



Lands Legacy Initiative



\$105 Million in FY 2000

NOAA's FY2000 budget requests \$105 million of new funding to fulfill the environmental mandates outlined in the Administration's Lands Legacy Initiative. The Nation's wetlands, estuaries, rivers, and other coastal habitats are critically important for supporting wildlife, commercial fisheries, recreational opportunities, and livable communities. Federal efforts to protect America's valuable ocean and coastal resources will be significantly strengthened, and state and community efforts to implement "smart growth" strategies will be bolstered through the requested funding. America's ocean and coastal areas, the gateways to our nation, are increasingly threatened by a whole suite of activities, including coastal population growth, development, maritime commerce, commercial and recreational fishing, and tourism. The economic and environmental well-being we derive from the abundant essential natural resources and beauty provided by these areas is being undermined by the very critical economic and aesthetic uses that make these diverse areas valuable to the Nation. Escalating losses and degradation of coastal wetlands, fisheries habitat, and coral reef ecosystems must be reversed. NOAA, the Nation's leader in ocean and coastal stewardship, has the vision, expertise and partnerships to successfully confront this challenge. The request includes funding for targeted investments to: strengthen and expand protection of the nation's most significant ocean and coastal areas; restore critical coastal habitat and vibrant coral reef ecosystems; and provide states and coastal communities with the tools and resources for environmentally-sound and economically-sustainable smart growth strategies.

Partnerships to Promote Community-Based Smart Growth (CZM Program - \$32M)

The coastal zone is home to more than half the Nation's population and continues to serve as an important economic engine. Working with the 32 states and territories, and hundreds of coastal communities, the Lands Legacy Initiative proposes an increase of \$32 million to develop and implement community-based comprehensive strategies that support environmentally-sound economic development and reduce urban sprawl. \$28 million of the proposed funding would be available through competitive, non-matching grants under section 310 of the CZMA to strengthen the support of community-based waterfront revitalization and habitat protection in states with approved Coastal Management Programs or plans. The remaining \$4 million in funding will be available to states and communities to address polluted run off problems. This initiative also would enable NOAA to provide the technical and scientific support needed to develop and implement these plans.

National Marine Sanctuaries: Our Special Ocean Places (\$15M)

The National Marine Sanctuaries are home to diverse marine life and exquisite marine ecosystems such as coral reefs, kelp beds and sea mounts. Recognizing the importance of these special places, the Lands Legacy Initiative proposes an increase of \$15 million to strengthen the nation's only system of marine protected areas. The National Marine Sanctuary program is designed to conserve, protect and enhance the biodiversity, ecological integrity and cultural legacy of the nation's marine environment. Funds will be used to accomplish this in three ways. First, to enhance programs at the twelve existing sites in Massachusetts, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Texas, California, Washington, Hawaii, and American Samoa, so that they are able to carry out their mission of marine resource protection and management. Second, funds will be used to expand education and outreach opportunities at the Sanctuaries. Through public and private partnerships, NOAA will develop programs designed to better interpret the uniqueness of each sanctuary for the public. Lastly, the initiative will look to the future and begin the planning process necessary for the potential growth of the National Marine Sanctuary system by working with states and communities to identify possible new sites.

National Estuarine Research Reserve System (\$14.7M)

The initiative proposes an increase of \$14.7 million to enhance the protection of critical estuaries by providing funds to states and communities for the acquisition of lands in and around the existing National Estuarine Research Reserves. Funds will also be used to improve management capabilities and upgrade facilities at these sites. There are currently 22 Reserves in 19 states and territories managing over 500,000 acres. The acreage in the System will more than double with the planned addition of three new Reserves and acquisition of additional properties at existing Reserves this year. The proposed funding would support the acquisition of forests and wetlands, buffer Reserve resources from the impacts of development, and provide opportunities for interpretation of estuary resources. This initiative also would strengthen Reserve management capabilities and enhance education and resource stewardship in surrounding communities.

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NOAA FY 2000 Budget Breakout of Lands Legacy Initiative Investments

	FY 2000 Change	Legacy Investment
National Ocean Service (OR&F)		
<i>Ocean Resource Conservation and Assessment</i>		
Ocean Assessment Program	\$10	Coastal Dredging and Restoration
Response & Restoration Program	\$10	Coral Reef Restoration
Subtotal	\$20	
 <i>Ocean & Coastal Management</i>		
CZM Section 306/309	\$ 2	Coastal Zone Management Program
CZM Section 310	\$28	Coastal Zone Management Program
Coastal Non-point Pollution Control	\$ 2	Coastal Zone Management Program
Estuarine Research Reserves	\$ 3	National Estuarine Research Reserves System
Marine Sanctuaries	\$12	National Marine Sanctuaries
Subtotal	\$47	
 National Marine Fisheries Service (OR&F)		
<i>Conservation and Management Operations</i>		
Fisheries Management Programs	\$23	Fisheries Habitat Restoration
 Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction Account		
Estuarine Research Reserves	\$12	National Estuarine Research Reserves System
Marine Sanctuaries	\$ 3	National Marine Sanctuaries
Subtotal	\$15	
NOAA Lands Legacy Initiative	-- Total	
	\$105	(dollars in millions)

Coastal Dredging and Restoration (\$10M)

More than 95 percent of U.S. overseas trade by tonnage (excluding Mexico and Canada) passes through U.S. ports and harbors. In 1996, U.S. ports handled approximately 2.3 billion tons of cargo and supported nearly 16 million jobs. As we head into the 21st century, international trade will continue to grow. Unless our ports are prepared, for instance by deepening channels to accommodate large cargo ships, Americans will pay more for imported goods, and American businesses will pay higher export costs. Such efforts must be undertaken in a way that protects the environment. This includes a continued commitment to environmentally-sound dredging and safe disposal or reuse of dredged materials. The initiative proposes an increase of \$10 million dollars for NOAA to work with the Corps of Engineers, other federal and state agencies, and coastal communities to help them determine ways to use material dredged from ports and shipping channels to restore important coastal habitats. This initiative will reduce costs and avoid delays in important dredging projects as well as restore degraded habitats and water quality for natural resource and human use.

Coral Reef Restoration (\$10M)

The initiative proposes an increase of \$10 million to restore fragile coral reefs injured by human impacts. These exquisite yet endangered ecosystems sustain tourism, recreation and fishing industries worth billions of dollars in economic activity. NOAA, by working with states and other agencies, will restore injured reefs in Puerto Rico, Florida, Hawaii, U.S. territories and the commonwealths. Funding will be provided for: development and implementation of emergency restoration activities; restoration of small to moderate-sized injured sites; development of coral nurseries to provide donor material for restoration projects; monitoring to evaluate restoration effectiveness; and the transfer of restoration technologies to other coastal stewards. This request complements and supports the \$2 million Coral Reef Protection increase proposed under the Year of the Ocean Initiative.

Fisheries Habitat Restoration (\$22.7M)

The initiative proposes an increase of \$22.7 million for NOAA to increase the number and geographical scope of community-based habitat restoration efforts that generate quality coastal or river habitat to improve survival of many salt water fish species nationwide. NOAA receives hundreds of restoration requests from state and local governments, universities, and private organizations seeking to partner in these efforts. Funding would go toward restoring areas that have been identified as important fish habitat and have an existing habitat restoration plan. In addition, funding would expand NOAA's existing community-based restoration program of public and private partnerships that address small-scale restoration projects, foster community natural resource stewardship and help leverage additional public and private funding.

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