



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere
Washington, D.C. 20230

June 22, 2021

Ms. Julie Thomas
Chairwoman
Hydrographic Services Review Panel
Senior Advisor, Coastal Data Information
Program and Southern California Coastal
Ocean Observing System
Scripps Institute of Oceanography
9500 Gilman Drive, No. 0214
La Jolla, CA 92093

Dear Ms. Thomas:

Thank you for the letter summarizing the Hydrographic Services Review Panel's (HSRP) March 2021 meeting discussions and recommendations. I found the discussions and special sessions addressing climate change, data, modeling, and coastal resilience needs to be informative and robust. I also appreciated your offer to start a dialogue around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion topics in the navigation services programs.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) appreciates the advice and the seven recommendations shared by the HSRP with NOAA National Ocean Service and NOAA leadership. Recent updates on several of these recommendations and priorities are below. I look forward to continuing our dialogue on all of the Panel's suggestions in the future.

- Recommendations 1 and 5: Per the HSRP recommendation to enhance collaboration on coastal resilience missions and initiatives both internally and with other Federal agencies and partners, NOAA is looking with renewed interest at resilience to climate change and modeling. The Biden-Harris Administration seeks to bolster our Nation's ability to respond to and mitigate climate change risks. A comprehensive government approach is needed to improve the science, integrate observations, and produce actionable information across timescales and spatial scales that are useful to our stakeholders. NOAA is making great progress toward integrating water prediction at weather timescales, and the demand for predictions beyond 10 days continues to grow as we seek to understand the impacts of sea level rise on future flood risk. We look forward to providing updates on our plans at one of your next meetings.
- Recommendations 7 and 4: NOAA is expanding stakeholder outreach and education in a variety of areas both for the conversion to Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC), updates to the Precision Marine Navigation Services and S-100 data, as well as for the

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National Spatial Reference System (NSRS). In May, the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) hosted over 1,150 stakeholders for the 2021 Geospatial Summit to provide updates on the NSRS modernization. NGS also convened 30 representatives from leading global survey equipment manufacturers and geospatial software developers for a virtual 2021 Industry Workshop. The Summit and workshop are part of the NGS strategy to engage members of the geospatial community to enable a smooth transition to the Modernized NSRS and ensure that our communities and our Nation are prepared to reap the full benefits of the new system. The Office of Coast Survey (OCS) held recent meetings and training on the new custom chart tool to engage with stakeholders on the sunsetting of raster charts and conversion to ENCs. OCS is also considering the next steps for the Precision Marine Navigation Services and the S-100 products.

- Ongoing HSRP Priorities:
 - NOAA will continue to update the HSRP on the status of National Ocean Mapping Exploration and Characterization Strategy (NOMEC) and Alaska Coastal Mapping Strategy milestones. This will also address Recommendation 3 by providing additional information on emphasizing surveying in waters less than 40 meters deep. The NOMEC Standard Ocean Mapping Protocol is in development now, which we expect will be of great interest to the HSRP. The NOMEC Council continues to coordinate public engagement in Federal Government ocean mapping, exploration, and characterization activities, including the upcoming NOMEC Pilot Project on the Blake Plateau, a coordinated NOAA-BOEM-USGS exploration campaign effort. The Council is working closely with the Executive Office of the President to ensure the NOMEC work reflects the priorities of the current Administration.
 - NOAA shares the HSRP's interest in wind energy developments and data-sharing by non-traditional providers. NOAA will be happy to provide a briefing on the new data-sharing agreement with Ørsted and the recently approved Vineyard Wind project at one of the next HSRP meetings.

I appreciate the HSRP members' continued efforts to advise NOAA on the challenges of the data backbone for coastal resilience and modeling. I look forward to our continued dialogue on topics from your recent meeting and the range of activities that help to advance and support NOAA's navigation services missions.

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Again, many thanks for your recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "ben R". A horizontal line extends from the end of the "R" across the page.

Benjamin Friedman
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations
Performing the Duties of Under Secretary
of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
and NOAA Administrator