



Ecological Society of America

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Testimony for the Record

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To the House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Regarding the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration FY 2018 Budget

April 27, 2017

The Ecological Society of America (ESA) is the nation's largest society of professional ecologists representing over 10,000 members across the country. We write to urge you to support at least **\$6.1 billion in funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for Fiscal Year 2018.**

NOAA continues to serve as the nation's premier environmental intelligence community, supporting U.S. economic growth and job creation, enhancing public safety, and protecting and managing natural resources. ESA is concerned with the administration's proposal to reduce the Department of Commerce FY 2018 budget by 16 percent, which would primarily come from NOAA's funding and would eliminate important research, education, and coastal management programs. We urge you to preserve funding for NOAA and to make strong investments in the agency and its research.

Strong Investments in NOAA Translate to Economic, Ecological, National Security, and Public Health Benefits

Over half of the American population lives along our coasts. NOAA provides critical data and services that are essential to protecting these coastal communities, maintaining coastal economies, and managing our coastal resources. NOAA contributes a range of atmospheric and oceanic data, products, and services that benefit America's economy, quality of life, and scientific competitiveness:

- Timely and accurate National Weather Service forecasts and warnings that reduce vulnerability to extreme weather events
- Environmental monitoring, analysis, and data that reduce risks to people and property

- Maintenance and stewardship of valuable coastal and marine resources, including sustainable management of fisheries
- Innovative geostationary and polar satellite systems that provide essential data and observations
- Cutting-edge scientific research and development that has led to new technologies and scientific advances

FY 2018 Funding for Research and Critical Offices

Programs of particular importance to the ecological community are NOAA's **Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)**, the **National Ocean Service (NOS)**, and the **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)**. These offices support intramural and extramural research critical to NOAA's mission of managing marine and coastal resources to meet the nation's environmental, economic, and social needs.

OAR provides the essential research foundation for NOAA's work. This office supports laboratories and programs across the U.S. and collaborates with external partners, including 16 NOAA-funded Cooperative Institutes and 33 Sea Grant Institutions. OAR research contributes to accurate weather forecasts, enables communities to plan for and respond to climate events such as drought, and enhances the protection and management of the nation's coastal and ocean resources.

NOS and NMFS both play critical roles in the stewardship and management of our nation's natural resources. NOS works to preserve and enhance coastal resources, ecosystems, and economies. NMFS is responsible for the stewardship of our ocean resources, providing the science necessary to sustain and revitalize our fisheries and marine habitats and ecosystems. ESA urges you to provide strong support for these NOAA offices.

Robust Support for NOAA Is Critical to Our Nation's Resilience and Scientific Leadership

NOAA is an essential agency that plays a key role not only in understanding and predicting changes in climate, weather, and oceans, but also in protecting communities and ecosystems. We appreciate your past support for this critical agency, and we urge you, in the interest of ensuring our nation's continued and future resilience and scientific leadership, to continue this support and provide **\$6.1 billion for NOAA in FY 2018**. Thank you for your consideration of this request.