

Meeting Summaries
ICOOS Act Implementation – Congressional Update Meetings
December 10 – 17, 2012

Introduction:

- IOOS Program staff met with Congressional staff to provide a regular update on progress implementing the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (ICOOS) Act of 2009.

Meeting Objectives:

- Share updates on ICOOS Act implementation efforts.
- Offer additional information on the Independent Cost Estimate, delivered in Nov 2012.

General Comments:

- Each of the offices we met with expressed their appreciation for these updates, including the outline format we utilize and the 30 minute timeframe.
- Staff were collectively pleased to hear the progress being made implementing the ICOOS Act and the overall tone of all ten meetings was positive and encouraging. There were no major concerns raised or negative feedback received.
- One major update covered during these briefings was the ICE, which was delivered to the Senate Commerce Committee and the House Natural Resources Committee on November 9, 2012. We outlined that federal, non-federal, and central functions were captured in the ICE. However, despite the resources gap identified, particularly for the non-federal and central functions, IOOS is delivering valuable benefits today and is infinitely scalable. The ICE discussion went well and no big issues or concern were raised by Congressional staff.
- The ICOOS Act reauthorization was discussed. In each briefing, we emphasized that we were comfortable with leaving the language as written. However, if changes are feasible to the Act, our suggestions would be minor and mainly technical in nature.
- An update on the effort to develop Certification Guidelines for non-Federal assets was provided. We informed staff that the major challenge to offer certification is the ICOOS Act requirement to consider RA positions as federal employees with regards to tort liability protection.
- We also provided status updates for: the Biannual Report to Congress; the IOOS Summit; and the System Advisory Committee.
- David Legler, one of the three IOOC Co-Chairs, joined us for our visits on December 14, 2012.