



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Budget for FY2009

Wayne A. Morrissey
Information Research Specialist

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Summary

On February 4, 2008, President Bush requested \$4.103 billion in discretionary budget authority for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the Department of Commerce (DOC) for FY2009. This amount was \$207 million, or 5.3%, more than FY2008 enacted appropriations of \$3.896 billion. Bush Administration priorities for the NOAA budget included restoring funding for some programs that were flat-funded or cut for FY2008; re-capitalizing aging facilities, equipment, vessels, buildings, and other infrastructure; and ensuring that NOAA satellite programs meet mission requirements and are kept to schedule.

On December 10, 2008, the House Appropriations Committee reported H.R. 7322 (110th Congress), amended, to fund the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) for FY2009. The House committee recommended \$4.252 billion for NOAA, which is \$356 million, or 9.1%, more than the FY2008 appropriation and \$149 million, or 3.6%, more than the FY2009 request.

On June 23, 2008, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported S. 3182 (110th Congress), the CJS Appropriations Act for FY2009, and recommended \$4.446 billion for NOAA. This amount was \$549 million, or 14.2%, more than the FY2008 appropriation, \$193 million, or 4.5%, more than the House committee recommendation, and \$342 million, or 8.3%, more than the FY2009 request.

On September 30, 2008, President Bush signed the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009 into law as P.L. 110-329, Division B, which froze most of NOAA's spending at FY2008 levels through March 6, 2009. NOAA also received emergency supplemental appropriations under P.L. 110-329, Division A, totaling \$92 million.

In addition, NOAA would receive additional funding as reported by the conference committee on H.R. 1 (amended), the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, passed by Congress on February 13, 2009, and popularly known as "The Stimulus Bill."

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Introduction

The mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet the nation's economic, social, and environmental needs.¹ President Bush's FY2009 request of \$4.103 billion for NOAA is the largest for an agency of the Department of Commerce (DOC) in terms of funding, and accounts for nearly 47% of DOC's discretionary budget request of \$8.721 billion. An FY2009 budget document indicates that NOAA's share of President Bush's entire "Federal Science and Technology Budget" for FY2009 would be \$378.0 million, or 0.61%, of the \$61.7 billion proposed.²

President Bush's FY2009 Budget

Of the \$4.103 billion President Bush requested for NOAA for FY2009 (**Table 1**), \$2.834 billion would be for the Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF) discretionary account; \$1.238 billion for the Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC) account; and a net \$31 million for NOAA's Other Accounts, which includes \$35.0 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF), zero net funding for the ORF Coastal Zone Management Fund (CZMF) and, according to the House Appropriation Committee estimates, an offsetting budget authority of \$4.0 million from NOAA fishery financing. When authorized, additional budget authority (BA) offsets the amount of discretionary funding that the agency would require otherwise. For example, for FY2009 President Bush proposed a transfer of \$79.0 million in offsetting BA for ORF from NOAA's Promote and Develop American Fisheries Products Fund (PDAF), the proceeds of which are transferred from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Table 1. FY2008 Appropriations, the FY2009 Request, and Congressional Budget Action

(budget authority in millions of dollars)

NOAA Accounts	FY2008 Enacted^a	FY2009 Request^b	House Action^c	Senate Action^d
<i>Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF): NOAA Budget Line Offices</i>				
National Ocean Service (NOS)	467.9	449.3	472.2	516.8
NOAA Fisheries (NMFS)	708.6	724.2	744.4	777.3
NOAA Research (OAR)	387.9	372.3	396.3	403.4
National Weather Service (NWS)	805.3	818.8	825.8	847.9
NOAA Satellites (NESDIS)	179.2	165.3	179.2	177.9
Program Support (PS)	392.4	394.4	410.0	426.5

¹ U.S. Dept. of Commerce, *NOAA, 2009 President's Budget Rollout*, "Protecting Lives and Livelihoods," February 7, 2008. Presentation by Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., U.S. Navy (Ret.), Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, February 7, 2008 (Washington, DC).

² U.S. Office of Management and Budget, Table 5-2, "Federal Science and Technology Budget(NOAA)," *The Budget for Fiscal Year 2009: Analytical Perspectives*, February 2008, p. 54.

NOAA Accounts	FY2008 Enacted ^a	FY2009 Request ^b	House Action ^c	Senate Action ^d
ORF BA Total	2,941.3	2,924.3	3,027.9	3,149.8
Offsets (PDAF/CZMF transfer/deobligations)	(82.0)	(93.0)	(45.6)	(97.9)
ORF Discretionary	2,859.3	2,831.3	2,982.3	3,051.9
Procurement, Acquisition, & Construction	979.2	1,238.7	1,212.3	1,258.0
Other Accounts/PCSRF/CZMF/Finance	58.0	33.9	58.0	86.0
Fisheries Disaster Mitigation Fund ^e	N/A	N/A	N/A	50.0
Total NOAA Discretionary Appropriations^f	\$3,896.5	\$4,103.9	\$4,252.6	\$4,445.9

Source: Compiled by CRS from sources as noted below.

Notes: Table does not include \$92 million provided in Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations (through 3/6/09) Act, 2009 (P.L. 110-329, Div. A) for NOAA.

- a. As reported by the House conferees on H.R. 2764, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, Div. B—Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008, December 26, 2007.
- b. H.R. 7322, Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2009, introduced, June 26, 2008, and reported by the House Appropriations Committee (H.Rept. 110-919), December 10, 2008.
- c. H.Rept. 110-919, December 10, 2008, p. 276.
- d. S.Rept. 110-397 to accompany S. 3182, Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2009, June 23, 2008.
- e. A new NOAA budget line proposed by the Senate Appropriations Committee (S.Rept. 110-397, June 23, 2008, p. 37).
- f. The FY2008 enacted ORF total includes a rescission of \$11.3 million mandated in Title VII, P.L. 110-161. It also reflects S.Amdt. 3290 to H.R. 3093, approved October 16, 2007, which transferred \$30.0 million from NOAA's PAC account to the U.S. Attorneys Office to hire additional prosecutors for offenses relating to the sexual exploitation of children (Sec. 704 of P.L. 109-248).

For FY2009, President Bush requested that Congress approve other offsetting BA of \$11.0 million for the ORF account from previous fiscal-year unobligated appropriations. Another \$3.0 million in BA would be transferred internally to ORF from CZMF collections for administering the Coastal Zone Management Program. In addition to NOAA's five budget line offices under ORF, Program Support (PS), a cross-cutting budget activity, supports agency administration, education programs, facilities, marine services, and the NOAA fleet of marine vessels and aircraft. Details of PS funding are found in **Table 2**.

Table 2. NOAA Program Support (PS) Funding Detailed
(\$ in millions)

PS Accounts	FY2008 ^a Enacted	FY2009 Request	House Action	Senate Action
Operations, Research, and Facilities				
<i>Corporate Services (CS)</i>				
Under Secretary and Associate Offices	28.8	28.7	28.7	28.7
Facilities Management ^b	18.5	24.3	29.3	24.3
Corporate Services and Agency Management	158.2	162.3	162.4	162.3

PS Accounts	FY2008 ^a Enacted	FY2009 Request	House Action	Senate Action
Operations, Research, and Facilities				
<i>Corporate Services (CS)</i>				
Office of Chief Information Officer (IT)	1.0	2.1	2.1	2.1
<i>Subtotal CS</i>	206.5	217.4	222.5	217.4
<i>Educational Programs (ED)</i>	34.1	16.5	20.5	48.7
<i>Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)</i>				
Marine Services ^c	109.9	113.5	118.5	113.5
Fleet Planning & Maintenance	16.8	17.0	17.0	17.0
Aviation Services	25.2	30.0	31.5	30.0
<i>Subtotal OMAO</i>	151.9	160.5	167.0	160.5
<i>Total PS ORF</i>	392.5	394.4	410.0	426.5
<i>Procurement, Acquisition, And Construction</i>				
Fleet Replace/Acquisition	5.3	11.5	11.5	15.4
PS Construction	23.2	87.0	37.9	87.0
<i>Total PS PAC</i>	28.5	98.5	49.4	102.4
Grand Total PS (ORF + PAC)^d	\$421.0	\$492.9	\$459.4	\$528.9

Source: Compiled by CRS from H.Rept. 110-919 (December 10, 2008); S.Rept. 110-397 (June 23, 2008); and Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, Committee Print of the House Committee on Appropriations on H.R. 2764, P.L. 110-161, Division B—Commerce, Justice, Science, And Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008 (December 16, 2007).

- a. P.L. 110-161, Div. B, Title I, Department of Commerce, NOAA.
- b. In some sources Facilities is included as part of Corporate Services.
- c. Includes funding for NOAA Corps health care benefits across-the-board.
- d. The ORF funding portion of PS is reported in **Table I**. The PAC portion is part of the PAC total.

NOAA Funding Proposals

Among NOAA’s priorities for FY2009, Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher Jr., U.S. Navy (Ret.), then Administrator of NOAA, stressed the agency’s need to “recapitalize” (invest capital) to address problems with aging equipment, facilities, infrastructure, and marine and aviation vessels.³ He indicated that “technology refreshment” was needed for some NOAA marine vessels and aircraft by replacing older environmental sensing instrumentation. The Vice Admiral stated that base funding for certain NOAA programs and activities was reduced in FY2008 in favor of Congressionally Directed Programs (CDPs).⁴ He added that this funding needed to be restored if the agency were to fund new initiatives.⁵ Lautenbacher also noted that the agency would have to

³ U.S. Dept. of Commerce, *NOAA, 2009 President’s Budget Rollout*, “Protecting Lives and Livelihoods,” February 7, 2008. Presentation by Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., U.S. Navy (Ret.), Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, February 7, 2008 (Washington, DC).

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ CRS estimated a total of \$150.4 million in CDPs for NOAA in U.S. House Appropriations Committee Print (continued...)

absorb increased costs of personnel and inflation of goods and services to maintain operation of NOAA's "Core Mission." As for the Bush Administration's Ocean Initiative, Lautenbacher discussed funding increases for (1) climate and ocean-related research activities (including drought); (2) marine resources conservation and management regulations aimed at over-fishing; and (3) critical marine habitat restoration to increase declining fish stocks. Other funding, he stated, would target coastal research, navigation safety, and the national Integrated Ocean Observation Network (IOOS). Lautenbacher also cited specific Bush Administration priorities for NOAA for FY2009, which include the following:⁶

- Develop and test new technologies to meet future challenges of weather forecasting, global climate monitoring, and continuity of scientific data.
- Develop and test the next-generation geostationary satellites (GOES-R).
- Restore GOES funding cuts and increase the budget by \$242.2 million for FY2009 (to more than double the FY2008 appropriation).
- Provide \$74.0 million to restore critical sensors on the National Polar-orbiting Observation Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS).
- Increase funding to test NPOESS ground control systems as part of the near-term NPOESS preparatory project (NPP).
- Decrease funding for the Polar-orbiting Observational Environmental Satellite (POES) program by \$92.0 million as operations wind down.
- Add \$49.0 million in *new* funding for President Bush's Ocean Initiative. Total funding requested for the Initiative was \$159.0 million for FY2009, and included \$78.3 million for ocean science and research; \$31.7 million for protecting and restoring marine coastal areas (which includes \$7.0 million for the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)); and \$48.9 million for sustainable use of ocean resources and enforcing laws against over-fishing in U.S. waters.
- Increase funding for the NOS Integrated Ocean Observation System (IOOS) by \$7.0 million to develop an educational component as part of National Ocean Research Priorities Plan Implementation.
- Add \$2.2 million to Tide and Current Data to expand the National Ocean Service National Water Level Observation Network (NWLON) and augment near-coastal, real-time tide gauge data.
- Site the Physical Observation in Real Time System (PORTS) at more U.S. ports with an increase of \$2.0 million to support safe navigation and homeland security needs.

(...continued)

(unnumbered), Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, to Accompany H.R. 2764 (amended), Div. B—Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (P.L. 110-161), December 16, 2007.

⁶ Funding changes herein reported by NOAA as compared with President Bush's FY2008 request. See NOAA, *FY2009 Budget Summary*, February 4, 2008, at http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~nbo/09bluebook_highlights.html.

- Provide \$2.9 million for NOAA Weather Radio Improvement program to modernize forecast dissemination technology and provide high impact, geographically targeted forecasts and warnings for those at most risk.
- Increase by \$5.3 million funds for technology enhancement and advanced instrumentation for Central Forecast Guidance weather modeling.
- Provide the U.S. Weather Research Program \$4.3 million for Hurricane Forecasting Modeling.
- Provide \$40.3 million for construction of the Pacific Regional Center facility on Ford Island, near Honolulu, HI to consolidate scattered NOAA science facilities operating in temporary structures.
- Provide \$11.2 million to refurbish the Fairbanks, AK Command and Data Acquisition Station (CDAS), relocate staff in temporary facilities, add equipment upgrades, and extend operations of the CDAS through FY2026.

Congressional Action on Appropriations for NOAA

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-161) approved \$3.896 billion in discretionary funding for NOAA (**Table 1**). This amount included \$2.859 billion for the ORF account, \$979.2 million for the PAC account, and a net total of \$58.0 million for NOAA's Other Accounts, including \$67.0 million for the PCSRF, a \$3.0 million internal transfer to ORF from the CZMF, and offsetting BA of \$9.0 million from fisheries financing. Additional BA of \$77.0 million was transferred to ORF from the PDAF. A Senate amendment directed a transfer of \$30.0 million of PAC funding to the Justice Department,⁷ and NOAA received a rescission of \$11.37 million for FY2008.

House Actions

On December 10, 2008, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies reported H.R. 7322 (H.Rept. 110-919) which recommended \$4.253 billion in discretionary funding for NOAA. Of that amount, \$2.982 billion was recommended for ORF; \$1.212 billion for PAC; and a net total of \$58.0 million for NOAA's Other accounts. Of the \$58.0 million approved, \$65.0 million was recommended for the PCSRF, which was offset by \$4.0 million from the fisheries finance account. In addition, \$3.0 million would be transferred internally to ORF from the CZMF. Other offsetting BA recommended included a transfer of \$79.0 million to the ORF account from the PDAF from USDA collections. The House committee also recommended another \$11.0 million in offsetting BA for NOAA from previous fiscal-year deobligations. H.R. 7322. There was no further action in the House on H.R. 7322.

Senate Actions

On June 23, 2008, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported S. 3182, amended (S.Rept. 110-397). The committee recommended almost \$4.446 billion for NOAA for FY2009, including \$50.0 million for a new "Fisheries Disaster Protection Fund." Of this total, \$3.052 billion would

⁷ S.Amdt. 3290 to H.R. 3093, approved October 16, 2007, transferred funding to the U.S. Attorneys Office for offenses relating to the sexual exploitation of children (P.L. 109-248).

be for ORF; \$1.258 billion would be for PAC (offset by BA of \$2 million); and a net total of \$86.0 million was proposed for NOAA's Other Accounts. Of this \$86.0 million, \$90.0 million was recommended for the PCSRF; \$3.0 million would be transferred internally from the CZMF to ORF; and \$4.0 million in offsetting BA would be derived from the fisheries financing account. Other offsetting BA of \$77.0 million would be transferred to ORF from the PDAF, and \$5.3 million offsetting BA would be derived from previous fiscal-year deobligations.

Comparison of FY2009 Funding Provisions

In all funding scenarios, the total NOAA budget would increase compared with FY2008 appropriations. ORF discretionary funding requested by President Bush was less than the FY2008 appropriation, however. Funding cuts proposed by the Bush Administration for ORF primarily would affect NOS, OAR, and NESDIS (**Table 1**). The Senate Appropriations Committee recommended \$90 million for PCSRF and the House Appropriations Committee recommended \$67.0 million; whereas President Bush requested \$35 million. The House committee recommendation for PAC is less than the FY2009 request owing to a Manager's amendment that would reprogram \$32.4 million of NOAA PS construction funding to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).⁸ The Senate Appropriations Committee had no similar proposal. In general, substantial increases were recommended by the Senate committee for NOAA across-the-board. It stated that much of this increased funding would strengthen national responses to U.S. Joint Ocean Commission findings on ocean policy.⁹ For the GOES program, both House and Senate committees recommended \$520.3 million. Further, each proposed \$288.0 million for the NOAA/ DOD/NASA (NPOESS); President Bush proposed a reduction of \$43.0 million for NPOESS from FY2008 appropriated levels. Congressional funding recommendations for NPOESS, when combined with those for NPOESS ground control and data systems, total \$992.6 million, the same amount the Bush Administration requested for these programs overall for FY2009. Also, President Bush requested, and House and Senate committees recommended, \$65.4 million to manage remaining operations of the Polar-orbiting Earth Observations Satellites (POES) program. President Bush requested \$60.3 million to construct the Pacific Regional Center, HI, from PAC-PS funding for FY2009. The Senate committee recommended \$20.3 million for the Center, while the House committee chairman's amendment reduced an original proposal of \$75.0 million for the Center to \$22.9 million.

FY2009 Continuing Resolution.

Under the FY2009 Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act (P.L. 110-329), Division A, funding for NOAA was frozen at the same level as FY2008 enacted appropriations.

In Division B of the Act, Disaster Assistance, \$75 million was provided for fisheries disaster assistance and \$17 million in emergency supplemental appropriations was provided for NOAA to

⁸ House Appropriations Committee, [Manager's] Amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science, Appropriation Bill, FY2009 (unpublished), June 25, 2998, "An Amendment Offered by Mr. Mollohan."

⁹ U.S. Congress, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, *Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2009*, Report to Accompany S. 3182 (S.Rept. 110-397), June 23, 2008, p. 29, "Joint Ocean Commission Initiative."

improve its hurricane track and intensity forecasts for the protection of life and property. These additional amounts are not reflected in **Table 1**.

FY2009 Stimulus Bill

On February 13, 2009, the 111th Congress passed H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, also known as the “Stimulus Package.” Authors of the ARRA stated that the legislation was essential for improving environmental research activities and infrastructure, and is expected to create an estimated 6,000 jobs within the maritime, marine technology, and environmental research communities.

For NOAA’s Operations, Research and Facilities Account , a total \$230 million was provided “to address a backlog of research, restoration, navigation, conservation and management activities.”

For NOAA’s Procurement, Acquisitions, and Construction account, a total of \$600 million was provided “to construct and repair NOAA facilities and equipment,” and, “include implementing the fleet modernization plan to address ship maintenance and new construction for the NOAA fleet; accelerating construction of local Weather Forecast Offices, Critical Weather Observing Systems, weather radars and dual polarization systems throughout the country; accelerating construction at regional facilities and laboratories currently under construction; and constructing vessels for marine conservation.” Within the \$600 million proposed, the joint explanatory statement in the conference report on H.R. 1 (H.Rept. 111-16) states that “\$170,000,000 shall address critical gaps in climate modeling and establish climate data records for continuing research into the cause, effects and ways to mitigate climate change.”

Author Contact Information

Wayne A. Morrissey
Information Research Specialist
wmorrissey@crs.loc.gov, 7-7072