



SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT

HEARING CHARTER

“A Review of the President’s Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration”

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

9:00 a.m.

2318 Rayburn House Office Building

Purpose

The purpose of the hearing is to examine the President’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and related issues within the Science Committee’s jurisdiction. This hearing is an opportunity for Members to discuss their priorities related to the agency’s mission.

Witness

- **Dr. Neil Jacobs, Ph.D.**, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Background

The President’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget request for NOAA is \$4.54 billion in discretionary appropriations, a \$1.1 billion decrease from the FY 2026 enacted level. ¹The request seeks to build a weather-ready nation and ensure NOAA’s weather products and services are accessible and useful to all Americans.

¹ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, FY 2027 Congressional Justification, <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2026-04/FY2027-NOAA-CJ-Submission.pdf> (last visited Apr 22, 2026).

NOAA's core mission and activities include weather forecasting, management of fisheries, coastal and ocean resources, as well as cross-cutting research to support and advance these operational areas. NOAA carries out this mission through six major line offices:

- **National Ocean Service (NOS):** Responsible for mapping and charting coastal areas and providing other navigation support services.²
- **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):** Responsible for stewardship of living marine resources through the conservation, management, and promotion of healthy ecosystems.³
- **Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR):** Responsible for research in support of most NOAA missions, including atmospheric, coastal, and oceanic sciences, air quality research, ecosystem research, and fisheries and marine mammal research.⁴
- **National Weather Service (NWS):** Responsible for weather forecasts and warnings.⁵
- **National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service (NESDIS):** Responsible for the development and operation of satellites that monitor and transmit data for weather forecasting, space weather forecasting, and Earth and ocean science research.⁶
- **Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO):** Manages a variety of specialized ships and aircraft for the collection of oceanographic, atmospheric, hydrographic, and fisheries data.⁷

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology has jurisdiction over NWS, NESDIS, and OAR, and shares jurisdiction over NOS and OMAO.

The most notable aspect of the FY27 budget request is the proposal to move most of OAR research activities into line offices to align research closer to operational missions. This proposal was made in the FY26 budget request but was not included when Congress passed H.R. 6938 – Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, which was signed into law in January 2026.

Other structural changes in the FY27 budget request include proposals to move Endangered Species Act (ESA) authorities to the Department of the Interior and a proposal to transfer the Office of Space Commerce to the Department of Commerce as a standalone office reporting directly to the Secretary.

² National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration US Department of Commerce, NOAA's National Ocean Service NOAA's National Ocean Service - About Us (2013), <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/about/> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

³ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, About NOAA Fisheries, NOAA.GOV, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/about-us> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

⁴ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, About NOAA Research, NOAA.GOV, <https://research.noaa.gov/About-Us> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

⁵ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, About National Weather Service, WEATHER.GOV, <https://www.weather.gov/about/> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

⁶ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, About National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, NOAA.GOV, <https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/about/what-we-do> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

⁷ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, About Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, NOAA.GOV, <https://www.omaao.noaa.gov/about> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

Table 1 shows the primary accounts, or line offices, of NOAA’s budget.

Table 1: NOAA FY 2027 Budget Discretionary Spending Request (dollars in millions)^{8 9}

Account	FY 24 Enacted	FY 26 Enacted	FY 27 Request	FY27 Request versus FY26 Enacted	
National Ocean Service	\$911M	\$843M	\$363M	(\$480M)	57%
National Marine Fisheries Service	\$1,271M	\$1,298M	\$768M	(\$530M)	41%
Oceanic and Atmospheric Research	\$738M	\$649M	\$0	(\$649M)	100%
National Weather Service	\$1,356M	\$1,464M	\$1,504M	\$40M	2.7%
National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service	\$1,800M	\$1,666M	\$1,576M	(\$162M)	5.4%
Mission Support	\$470M	\$426M	\$312M	(\$114M)	26.7%
Office of Marine and Aviation Operations	\$508M	\$503M	\$602M	\$99M	19.9%
Total Discretionary Appropriations	\$6,336M	\$5,634M	\$4,540M	\$1,184M	21%

FY25 was a Continuing Resolution of FY24 numbers.

National Ocean Service (NOS)

NOS enables the safe, sustainable, and efficient use of marine and coastal resources across a range of economic sectors, including maritime commerce and marine transportation, fishing and aquaculture, energy and minerals development, and coastal recreation. Businesses in the maritime community rely on NOS for a range of decisions, from how much cargo can be loaded to choosing the safest and most efficient route between two points. They use NOS data, tools, and services to plan seasonally for ship schedules to service global trade more safely and efficiently. Coastal communities also rely on NOS for water-level models, flood-risk assessments, and forecasting capabilities.

NOS has three main mission areas reflected in its budget: Navigation, Observations, & Positioning; Coastal Science & Assessment; and Ocean & Coastal Management and Services. The FY27 request for NOS is \$363 million, a 57% (\$480 million) decrease from the FY26 enacted level.¹⁰

⁸ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, FY 2026 Congressional Justification, <https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/NOAA%20FY26%20Congressional%20Justification.pdf> (last visited Apr 22, 2026).

⁹ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

¹⁰ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

Within NOS, NOAA is requesting a \$46 million decrease in its Navigation, Observations, and Positioning Services, providing core support for maritime commerce, navigation, and positioning services. A decrease of \$17 million is proposed for Ocean Exploration and Research to eliminate grant funding for technological advancement of vehicles and sensors, and other activities. The FY27 request for Sustained Ocean Observations and Monitoring activities is \$11,140,000, a 79% decrease from FY26 levels. NOAA intends to prioritize maintaining the Argo and Drifter programs and global observing data for forecast products and improvements. Argo is an international program that collects information from inside the ocean using free-drifting profiling floats. These floats drift with the ocean currents and move up and down between the surface and the mid-water level. The floats are distributed over the global ocean to measure temperature and salinity in the upper 2,000 meters.¹¹

The Administration is proposing to terminate the Integrated Ocean Observation System Regional Observation activities, while prioritizing national Data Management and Cyberinfrastructure (DMAC) capacity to integrate the remaining Federal, academic, private sector, and non-profit ocean data. The budget request also proposes to terminate the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, but proposes to continue to provide approximately \$4 million to support critical operational Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) forecasts. NOAA also requests the termination of all Integrated Ocean Acidification activities, including support for activities authorized under the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

NMFS is responsible for the management and conservation of living marine resources within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)—the area extending from three to 200 nautical miles offshore. NMFS implements science-based conservation and management actions to sustain long-term use and promote the health of coastal and marine ecosystems.

Broadly, NMFS is tasked with assessing and predicting the status of fish stocks, setting catch limits, ensuring compliance with fisheries regulations, and reducing bycatch. Most of these activities fall under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, ESA, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), which are outside of the Science Committee's primary jurisdiction.

The FY27 request for NMFS is \$768 million, a 41% (\$530 million) decrease from the FY26 enacted level.¹² Part of the decrease for NMFS is due to the Administration's proposal to consolidate all ESA and MMPA activities within the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. NOAA intends to use the remainder to fund its core authorities under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)

¹¹ Argo Program, NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory (2026), <https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/argo/> (last visited Apr 23, 2026).

¹² *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

OAR is the primary research arm of NOAA, conducting scientific research, environmental studies, and technology development necessary to improve NOAA operations. OAR operates through a national network of ten laboratories, 16 Cooperative Institutes, 34 Sea Grant College Programs, and specialized programs.¹³ Research plans and products are developed in partnership with academia and other federal agencies and are peer-reviewed and widely distributed.

The FY27 budget request for OAR is \$0, a 100% (\$649 million) decrease from the FY26 enacted level due to the Administration's proposal to transfer OAR research activities to the remaining line offices.¹⁴

National Weather Service (NWS)

NWS provides weather, hydrologic, and seasonal forecasts and warnings for the United States, adjacent waters, and ocean areas, and maintains a national infrastructure of observing systems that gather and process data worldwide from the land, sea, and air. NWS operates six Regional Headquarters, 13 River Forecast Centers, 21 Center Weather Service Units, and 122 Weather Forecast Offices across the country that issue daily weather warnings, advisories, and short-term forecasts for their respective local areas.¹⁵ NWS also leads efforts to advance Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS) to better enable emergency personnel and public safety officials to make decisions to preserve life and property, as well as efforts to make the United States a Weather-Ready Nation, where operations help the public prepare and respond to extreme weather events.

The FY27 request for NWS is \$1.504 billion, a 2.7% (\$40 million) increase from the FY26 enacted level.¹⁶

Within NWS, the FY27 budget request for NOAA's analysis, forecast, and support activities is \$603.5 million, a reduction of \$4.7 million. The decrease is due to NOAA reducing the number of deferred maintenance and replacement projects at NWS field facilities. The budget request also proposes a modest reduction for marine observations by \$1.8 million. The intent is to physically remove seven weather buoys across the system (4 are currently not operational), thereby leaving 97 operational buoys intact. The budget request includes a \$5 million increase for the Radar Next program for a total of \$21.2 million. The additional funding is to continue efforts for the acquisition, integration, and implementation of a follow-on radar capability to provide continuity of data as the existing NEXRAD system nears its end-of-life utility. NOAA is seeking an increase of \$7.1 million to continue the transition of the legacy Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) to AWIPS in the Cloud, including continuing parallel operation of both systems to mitigate risk through testing and training. The FY27 budget request includes a reduction of \$8.3 million for high-performance computing capabilities. Within NWS Science and Technology Integration activities, the budget request proposes to reduce research grants related to streamflow and rainfall by \$1.9 million. NOAA requests an increase of \$5

¹³ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *NOAA Research Laboratories*, NOAA.GOV, <https://research.noaa.gov/Labs-Programs/OAR-Labs> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

¹⁴ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

¹⁵ *About National Weather Service*, *supra* note 5.

¹⁶ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

million to continue efforts for the acquisition, integration, and implementation of the Radar Next program. The agency is also requesting an increase of \$2 million to invest in the recapitalization of existing observing system networks through refurbishment and extension of the useful life of NWS observational assets.

National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS)

NESDIS procures, launches, and manages the nation's civil operational environmental satellites. This office collects data from NOAA's satellites and sensor networks, multiple partner satellites (both U.S. and internationally owned), and commercial sources, and uses them to develop and distribute products and information to the public. 95% of the data used in weather forecasting models comes from satellites, and NESDIS operates 15 active satellites that NOAA owns or operates, including five geostationary, five polar-orbiting, and two deep-space satellites.¹⁷ NESDIS is also in the process of developing the next generation of satellites, named Geostationary Extended Observations (GeoXO), to further protect people and property in an increasingly complex environment.

The FY27 request for NESDIS is \$1.66 billion, a 5.4% (\$162 million) decrease from the FY26 enacted level.¹⁸

Within NESDIS, the budget request includes a reduction of \$47.8 million as a result of planned streamlining of satellite operations, leveraging automation at the NOAA Satellite Operations Facility, as well as a shift toward leveraging private sector capabilities. This includes moving toward data operations through a government-owned, contractor-operated model, starting with the outsourcing of GOES-R series data operations. The FY27 budget request includes a modest increase of \$2.1 million for the restructuring of the GeoXO program, the next series of geostationary satellites that will eventually replace the GOES-R series. The Administration is seeking a total of \$500 million to support the GeoXO program. NOAA proposes a 27% decrease of \$16.3 million for product development, readiness, and application for satellite observations. NOAA is seeking a \$5 million increase to support its development activities of the Near Earth Orbit Network (NEON). This satellite network is intended to be part of the low-Earth orbit follow-on series after the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) has reached the end of its planned lifespan. The Administration is requesting an increase of \$9.75 million to expand NESDIS space-based commercial data acquisition activities.

Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)

OMAO maintains ships and aircraft used by NOAA to gather and collect oceanographic, atmospheric, hydrographic, and fisheries data, which supports NOAA's core missions. OMAO also provides centralized coordination, support, and guidance for uncrewed systems across NOAA.

¹⁷ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *Current Satellite Missions*, NOAA.GOV, <https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/current-satellite-missions/currently-flying> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

¹⁸ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

The research and survey ships operated, managed, and maintained by OMAO comprise the largest fleet of federal research ships in the nation. NOAA aircraft provide a wide range of capabilities, including hurricane reconnaissance and research, marine mammal and fisheries assessment, and coastal mapping. NOAA's fleet of 10 crewed aircraft is housed at the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center in Lakeland, FL, and flown by the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps, one of the eight uniformed services of the United States.¹⁹ NOAA is currently authorized for up to 500 NOAA Corps officers, excluding flag officers.²⁰ The FY27 request for OMAO is \$602 million, a 19.9% (\$99 million) increase from the FY26 enacted level.²¹

Within OMAO, the budget request includes a reduction for NOAA fleet operations of \$24.7 million, a decrease of 11% from FY26 enacted levels. The agency intends to use the remaining \$204 million to deliver 2,000 days at sea in FY27, focused on supporting national priorities. The Administration is seeking \$7.5 million less for the NOAA Corps to conform with proposed alterations of program priorities, specifically, reducing 18 full-time positions to reflect the increased use of uncrewed systems. For FY27, NOAA is requesting an increase of \$75 million for Uncrewed Systems Acquisitions. The Administration's proposal increases funding to modernize the NOAA fleet by supplementing crewed activities to substantially expand NOAA's data collection capabilities with uncrewed transoceanic assets that work independently from NOAA's ships and aircraft. The budget request also includes an increase of \$60 million to accelerate the acquisition of a Class C science vessel to expand NOAA's in situ collection of oceanographic and fisheries data.²²

Mission Support (MS)

The Mission Support line office (previously called "Program Support") supports corporate services and agency management. This includes the Office of the Under Secretary, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Program, Planning and Integration Office, and the NOAA Education Program. The FY27 request for MS is \$312 million, a 26.7% (\$114 million) decrease from the FY26 enacted level.²³

Within MS, the budget request includes a \$4.4 million decrease for IT security. NOAA intends to defer the start date of the Continuous Authorization to Operate program to FY29 and support Risk Management Framework compliance activities to High Value Asset systems only.

¹⁹ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *About the NOAA Fleet*, NOAA.GOV, <https://www.oma.noaa.gov/ao/about> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

²⁰ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *About the NOAA Corps*, NOAA.GOV, <https://www.oma.noaa.gov/noaa-corps/about-noaa-corps> (last visited Apr 17, 2026).

²¹ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51.

²² *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 20.

²³ *FY 2027 Budget Summary*, *supra* note 1, p. 51