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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) FY2024 Budget Request and Appropriations

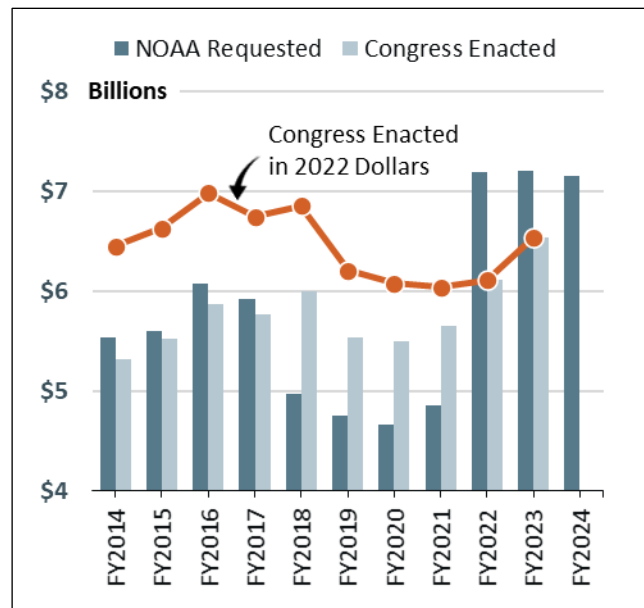
The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is an agency in the Department of Commerce whose mission is to understand and predict changes in weather, climate, oceans, and coasts; share that information; and conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources. NOAA’s work is divided among six line offices: National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS); National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS); National Ocean Service (NOS); National Weather Service (NWS); Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR); and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO). NOAA’s Mission Support provides planning, leadership, finances, information technology, educational programming, and other support across the line offices.

Congress provides NOAA with annual mandatory and discretionary appropriations. Mandatory appropriations, which generally comprise a small percentage of total NOAA funding, are disbursed to various accounts that support programs in NOS, NMFS, and OMAO. NOAA’s discretionary appropriations typically are included in the annual Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations acts. Discretionary appropriations support two broad accounts—Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF) and Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC)—as well as a few smaller accounts. This product focuses on NOAA’s FY2024 discretionary funding for ORF and PAC. It also notes potential topics of interest for Congress from NOAA’s FY2024 budget request, including NOAA’s satellite operations, science and data for economic development, and climate-related products and services.

Agency Funding

NOAA requested over \$7.1 billion in discretionary *direct obligations* for ORF and PAC for FY2024, including almost \$6.8 billion in appropriations (**Figure 1** and **Table 1**). NOAA requested a total of \$7.3 billion in direct obligations for all accounts. Direct obligations include annual appropriations, transfers, and recoveries from prior year obligations. For FY2023, Congress provided \$6.5 billion in annual ORF and PAC direct obligations and an additional \$150.8 million in supplemental funding through P.L. 117-328, for a total of \$6.7 billion (**Table 1**). According to NOAA, the supplemental amounts are considered “base or discretionary funding designated as emergency.” Supplemental appropriations are described in the right column. For FY2024, H.R. 5893, as introduced, would provide a total of \$5.8 billion in direct obligations; S. 2321, as reported, would provide \$6.9 billion in direct obligations.

Figure 1. ORF and PAC Annual Direct Obligations, FY2014-FY2024 (\$ in billions, nominal and adjusted)



Sources: CRS, from NOAA budget justifications, congressional explanatory statements, and Office of Management and Budget, *Historical Tables, Table 10.1*.

Notes: ORF = Operations, Research, and Facilities; PAC = Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction. Figure does not include supplemental appropriations. Direct obligations include appropriations, transfers, and recoveries from prior year obligations.

Supplemental Appropriations Available in FY2024

Congress also has made supplemental appropriations available to NOAA for ORF and PAC, including

- \$52.2 million for expenses related to hurricanes and wildfires in 2020 and 2021, through FY2024 (P.L. 117-43);
- \$1.2 billion for restoration, observation, modeling, forecasting activities, and other purposes, through FY2024 (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act; P.L. 117-58);
- \$3.3 billion for conservation, restoration, protection, construction, reviews, research and forecasting, computing, aircraft acquisition, and other purposes, through FY2026 (Inflation Reduction Act of 2022; P.L. 117-169); and
- \$527.5 million for expenses related to hurricanes, typhoons, flooding, and wildfires in 2022; fishing gear and techniques; aircraft acquisition; and other uses, through FY2024 or until expended (P.L. 117-328, of which \$150.8 million is included in **Table 1** amounts).

Table I. NOAA Annual Direct Obligations and Appropriations for Discretionary ORF and PAC Accounts
(\$ in millions, nominal)

Line Office and CPF/CDS	FY2023 Enacted ^a	FY2024 Base Level ^b	FY2024 Request ^b	H.R. 5893 and Related Exp. Mat. ^c	S. 2321 and S.Rept. 118-62	FY2024 Enacted
NESDIS	1,705.7	1,716.5	2,073.9	1,490.5	1,916.7	NA
NMFS	1,093.3	1,161.7	1,154.9	890.2	1,112.8	NA
NOS	693.4	744.4	687.7	644.7	694.7	NA
NWS	1,356.7	1,403.9	1,380.1	1,164.5	1,353.6	NA
OAR	761.3	792.0	786.3	706.1	751.3	NA
OMAO	460.7	469.9	459.0	379.4	447.7	NA
Mission Support	503.8	533.5	605.6	370.2	494.8	NA
CPF/CDS	111.5	37.7	0	(57.0 within NOS)	85.2	NA
Total Direct Obligations^d	6,686.4	6,821.9	7,147.4	5,771.3	6,856.7	NA
Total Appropriations^e	6,305.5	6,430.8	6,756.3	5,380.3	6,455.7	NA

Sources: CRS using the explanatory statement accompanying P.L. 117-328; NOAA, *Budget Estimates Fiscal Year 2024, Congressional Submission*; H.R. 5893, as introduced; explanatory materials for H.R. 5893 (October 31, 2023); S.Rept. 118-62; and S. 2321, as reported.

Notes: CPF/CDS = community project funding/congressionally directed spending; Exp. Mat. = explanatory material; NA = not available. See text for additional abbreviations. Components may not sum to totals shown due to rounding. Values are rounded to the nearest tenth.

- Amounts include both FY2023 annual direct obligations and the supplemental appropriations in Division N, Title II, of P.L. 117-328.
- NOAA calculated the FY2024 base level as equal to the FY2023 enacted amount plus expected “Adjustments-To-Base,” such as certain inflationary adjustments.
- Total direct obligations amounts in H.R. 5893 and tables in the explanatory materials differ (\$5,771,300,000 vs. \$5,645,623,000). Table I shows the line office amounts from the explanatory materials and the total direct obligations amount from H.R. 5893.
- Total Direct Obligations*, or total program or funding levels, include annual appropriations, transfers, and recoveries from prior year obligations, but exclude any supplemental appropriations, except *FY2023 Enacted* includes some supplemental appropriations from Division N, Title II, of P.L. 117-328.
- Total Appropriations* are a part of the total direct obligations. *Total Appropriations* include annual appropriations but exclude any supplemental appropriations, except *FY2023 Enacted* includes some supplemental appropriations from Division N, Title II, of P.L. 117-328.

Issues for Congress

NOAA’s FY2024 requested budget proposed changes to multiple activities, the largest portion of which was increased funding for activities under the agency-identified themes of satellites, science and data for economic development activities, and climate products and services. The agency also proposed reducing or eliminating funding for several activities across all of the line offices.

Satellites

NOAA’s NESDIS request includes increases for the Polar Weather Satellites (PWS) and Geostationary Extended Observations (GeoXO) programs. PWS includes the Joint Polar Satellite System and Polar Follow-On missions, which provide global meteorological observations for short- and midterm forecasts and weather warnings. GeoXO is the next generation of space-based environmental monitoring satellites. NOAA requested \$342.4 million (\$183.5 million enacted in FY2023) for PWS and \$417.4 million (\$285.0 million enacted in FY2023) for GeoXO programs. Both the explanatory materials for H.R. 5893 and S.Rept. 118-62 accompanying S. 2321 would provide the requested amount for PWS and did not state an amount for GeoXO.

Science and Data for Economic Development

NOAA requested additional funding for NMFS, NOS, NWS, OAR, and MS for activities that “foster environmental stewardship and optimize advances in

science and technology to create value-added, data-driven sustainable economic development, with a particular focus on the New Blue Economy.” NOAA’s requested increases include \$88.0 million (\$70.0 million enacted in FY2023) for the Office of Space Commerce (OSC) and \$223.2 million (\$203.9 million enacted in FY2023) to minimize the effects of offshore wind energy activities on NMFS scientific surveys. The explanatory materials would provide \$40.0 million for OSC and did not state an amount for these NMFS activities, while S.Rept. 118-62 would maintain the FY2023 amounts for OSC and NMFS in FY2024.

Climate Products and Services

NOAA requested additional funding across all of the line offices to continue implementing E.O. 14008, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad.” Under the theme, the agency requested \$87.9 million for the National Marine Sanctuary System (NMSS; \$68.0 million enacted in FY2023) and \$224.3 million (\$204.0 million enacted in FY2023) for OMAO for at-sea data collection and mission requirements. The explanatory materials would provide \$61.0 million for NMSS and \$166.0 million for OMAO activities; S.Rept. 118-62 would maintain the FY2023 amounts for NMSS and OMAO in FY2024.

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