



Memorandum

To: Presidential Transition Team
From: Josie Quintrell, Director
Re: Ocean Observing Needs in the New Administration
Date: December 16, 2008

The Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) is a vital tool for tracking, predicting, managing, and adapting to changes in our coastal and ocean environment. From driving our weather and climate, to providing highways for marine commerce and transportation, recreational opportunities, and natural resources, the oceans are critically important to our society. An integrated network for monitoring the oceans can improve our ability to predict hurricanes, floods, and climate change, helping us to protect lives, property, and the environment.

IOOS is a catalyst for improving people's lives and livelihoods. Timely and reliable ocean information is critical for safe marine commerce, preparing for and responding to coastal hazards, protecting public health and safety, and protecting living marine resources. IOOS allows government to work more efficiently, avoiding redundancy through the operation of a single system that can serve multiple needs, enabled by innovated information technology. As a program that combines Federal agencies with a network of regional systems, IOOS offers a framework to provide coastal ocean information to the regional ocean governance initiatives and to assist states prepared and adapt to climate changes.

IOOS is already demonstrating the value of ocean observations to fishermen, commercial mariners, local utility companies, water management agencies, fisheries managers, emergency managers, recreational boaters and other users. To continue to provide these services and to grow the system, we request the following actions:

- 1) Support the passage of the IOOS legislation to establish NOAA as the lead federal agency, recognize the Regional Associations and to address several key administrative issues.
- 2) Fund IOOS at the levels consistent with the national need. The U.S. Ocean Commission recommended \$138 million to initiate the program, of which \$50 million should support regional IOOS.
- 3) Modernize NOAA's IT structure to allow for innovation and partners with research community and private sector.
- 4) Establish a National IOOS Office to facilitate interagency coordination and interoperability.

For more information, please contact Josie Quintrell, Director, NFRA at 207-725-8143 or jquintrell@suscom-maine.net. www.usnfra.org

