

Updated August 15, 2024

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) FY2025 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 climate, weather, 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 has provided 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 (CJS) appropriations act. 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 the Administration's request for NOAA's FY2025 discretionary funding for ORF and PAC. It describes some of NOAA's proposed changes to NESDIS, NOS, and OAR line office activities and what the House and Senate would provide via committee reports.

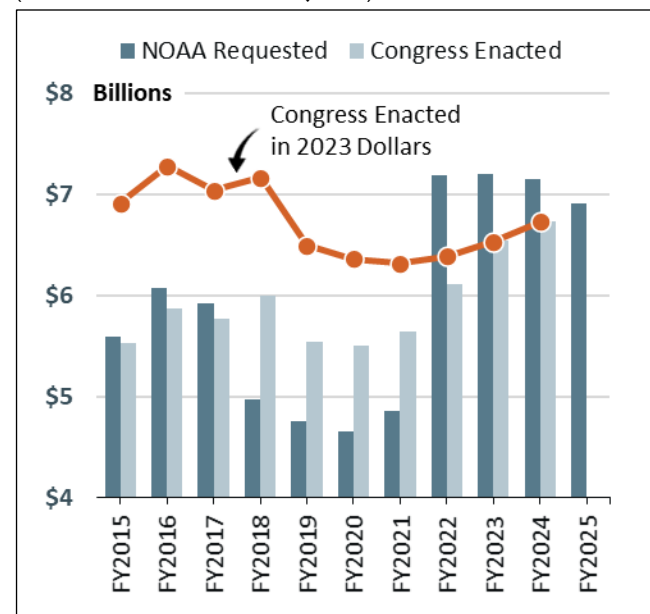
Agency Funding

NOAA requested over \$6.9 billion in discretionary *direct obligations* for ORF and PAC for FY2025, including almost \$6.5 billion in appropriations (**Figure 1**). NOAA requested a total of \$7.1 billion in direct obligations for all accounts. Direct obligations include annual appropriations, transfers, and recoveries from prior year obligations. The request is \$129.0 million above the FY2025 base level and \$175.1 million over the FY2024 enacted amount. NOAA calculated the FY2025 base level as equal to the FY2024 Annualized Continuing Resolution (P.L. 118-40) amount plus expected "Adjustments-To-Base," such as certain inflationary adjustments. In some cases, the FY2024 Annualized Continuing Resolution amount was lower than Congress provided as the full year FY2024 amount. Proposed changes to the base level reflect Administration priorities. For FY2024, Congress provided \$6.7 billion in annual ORF and PAC discretionary direct obligations (**Figure 1**). Congress also has provided NOAA with

supplemental appropriations available to the agency in FY2025; these are described in the following section.

Figure 1. ORF and PAC Annual Direct Obligations, FY2015-FY2025

(\$ 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: See text for abbreviations. Figure does not include supplemental appropriations. Direct obligations include appropriations, transfers, and recoveries from prior year obligations.

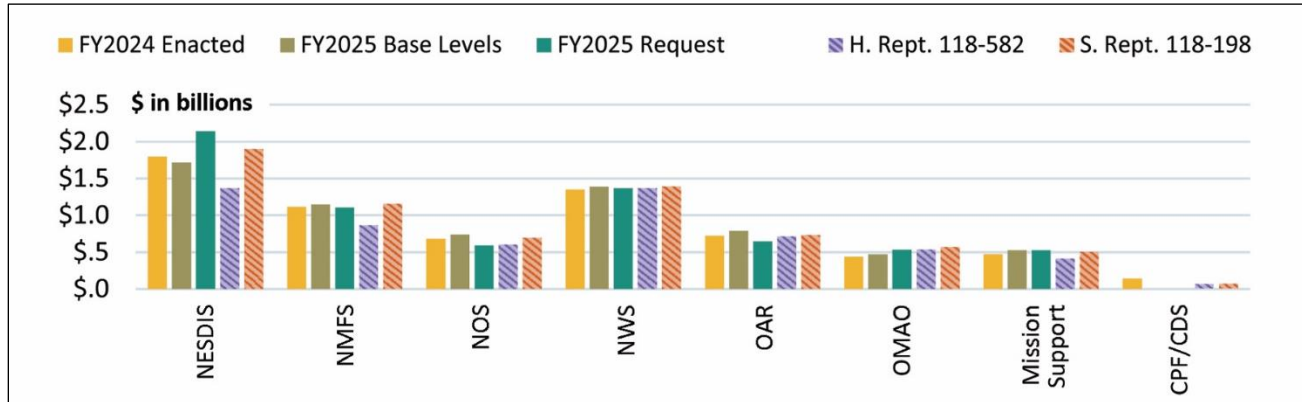
Supplemental Appropriations Available in FY2025

Congress provided supplemental appropriations to NOAA for ORF and PAC that are available in FY2025. According to NOAA, the following amounts are available in FY2025:

- \$515.6 million for restoration, observation, modeling, forecasting activities, and other purposes (provided under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act [IIJA]; P.L. 117-58);
- \$330.0 million for conservation, restoration, protection, construction, reviews, research and forecasting, computing, aircraft acquisition, and other purposes (provided under P.L. 117-169, known as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 [IRA]); and
- \$34.0 million for fishing gear and techniques, aircraft acquisition, and other uses (provided under P.L. 117-328).

Figure 2. NOAA Annual ORF and PAC Discretionary Direct Obligations (\$ in billions, nominal)

Figure is interactive in the HTML version of this In Focus



Sources: CRS using NOAA, *Budget Estimates Fiscal Year 2025*, Congressional Submission; explanatory statement accompanying P.L. 118-42; and line office amounts as listed in tables within H.Rept. 118-582 and S.Rept. 118-198.

Notes: See text for abbreviations and FY2025 base level definition. The total direct obligations for ORF and PAC in the text of H.Rept. 118-582, S.Rept. 118-198, H.R. 9026, and S. 4795 differ from the totals of summing the direct obligations by line office in the tables within H.Rept. 118-582 and S.Rept. 118-198. This figure uses the line office amounts as shown in the report tables. Direct obligations, or total program or funding levels, include annual appropriations, transfers, and recoveries from prior year obligations but exclude any supplemental appropriations.

Issues for Congress

NOAA requested changes across the agency for FY2025, with the largest funding changes in the NESDIS, OAR, and NOS line offices (**Figure 2**) relative to the FY2024 enacted level and FY2025 base level. NOAA requested smaller changes for the other line offices, including decreases for NMFS and increases for NWS, OMAO, and Mission Support. The House and Senate Appropriations Committees have reported funding for the CJS bills. Neither chamber has passed CJS bills for FY2025 as of August 2024.

NESDIS Changes

NOAA's FY2025 request for NESDIS is higher than the FY2024 enacted amount and FY2025 base level. It includes increases from the FY2025 base level for Polar Weather Satellites (PWS), which provide global meteorological observations for short- and midterm forecasts and weather warnings, and Geostationary Earth Orbit (GEO), which provides space-based environmental monitoring. NOAA requested \$342.4 million for FY2025 (\$342.4 million FY2024 enacted; \$183.5 million FY2025 base level) for PWS and \$798.4 million (\$285.0 million FY2024 enacted; \$285.0 million FY2025 base level) for GEO programs. H.Rept. 118-582 and S.Rept. 118-198 would provide the requested amount for PWS and \$150.0 million or \$625.0 million, respectively, for GEO.

NOS Changes

NOAA's proposed NOS changes would decrease or terminate funding for nonfederal grants and cooperative agreements. The largest changes would include terminating

- Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending (CPF/CDS; \$54.6 million FY2024 enacted; \$37.7 million FY2025 base level), for which H.Rept. 118-582 would provide \$67.5 million and S.Rept. 118-198 would provide \$69.1 million in total, a subset of which would be for NOS projects, and
- base funding for the National Coastal Resilience Fund (\$32.0 million FY2024 enacted; \$34.0 million FY2025 base level), which H.Rept. 118-582 would fund at \$15.0 million and S.Rept. 118-198 at \$34.0 million.

NOAA also would decrease funding for Integrated Ocean Observing System regional observations by \$32.5 million (\$42.5 million FY2024 enacted; \$42.5 million FY2025 base level), which H.Rept. 118-582 would fund at \$56.0 million and S.Rept. 118-198 at \$43.5 million, and decrease funding for NOS competitive research grants by \$17.5 million (\$20.0 million FY2024 enacted; \$22.5 million FY2025 base level), which H.Rept. 118-582 would support with \$22.7 million and S.Rept. 118-198 with \$20.0 million. NOAA requested some of the changes (and those for OAR; see below) to support "other NOAA and Administration priorities." NOAA plans to use funds from IJA and IRA for some FY2025 NOS activities (e.g., \$232.5 million of IJA funds).

OAR Changes

NOAA's proposed OAR changes would decrease or terminate funding for nonfederal grants and cooperative agreements. NOAA did not request funding for CPF/CDS in FY2025 (\$19.2 million FY2024 enacted; \$20.8 million FY2025 base level). H.Rept. 118-582 would provide no OAR CPF funds; S.Rept. 118-198 would potentially impart a subset of the total CDS funds to OAR. The request would also terminate the acquisition of a phased array radar (PAR) as it was acquired via FY2023-FY2024 funds (both H.Rept. 118-582 and S.Rept. 118-198 would provide some funding for PAR). NOAA requested decreased ocean exploration and research funding by \$21.0 million (\$46.0 million FY2024 enacted; \$46.4 million FY2025 base level), which H.Rept. 118-582 would fund at the FY2024 level and S.Rept. 118-198 would fund at \$46.5 million. NOAA would terminate Sea Grant aquaculture research (\$14.0 million FY2024 enacted; \$14.0 million FY2025 base level), which both H.Rept. 118-582 and S.Rept. 118-198 would fund at the FY2024 level. NOAA plans to use funds from IJA and IRA for some FY2025 OAR activities (e.g., \$36.6 million of IJA funds).

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