like the *Paul Palmer* powered the industrialization of the northeastern states, one of the greatest economic and social forces in American history."

Built in Waldoboro, Maine, the five-masted, 276-foot schooner *Paul Palmer* was part of William F. Palmer's "Great White Fleet," which at its peak consisted of 15 schooners that carried bulk cargos throughout the East Coast, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean. During its 12-year career, the schooner *Paul Palmer* transported 280,000 tons of coal, as well as phosphate, railroad ties, ice, and sugar.

After unloading coal in Bangor, *Paul Palmer* departed Rockport, Maine, for Virginia on Friday, June 13, 1913. Sailing south, the schooner caught fire off Cape Cod. Several vessels responded to the stricken schooner, but were unable to extinguish the fire. The schooner's crew abandoned ship and was picked up by a waiting fishing boat. The *Paul Palmer* burned to its waterline and then sank. The *Paul Palmer* was the only five-masted East Coast schooner to be lost to fire.

The *Paul Palmer* was no stranger to fire. In 1907, the schooner sustained light damage when it was nearly caught in a conflagration that consumed Baltimore's coal docks. The following year, a fire swept across East Boston's docks, catching the schooner's top rigging afire. Tugs pulled *Paul Palmer* away from its dock and put out the fire before flames engulfed the schooner. The fire destroyed a quarter-mile stretch of the waterfront and caused \$1.6 million in property damage.

Since NOAA's discovery of the then-unknown shipwreck in 2000, the sanctuary has investigated the site with divers, remotely operated vehicles, and autonomous underwater vehicles capturing detailed video and still imagery to document the vessel's construction and artifacts. This research led to the schooner's identification in 2002. The *Paul Palmer's* partially buried remains lie on the flat, sandy seafloor atop Stellwagen Bank.

The schooner's location within Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary provides protection unavailable in other federal waters off Massachusetts. Sanctuary regulations prohibit moving, removing, or injuring, or any attempt to move, remove, or injure any sanctuary historical resource, including artifacts and pieces from shipwrecks. Anyone violating this regulation is subject to civil penalties.

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 842 square miles of ocean, stretching between Cape Ann and Cape Cod offshore of Massachusetts. Renowned for its scenic beauty and remarkable productivity, the sanctuary is renowned as a whale watching destination and supports a rich assortment of marine life, including marine mammals, seabirds, fishes, and marine invertebrates. The sanctuary's position astride the historic shipping routes and fishing grounds for Massachusetts' oldest ports also make it a repository for shipwrecks representing several hundred years of maritime transportation.

NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program seeks to increase the public awareness of America's marine resources and maritime heritage by conducting scientific research, monitoring, exploration and educational programs. Today, the sanctuary program manages 13 national marine sanctuaries and one marine national monument that together encompass more than 150,000 square miles of America's ocean and Great Lakes natural and cultural resources.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

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 60 countries to develop a global Earth observation network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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On the Web:

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

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

NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

NOAA Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary: <http://stellwagen.noaa.gov>

NOAA Preserve America Initiative: <http://preserveamerica.noaa.gov>