January, 21 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman,
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member,
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

We write on behalf of a diverse coalition of groups that partner with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to thank you for your support of NOAA's programs in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and your recognition of their contribution to the economy. As scientists, educators, outdoor enthusiasts, coastal states, conservationists, and members of industry, we strongly support the $1 billion for NOAA habitat restoration and satellite programs included in the bill. This funding will create jobs and stimulate local economies while benefiting fish and wildlife, improving coastal ecosystem, and maintaining our ability to predict severe weather events and climate trends.

Coastal communities are major economic engines in many counties, regions and states. More than half of the Nation's GDP is generated in coastal counties. An economic analysis from the Economic Policy Institute estimates that each $1 million of restoration work generates 20.3 jobs. Based on this estimate, the $400 million in restoration work included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will generate over 8,000 jobs in coastal communities.

Moreover, this investment in restoration will repair and improve habitats which serve as natural infrastructure for these communities. Restoring wetlands, shellfish reefs, seagrass beds; reestablishing hydrologic flow; replacing road culverts; moving or removing unnecessary levees and derelict dams. These projects restore the long term ecological and economic benefits that flow from healthy coastal ecosystems. In addition to improved water quality, fish passage, and habitat, these landscapes will support commercial and recreational fishing; improve tourism; and create new business and recreational opportunities such as fishing, river rafting and kayaking and associated support services. Finally, green infrastructure projects can reduce hazards through erosion and flood mitigation, or the removal of out-dated, non-functional structures.

The weather and severe storm forecasting services provided by NOAA satellites are critical to almost every sector of our economy. Whether it is the homeland security benefit of predicting major events like hurricane Katrina or support for more everyday functions like managing the energy grid, NOAA satellites play a fundamental role. As the impacts of climate change become more apparent the climate data from NOAA satellites will be increasingly important in helping us understand and plan for potentially

significant changes. The $600 million included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will serve as an immediate example of addressing the national priority of climate change, and protect high tech jobs now while avoiding gaps in NOAA satellite services in the future.

Thank you again for your support of these NOAA programs. We hope you will continue to recognize their important contributions to the economy and demonstrate continued commitment to providing these investments in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Sincerely,

AccuWeather, Inc.
Aerospace Industries Association
Alliance for Earth Observations
American Geological Institute
American Littoral Society
American Meteorological Society
American Rivers
American Society of Limnology and Oceanography
American Sportfishing Association
Artist Boat
Association of National Estuary Programs
Association of US delegates to the Gulf of Maine Council
Brandywine Conservancy
California Conservation Corps
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Coastal States Organization
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Conservation Law Foundation
Consortium for Ocean Leadership
Elizabeth River Project
Fugro Pelagos, Inc
Fugro Earth Data, Inc
Galveston Bay Foundation
Gulf of Mexico Foundation
Kenai Watershed Forum
Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership
Lynnhaven River NOW
Mattole Restoration Council
Musconetcong Watershed Association
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
National Federation of Regional Associations for Coastal and Ocean Observing
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
National Weather Service Employees Organization
National Association of Marine Laboratories
New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Dam Removal and River Restoration Program
Marine Conservation Biology Institute
Norfolk's Division of Environmental Services
North Carolina Coastal Federation
Northwest Maritime Center & Wooden Boat Foundation
Ocean Trust
People For Puget Sound
Restore America's Estuaries
Reinsurance Association of America
Rivanna Conservation Society
Save the Bay - Narragansett Bay
Save the Bay – San Francisco
Save the Sound - Long Island Sound
Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Sea Grant Association
Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership
Tampa Bay Watch
The American Red Cross
The Bay Institute
The Friends of St. Andrew Bay
The Nature Conservancy
The Weather Channel, Inc.
Trout Unlimited
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
United Fishermen's Marketing Association, Inc.
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Space Enterprise Council
Weather Coalition
West Marine
Wildlife Research Team, Inc.
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute