

Friends of NOAA Reception Remarks

Dr. Jane Lubchenco
Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere
and NOAA Administrator

May 20, 2009
AS DELIVERED

Thank you Admiral Watkins for the gracious introduction and welcome. Thank you Representative Kennedy, Representative Delahunt, and Representative Ehlers for your words of support and for highlighting some of the many important issues we must address. I am encouraged that so many people took the time to join us tonight and thank you for coming.

Today we celebrated the 3rd Annual NOAA Day on Capitol Hill and I am excited by the tremendous interest shown in NOAA by Members, staff, and friends who visited our displays to learn more about who we are and the work we do to provide weather and climate information and conserve and protect the nation's coastal, marine, and Great Lakes' resources.

I would like to especially thank the Friends of NOAA for hosting this event. I am proud that NOAA has such great partners in the Friends of NOAA and their member organizations.

President Obama has shown a commitment to bring good science to good government; He nominated the NOAA Administrator and other members of his science team in mid December, months and months ahead of any previous administrations science team nominations.

I left the world of academia, having taught marine biology and environmental science at Harvard and Oregon State University for more than 30 years – a job that I loved. I was able to juggle a wonderful combination of teaching, research, outreach, and service.

The opportunity to lead a dynamic agency and have a hand in connecting science to policy and management in a direct fashion, to work with the many wonderful people at NOAA on issues ranging from oceans to climate, to weather on Earth and in space, and to help President Obama achieve his vision was too much to resist.

This is a momentous time for NOAA. We sit at the center of key issues of significant import for the Nation. Our agenda is ambitious but achievable; I

believe that now is the time, with the President's inspiration and the best science as our guide, for NOAA to:

1. spur the creation of new jobs and industries
2. revive our fisheries and the economies and communities they support
3. improve weather forecasting and disaster warnings
4. provide credible information about climate change and ocean acidification to Americans, and
5. protect and restore our coastal ocean ecosystems.

NOAA's ability to deliver on this agenda will require your strong support and engagement.

I am very proud of NOAA's record of Science, Service, and Stewardship. We will continue to honor this record as we work with our friends in Congress on key pieces of legislation during the coming months, including our budget priorities.

I am pleased that the FY 2010 NOAA budget request totals \$4.484B, an increase of 2.5 percent, or \$110M over the FY2009 Omnibus. This is but a down payment on the work that we need to do. We have been very careful to reallocate resources, maximize efficiencies, and ensure the highest priorities are addressed in the

request. The budget supports core mission functions for environmental prediction and stewardship and focuses on our two top management challenges for satellites and fisheries. The request also provides added funds to support climate research, observations and services, and improve coastal stewardship.

NOAA's science, service, and stewardship touches the daily lives of every person in the United States and in much of the world. From weather forecasts in the Midwest to fisheries management on the East Coast, from safe navigation to coastal services in the Gulf, from remote sensing to climate research and ocean exploration, NOAA's products and services contribute to the foundation of a healthy economy.

A priority focus for me this year is on the climate science and services that the nation needs, and NOAA currently provides. The climate challenge before us is real. Through sustained federal and extramural partnerships and collaboration, the nation has realized significant progress in our understanding of climate change. From concerns about droughts and sea level rise to changes in the chemistry of the ocean, there is a real hunger for more and better information. NOAA is equipped, and ready to work with its partners, to keep providing this information.

A vigorous interagency dialogue about a National Climate Service, led by OSTP, is currently underway. NOAA is well-positioned to build on its current strengths and play a lead role in this effort. The nation needs an honest broker of climate change-related information that can inform effective decision-making by industry, government, and civil society. NOAA is prepared to build upon its broad range of capabilities, integrate across its organization, and create innovative partnerships with other agencies, institutions, and the private sector. I welcome the work Congress has already done to address the need of establishing a National Climate Service.

NOAA works closely with partners and the communities in states and territories in providing stewardship of the special places for which it has responsibility. From the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Pacific, to the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve on Maine's coast, our partnerships with federal, state, tribal, and local agencies and organizations is our most powerful tool.

I am pleased to be at the helm of an agency focused on integrated science, service, and stewardship. We will uphold the rule of law, we will produce stellar science, respect the integrity of science, and base our decision on scientific knowledge.

Much of what we have been able to accomplish has been due to the long-standing and strong support we have received from Members of Congress and congressional staff. On behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce, I would like to thank you and invite you to continue to be our strong partners and supporters.