

**U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY**

**HEARING CHARTER**

*Examining NOAA's Climate Service Proposal*

**Wednesday, June 22, 2011**

**10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**2318 Rayburn House Office Building**

**PURPOSE**

On Wednesday, June 22, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will hold a hearing to review the Administration's FY12 budget request proposal to reorganize NOAA to create a climate service.

**WITNESSES**

- **Dr. Jane Lubchenco**, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- **Mr. Robert Winokur**, Deputy Oceanographer, Department of the Navy

**BACKGROUND**

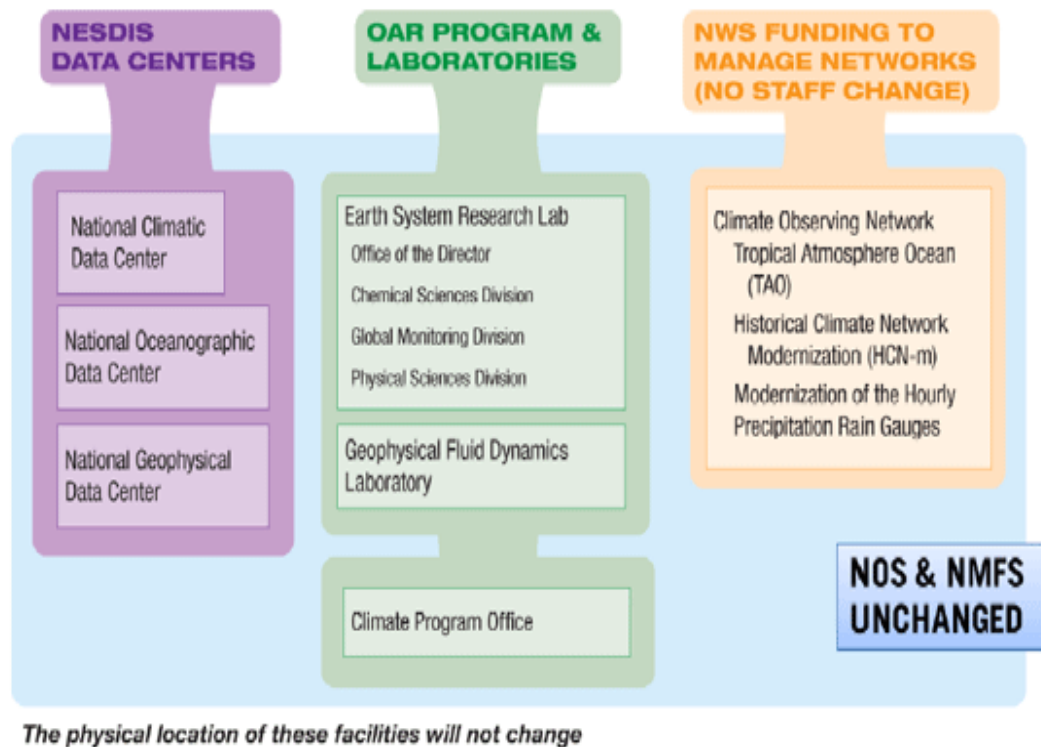
The Administration's FY12 budget request included a proposal for the creation of a Climate Service at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The stated goal of this new line office is to bring together NOAA's existing climate capabilities under a single entity to more efficiently and effectively respond to demands for climate services. According to NOAA, the Climate Service "will provide a single, reliable and authoritative source for climate data, information, and decision-support services to help individuals, businesses, communities and governments make smart choices in anticipation of a climate changed future."

The proposal would constitute the largest reorganization of NOAA since its establishment in 1970. NOAA proposes to spend \$346 million on the new Climate Service in FY12. It intends for this effort to be budget neutral, paid for through the transfer of transfer assets and resources from existing line offices (Figure 1). The assets that would move include:

- Three data centers from the National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service (NESDIS)
- Two science labs, including the Earth System Research Lab and the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Lab, and the Climate Program Office from the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)
- The Climate Prediction Center and management oversight for the Climate Observing Network from the National Weather Service (NWS)

**Figure 1. Building Blocks of Proposed NOAA Climate Service.**

## Building Blocks of Proposed NOAA Climate Service



The National Ocean Service (NOS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and Program Planning and Integration (PPI) would be untouched in this reorganization.

The new line office would be subdivided into three offices: the Office of Climate Research; the Office of Observation, Monitoring and Prediction; and the Office of Service Development and Delivery. The management structure that would oversee these three offices would consist of an Assistant Administrator for Climate Services, a Deputy Assistant Administrator for Climate Services, and a Climate Senior Scientist. These new positions would not require Senate confirmation, which is consistent with the structure of other NOAA line offices.

Table 1 shows the NOAA FY12 budget request and the impact the creation of the Climate Service has on the three line offices its assets come from. Most notably, OAR is reduced by 53 percent—by far the largest reduction from any line office—due to the loss of approximately \$203 million in research funding to the Climate Service.

**Table 1:** NOAA FY 2012 Budget Request for Climate Service Reorganization (dollars in millions)

Account	FY08 Actual	FY10 Enacted	FY11 Request	FY12 Request	Climate Reorg	FY12 Request versus FY10 Enacted	
						\$	%
National Ocean Service*	536.0	578.7	550.6	558.6	0.0	(20.1)	(3.5)
Oceanic and Atmospheric Research	398.0	449.1	464.9	212.0	(225.9)	(237.1)	(52.8)
National Weather Service	911.0	999.8	1003.2	988.0	(15.0)	(11.8)	(1.2)
National Environmental Satellite Data Information Service/NESS	955.0	1398.5	2209.0	2015.4	(111.0)	616.9	44.1
Climate Service	0.0	0.0	0.0	346.2	346.2	346.2	--
National Marine Fisheries Service**	829.0	1008.2	992.4	997.5	0.0	(10.7)	(1.1)
Program Support	446.0	485.9	515.1	524.8		38.9	8.0
Transfers/Rescissions		(24.8)	(50.3)	(144.8)			
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>4075.0</b>	<b>4748.4</b>	<b>5554.5</b>	<b>5497.7</b>		<b>749.3</b>	<b>15.8</b>

\* Jurisdiction of the NOS line office is shared with the Resources Committee.

\*\* NMFS is solely in the jurisdiction of the Resources Committee.

### *Climate Service Proposal Timeline*

NOAA first announced its intent to create a climate service on February 8, 2010. This announcement was accompanied by the creation of six new NOAA Regional Climate Services Director positions at laboratories across the country. Additionally, Administrator Lubchenco appointed senior officials Tom Karl and Chet Koblinsky as Climate Service Transition Director and Deputy Director, respectively. In a December 2010 interview regarding NOAA’s Climate Service activities, Karl said “We’ve moved in...we’re waiting for the marriage certificate, but we’re acting like we have a Climate Service.” This statement, as well as the absence of a formal Climate Service budget submission to Congress, raised questions regarding NOAA’s intended path for creation of the new office.

Earlier in 2010, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (P.L. 111-117) included language directing NOAA to contract with the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) to study the formation of a climate service at NOAA.

*The conferees direct NOAA to enter into a contract with the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) within 60 days after the enactment of this Act for a study and analysis of organizational options for a National Climate Service within NOAA, emphasizing maximum effectiveness and efficiency. The study should consider how to provide information at the global, regional, and State levels over varying timescales; support interaction among the government and various users, stakeholders, researchers, and information providers of climate information in both the private and public sectors; develop and distribute products and information that will support decision-making to better prepare the Nation for climate variability and climate change; coordinate and align existing programs and resources internal and external to NOAA to reduce duplications and leverage existing climate-related resources; and provide estimates on projected funding levels. The study shall be completed no later than 120 days after the contract is awarded.*

As such, NOAA delayed its formal proposal until the NAPA study was complete. The scope of the study was defined by four study questions:

- 1) Are NOAA's organizational design criteria appropriate?
- 2) Is NOAA's proposal to align core climate programs and resources into a Climate Science and Service Line Office the recommended approach?
- 3) Are NOAA's current resources sufficient to establish a Climate Science and Service Line Office that can meet current and future demands?
- 4) What additional business practices should NOAA consider to enhance climate services beyond NOAA's proposed organizational changes?

Limited to the scope of the study questions, the NAPA did not consider the potential impacts of a new Climate Service line office on non-climate-focused activities or the functionality of other line offices, such as NOAA's research enterprise housed in OAR. Although NAPA endorsed NOAA's proposal for the creation of a Climate Service within the scope of the questions listed above, its report emphasized that it "is skeptical that current funding levels (even as augmented at levels consistent with the President's FY 2011 budget request) will adequately sustain public and private sector expectations for climate services and research in the years ahead."<sup>1</sup>

On September 22, 2010, NOAA released a draft Climate Service vision and strategic framework for public comment. On January 24, 2011 NOAA released a new version of the Climate Service vision and strategic framework reflecting input from the public comment period. Finally, on February 14 2011, the President's 2012 budget was released, containing the formal proposal to establish a Climate Service in NOAA.

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<sup>1</sup> National Academy of Public Administration. *Building Strong for Tomorrow: NOAA Climate Service*. September 13, 2010.

Table 2 shows the operating plan proposed by NOAA for FY 2011.

**Table 2:** NOAA FY 2011 Spend Plan (dollars in millions)

<b>FY 2011 Operating Plan</b>	<b>FY 2010 Enacted (Conference)</b>	<b>Adjusted FY 2011 President's Budget</b>	<b>FY 2011 Full-Year CR Spend Plan</b>	<b>FY 2012 President's Budget</b>
National Ocean Service	578.7	549.1	<b>547.6</b>	559.6
Oceanic and Atmospheric Research	449.1	463.9	<b>427.0</b>	212.0
National Environmental Satellite, Information and Data Service	1,398.5	2,208.3	<b>1,442.1</b>	2,015.4
National Weather Service	999.8	997.9	<b>968.5</b>	988.0
Climate Service	--	--	<b>--</b>	346.2
National Marine Fisheries Service	1,008.2	989.1	<b>965.5</b>	1,001.1
Program Support	486.0	513.7	<b>490.2</b>	524.8
<b>Totals:</b>	4,725.2	5,580.0	<b>4,642.0</b>	5,544.1

Signed into law on April 15, 2011, The Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10) prohibits the use of funding to implement, establish or create a NOAA Climate Service.

*Section 1348. None of the funds made available by this division may be used to implement, establish, or create a NOAA Climate Service as described in the ``Draft NOAA Climate Service Strategic Vision and Framework'' published at 75 Federal Register 57739 (September 22, 2010) and updated on December 20, 2010: Provided, That this limitation shall expire on September 30, 2011.*