



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA Announces Funding to Support Ocean Observing Along the Gulf Coast

NOAA's Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) is awarding \$749,986 in fiscal year 2008 competitive grant funds to support ocean and coastal observing efforts in the Gulf of Mexico.

Texas A&M University Research Foundation is the grant recipient and will use the funding to oversee the continued development of the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) and associated management efforts. GCOOS will maintain and enhance ocean and coastal observations in the region and link various regional online databases into one centralized database. The project will make data gathered by federal organizations as well as private, academic, and state and local government entities, easier to access and use. Ann Jochens, Ph.D., serves as the regional coordinator for GCOOS and will serve as the project lead investigator.

"Regional partnerships are critical to the success of a national Integrated Ocean Observing System," said Zdenka Willis, NOAA IOOS program director. "With increased understanding of our oceans and coasts comes an increased ability to keep our nation safe, our economy secure, and our environment healthy and productive."

GCOOS is one in an anticipated series of nationwide IOOS grant funded projects, totaling \$20.4M this year. These grants will support the continuation of 17 multi-year projects awarded in 2007, as well as new efforts in 2008.

"This agreement represents another big step forward for the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observing System, as called for in the President's Ocean Action Plan," said retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator. "This year's award is a great example of NOAA's dedication to our ocean and coastal observing capacity, as well as our commitment to work with our regional partners."

The money supports NOAA's efforts to develop a national IOOS, a vital tool for tracking, predicting, managing, and adapting to changes in our coastal and ocean environments. This network of people and technology is consolidating coastal and ocean data, so it is easily accessible and can be used by scientists and decision-makers to get a 'bigger picture' view of environmental change.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA Integrated Ocean Observing Program: <http://www.ioos.noaa.gov>