



Our Eyes on the Ocean, Coasts, and Great Lakes

August 5, 2022

FY 2022 Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System Award Information

Dear Dr. Brenner,

The U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Office has recommended funding in the amount of \$3,057,641 in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) for your NOAA award #NA21NOS0120092, entitled, *“Continuing the Development of the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System.”*

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 provided \$41M in funding for IOOS Regional Observations with associated guidance stating that “NOS is encouraged to: (1) work to complete and operate the National High Frequency Radar System to close key gaps in the U.S. surface current mapping system; (2) expand the regional underwater profiling gliders program; (3) increase support to maintain the buoy systems supported by IOOS and to continue to add buoys in regional priority areas.” In addition, the Act includes “no less than \$2,500,000 to continue the five IOOS Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) pilot programs initiated in fiscal year 2020 and to continue to support the HAB monitoring and detection test bed in the Gulf of Mexico initiated in fiscal year 2021.” (Refer to Table 1 and 2 for reference)

NOAA’s Ocean Acidification Program (OAP) is providing \$130,091 in FY22 towards OAP sponsored projects carried out by GCOOS partners in support of NOAA’s mission requirements under the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act (FOARAM Act) including maintaining the Gulf of Mexico NOAA Ocean Acidification Observing Network (NOA-ON) station (\$92,591, PI Howden, USM) and the Gulf Coast Acidification Network (\$37,500, PI Brenner, GCOOS). The OAP continues to invest in regional OA capacity building and stakeholder engagement activities advanced by the regional OAP sponsored Coastal Acidification Networks (CAN). These CANs provide for fostering national, regional, state, and local engagement on ocean acidification. In FY22 the OAP will be providing \$25,000 towards the project entitled “GCAN coordination with OAP and National CAN Team: Response to the Coordinated Ocean Observations and Research Act (COORA) of 2020” (PI Brenner, GCOOS). These resources contribute partial salary support for the GCAN Coordinator, website update and maintenance, and publication cost. During the 2022 to 2023 funding period, GCAN will work to synthesize and report information of socioeconomic risks and vulnerabilities; impacts to habitats, coastal and marine resources, and research and monitoring gaps and priorities in response to the Interagency Working Group-OA congressional reporting requirements through the project “A SOCAN-GCAN collaboration across the Southeast/ Gulf of Mexico regions to support efforts of

the Monitoring and Prioritization plan”. OAP will invest \$10,000 in this effort (PI Brenner, GCOOS). GCAN (PI Brenner, GCOOS) will receive \$2,500 for a State of the Science Gulf of Mexico publication fee. The NOAA Ocean Acidification Observing Network long-term time-series station (NOA-ON) in the northern Gulf of Mexico (PI Howden, USM) represents an important node in the NOA-ON and the resources provided here represent the first installment of a three-year approved project to sustain this station. USM will receive \$92,591 to conduct servicing and maintenance of the time-series station in partnership with the NOAA Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory’s Carbon Group. (See table 2 for details.)

\$300,000 was not included in this GCOOS award for the deployment of lower cost continuous nutrient sensors to better understand and evaluate nitrogen and phosphorous levels and impacts at selected locations in the Gulf of Mexico. These funds will be added to the GCOOS award in Quarter 1 of federal fiscal year 2023. The Gulf of Mexico Division of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) works with partner agencies and states to continue to maximize the efficiency and utility of water quality monitoring efforts for local managers by coordinating and standardizing state and federal water quality data collection activities in the Gulf region. Enhanced monitoring, research, and field testing of recently developed continuous, deployable nutrient sensors is needed in the Gulf Coast region to help make sensors and collecting nutrient monitoring data more cost effective, accessible, and readily available. (See table 2 for details.)

Table 1, below, reflects the total core funding amount for FY22. The intent is that this core amount be considered the sustained amount of funding for a regional observing system, if appropriations remain level. RAs can use this amount to plan from one year to another.

The United States Government, through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, directs the IOOS Office to support a number of thematic priorities as noted above. One of these priorities is the existing High-Frequency Radar (HFR) stations. The Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 was reauthorized in 2020 and amended to direct the IOOS Office to support, “a deployment plan that prioritizes closing gaps in high frequency radar infrastructure in the United States.” Accordingly, while you may allocate funds to support any priorities within the region, the allocation should not be one that negatively affects the performance of HFRs or reduces the area of HFR measurement coverage. HFR coverage area and performance is measured by a metric approved by the IOOS Office Surface Currents Program Manager that was developed with input from an IOOS National HFR Technical Steering Team and the IOOS HFR community. Providing you with the flexibility to determine how to operate and maintain these stations will still require GCOOS to report to the IOOS Office Surface Currents Program Manager on activities specific to its HFR stations through the cooperative agreement reporting requirements.

As with HF Radars, we understand the need to continue to build and expand the underwater glider network. This is another thematic area which is a priority to IOOS and where appropriated funds must be directed towards. Our goal is to allow you the flexibility to determine regional needs for glider operations and how much funding will be directed to meet those needs. We expect each RA to coordinate with the IOOS Office and report on GCOOS actions through the cooperative agreement reporting cycle.

As noted in our letter dated April 26, 2021, the IOOS Office is committed to make the work of environmental justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion core to what we do and how we operate. In Fiscal Year 2021, the IOOS Office set aside funding-to match funding from the regions to build an approach for tackling this issue and promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. In Fiscal Year 2022 we intend to also allocate funding towards this effort. We continue to believe that together, we can deliver IOOS information to enrich lives and livelihoods while also making inclusion, racial equity, and support for underserved communities a central part of our work. The IOOS Association, directly working with the RAs and the IOOS Office, will continue to coordinate the work to be done with these funds.

The Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (ICOOS) Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111-11, codified at 33 U.S.C. 3601-3610) and the Coordinated Ocean Observation and Research Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-271, Title I) directs the U.S. IOOS Office to develop national system capacity; please make the following allotments with FY 2022 funding.

Feel free to contact me regarding your FY22 funding at Dave.Easter@noaa.gov. If you have technical questions about how to initiate an award action request in Grants Online, contact the Grants Online Help Desk at 1-877-662-2478.

Regards,

Dave Easter
U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System

Table 1. CORE Regional IOOS funding

Core IOOS Funding			
Amount	Funding Area	Task	ASAP TAS BETC Codes
\$2,449,000	Core	Sustained operational funding and service delivery.	FY22REG022-T-002-001

Table 2. Non CORE funding

IOOS, NOAA, Other Agency Funding			
Amount	Funding Area /Recipient	Task	ASAP TAS BETC
\$100,000	GCOOS	Glider - support for UG2 Coordinator	FY22REG022-T-002-001
\$40,000	One time System Add On	Glider - Navy Coordination support. (includes CENOTE and Navy Glider coordination)	
\$11,500	One time System Add On	Glider - To support glider deployments and recoveries	
\$31,310	One Time System Add On	HFR system wide support - support for retuning/testing/additional work by GCOOS' HFR Operators to Comply with FCC Regulations.	
\$200,000	Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)	To further HABS understanding and prediction.	
\$10,000	GCOOS	HFR system wide support - Radiowave Operators Working Group (ROWG) Meeting and Recapitalization Support.	
\$35,000	GCOOS	FY22 one time. These funds will be used to assist with core needs of the Regional Association.	
\$20,000	GCOOS One-time System Add-on	NTL project. The funds will support the increasing bandwidth and the single point failure for data uploads.	
\$92,591	Ocean Acidification	OAP allotment of FY22 project resources in support of the NOAA Ocean Acidification Observing Network (NOA-ON) GCOOS Gulf of Mexico (PI Howden, University of Southern Mississippi)	FY22 OAP 022-T-002-002
\$37,500	Ocean Acidification	GCOOS Gulf Coast Acidification Network (PI Brenner, GCOOS)	
\$30,740	Texas Agricultural & Mechanical University (TAMU)	Glider funding from the Office of Marine Aviation Operations to support an additional 2022 Hurricane Glider Deployment.	FY22 OMAO022-T-002-003