

Sea Grant Association

A request to continue to increase the economic development and resiliency of our coastal communities through Sea Grant research and outreach activities

The National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) is a joint federal-state investment that supports the health and resilience of the Nation's coastal communities (including the Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico and communities on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts), yielding quantifiable economic, social, and environmental **benefits at the national, regional, state, and local levels**. Sea Grant is a unique program within NOAA that sends 95% of its appropriated funds to coastal states through a competitive process to solve problems that are identified as critical by public and private sector constituents and our nation's coastal communities. This is done through the establishment of efficient, cost-effective partnerships between state universities, NOAA, coastal communities and businesses –who all share in the costs of solutions – resulting in a leveraging of nearly \$3 for every \$1 appropriated by Congress.

In 2015-16 the Sea Grant program helped [generate](#) an estimated **\$575 million** in economic impacts; created or sustained nearly **21,000 jobs**; provided **33** state-level programs and **534 communities** with technical assistance on sustainable development practices; worked with about **1300 industry, local, state and regional partners**; and supported the education and training of almost **2000 undergraduate and graduate students**. The Sea Grant program achieved this with a Congressional appropriation in FY 2016 of \$73 million, which is leveraged with matching funds provided by states, universities, and other sources.

For the United States to be more responsive to the sustainable **economic development** potential of its coastal states, strengthen domestic aquaculture, improve coastal resilience of the nation's communities, and balance the economic and environmental challenges the country's coastal regions face, the Sea Grant Association is recommending **federal funding of \$80 million in FY2018**. These funds will support: sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, resilient communities and economies, healthy coastal ecosystems, and environmental literacy and workforce development. This funding recommendation is consistent with [S. 3282](#), which passed the Senate unanimously in 2016.

FY 2018 Appropriations Bill:	Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill
Agency:	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Account:	Operations, Research, and Facilities
Office:	Oceanic and Atmospheric Research
Program:	National Sea Grant College Program
FY 2016 Funding Level:	\$73M
FY 2017 Funding Level (CR):	\$73M
FY 2018 SGA Recommendation:	\$80M

FY 2018 Report Language Proposal: \$80.0 million is provided to the National Sea Grant College Program for research, education, extension, and outreach activities. This funding level supports the key focus areas in the program's strategic plan: sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, resilient communities and economies, healthy coastal ecosystems, and environmental literacy and workforce development. The Committee directs NOAA to continue funding all Sea Grant STEM education and fellowship programs.

The *Sea Grant Association* (SGA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to furthering the Sea Grant Program concept. SGA's regular members are the academic institutions that participate in the National Sea Grant College Program. The SGA advocates for greater understanding, use, and conservation of marine, coastal and Great Lakes resources.

For more information, please visit www.sga.seagrant.org or contact:
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RATIONALE FOR THE SGA REQUEST

Coastal Communities are Vital to the Nation's Prosperity – More than half of the United States population lives in coastal counties that generate 58% (\$8.3 trillion) of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). In 2011, Americans, on average, ate 15 pounds of fish and shellfish per person – 4.7 billion pounds altogether – making the U.S. second in the world in total seafood consumption. The United States is the leading global importer of fish and fishery products, with 91% of the seafood we eat originating abroad – half of which is from aquaculture. Driven by imports, the U.S. seafood trade deficit has grown to over \$11.2 billion annually. Tourism is a major economic driver in coastal states. In [California](#) coastal tourism is estimated to contribute \$9.9 billion to that state's economy. While in South Carolina the estimate exceeds \$10 billion. The U.S. has jurisdiction over 3.4 million square miles of oceans – an expanse greater than the land area of all 50 states combined. This is a dynamic area with biologically diverse habitats that provide a wealth of natural resources and economic opportunities, while at the same time exposing human and biological communities to coastal hazards such as storms and hurricanes, shifting shorelines, outbreaks of harmful algal blooms, and water-borne pathogens.

The 2010 Gulf of Mexico Deepwater Horizon oil spill; Superstorm Sandy in 2012; Toledo, Ohio's drinking water crisis in 2014; and last year's Hurricane Matthew are vivid examples that the depth of our understanding of our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes - and our ability to protect and manage them - are far from complete. *Sea Grant is a key partner in developing sufficient capabilities to sustain ocean-based economies; grow our marine food sector; diversify our energy sources; protect critical ocean and coastal infrastructure and related natural resources; and train the next generation of scientists, managers, and stakeholders – all necessary components of a more resilient ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes enterprise.*

The National Sea Grant College Program Contributes to the Economic Health of Coastal States and Communities -- In 2015-16, the Sea Grant program [provided](#) the following benefits to the nation as a result of its activities:

- \$575 million in economic development;
- 20,700 jobs created or retained;
- 265,602 volunteer hours for outreach;
- 860 undergraduate students supported;
- 1105 graduate students supported;
- 1300 industry and local, state, and regional partners assisted;
- 534 communities implemented new sustainable practices; and
- 127,348 acres of ecosystems restored.

Sea Grant Makes A Difference – Ninety-five (95) percent of the Sea Grant funding goes to state programs where it is used to conduct research, carry out extension and outreach activities, and deliver valuable services to the nation. For 50 years, Sea Grant has been at the forefront of creating economic opportunities, enhancing food and water security, and reducing risks from natural hazards and extreme events facing coastal communities through research and outreach efforts. Sea Grant is user-driven and university-based, and fully engaged with regional, state, and local organizations. **With \$80 million in federal funding, Sea Grant will leverage significant state and local support, continue to increase the economic development and resiliency of our coastal communities, and help sustain the health and productivity of the ecosystems on which they depend.**

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