

**WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM THE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD FOR THE LEGISLATIVE HEARING
ON
[H.R. 2860](#) and [H.R. 2294](#)**

**BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, WILDLIFE, AND FISHERIES
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

MAY 20, 2025

Introduction

The Department and NOAA acknowledge and appreciate the ongoing work with this Subcommittee on ocean and coastal conservation efforts and ocean observation infrastructure.

H.R. 2860 - Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act of 2025

H.R. 2860 seeks to reauthorize the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Act to enhance the conservation of marine resources in the Northwest Straits region in Washington state, including parts of Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The bill would reauthorize the Northwest Straits Commission, a regional collaborative body, to provide resources and technical support to further conservation efforts. The Northwest Straits Commission works to conserve the marine waters, habitats, and species of the Northwest Straits region with the goal of achieving ecosystem health and sustainable resource use.

NOAA has worked with the Northwest Straits Commission on a wide range of issues. For example, the Northwest Straits Commission has led collaborations among forage fish experts in the U.S. and Canada. Forage fish are a critical food source for commercially important salmon, as well as killer whales. Forage fish are also used as bait for commercial and sport fisheries. The Northwest Straits Commission provides funding and technical support for monitoring, research, policy, and local planning efforts; and to improve conditions for forage fish populations (e.g., addressing modified shoreline armoring and stormwater runoff into local embayments). Additionally, NOAA collaborated with the Northwest Straits Commission on the Kelp Plan, which provides a research and management framework for coordinated action to improve kelp beds that are a necessary habitat for commercially important salmon, rockfish, halibut, and Dungeness crab.

H.R. 2294 - To reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009

H.R. 2294 would reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (ICOOS) Act. The original ICOOS Act authorized NOAA to collect sustained ocean observations, such as ocean current, sea state, and temperature profile, and to make the resulting data publicly available. This data is used by other Federal agencies, state and local governments, and industry to benefit maritime safety and awareness and weather forecasting.

Conclusion

We appreciate the Subcommittee's support for NOAA's mission and look forward to working with you on these bills and future legislation.