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**NOAA Announces Funding to Support Ocean Observing
in Central and Northern California**

The NOAA Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) is awarding over \$1.6 million in 2009 competitive grant funding to support ocean observing efforts in Central and Northern California.

The grants will go to the Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System through the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. Steve Ramp of MBARI will coordinate the grant for conducting long-term monitoring of environmental conditions in support of protecting marine life and habitat. Funding will also help maintain and enhance ocean and coastal observations in the region by providing easier access to regional real-time data.

Collaborations between the Central, Northern, and Southern California systems exist to ensure that ocean observing benefits like harmful algal bloom predictions and ecosystem health assessments are available. They also coordinate with California state agencies like the State Coastal Conservancy.

The consortium is one recipient in a series of nationwide peer-reviewed IOOS grant projects, totaling \$21 million this year. The goal of each regional observing system is to maintain and enhance ocean and coastal observations in the area, making data easier to access and giving planners and policymakers the information needed to improve safety, enhance the economy, and protect the environment. Data from each region will also be available to researchers throughout the country via the national IOOS.

“This award represents NOAA’s commitment to implementing the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation Act of 2009 which recognizes the IOOS regional systems as key components of the national effort,” said Zdenka Willis, NOAA IOOS program director. “These projects are crafted to meet local customer needs while also contributing to the success of the national effort.”

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth’s environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

On the web:

NOAA IOOS: <http://www.ioos.gov>

Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System: <http://www.cencoos.org>