

House Natural Resources Committee
Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act
Section-by-Section Summary

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TITLE I—BLUE CARBON

Section 101. Blue Carbon Program

Establishes a Blue Carbon Program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Directs the agency to coordinate an interagency effort to understand, protect and restore blue carbon ecosystems (BCEs).

Section 102. National map of coastal blue carbon ecosystems

Requires NOAA to produce and maintain a map and inventory of BCEs in the United States to, among other purposes, assess carbon sequestration in existing blue carbon ecosystems and potential carbon sequestration from restoration of degraded BCEs.

Section 103. Report on blue carbon in the United States

Requires NOAA to submit biennial reports to Congress summarizing federally funded efforts to study, monitor, preserve and restore BCEs in the United States. The report should assess status and trends, vulnerabilities, impediments to restoration, and co-benefits of BCEs.

Section 104. Blue Carbon Partnership Grant Program

Establishes and authorizes \$200 million per year from 2021-2025 for NOAA to provide grants to eligible non-federal entities for projects to restore BCEs on non-federal land. Grants are competitive and priority is to be given to projects that would protect fish and wildlife habitat, other coastal resources, and benefit lower income communities.

Section 105. Integrated pilot programs to restore degraded coastal blue carbon ecosystems

Directs the Blue Carbon Program to carry out a set of pilot programs for blue carbon restoration. Ensures that pilot projects are geographically, ecologically, culturally, and economically representative, and maximize blue carbon storage.

Section 106. Interagency working group

Establishes an interagency working group, to be chaired by the director of the Blue Carbon Program, to develop a national strategy for research, development and demonstration (RD&D), monitoring and stewardship (including assessment of legal authority to protect and restore) of BCEs. The strategy is to be developed within a year, updated every five years, and submitted to Congress.

Section 107. Coastal carbon areas of significance

Directs the Administrator of NOAA to develop criteria for and designate “coastal carbon areas of significance” (CCAS) and ensure conservation of CCAS using Department of Commerce programs and resources. Federal agencies proposing actions that may harm CCAS are required to notify NOAA. The NOAA administrator is to consult with the action agency to determine adverse impact, how to avoid adverse impacts, and to determine alternative action(s), if any, to minimize adverse impact. The action agency is prohibited from taking the proposed action if an alternative exists that fulfills the purpose of the proposed action without harming CCAS. If no feasible alternative exists, the action agency is to take measures to mitigate the impact and to create carbon storage offsets for unavoidable impact.

Section 108. Authorization of Smithsonian Institution blue carbon activities

Charges the Smithsonian Institution to support and maintain the Coastal Carbon Data Clearinghouse to provide for the long-term stewardship of, and public access to, data related to BCEs.

Section 109. Authorization of appropriations

Authorizes \$50,000,000 per year from 2021-2025 to the NOAA Administrator to carry out activities under this title.

Section 110. Definitions

TITLE II—MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Section 201. Policy

Establishes a national policy to protect 30 percent of the ocean by 2030 and to support adoption of a similar global goal. Sets ecological, social and economic criteria for pursuit of the goal.

Section 202. Interagency Task Force

Establishes an interagency task force, to be chaired by the chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, to guide achievement of the 30 by 30 goal. Requires the task force to prepare and submit a plan to Congress with an inventory of existing MPAs, an inventory of areas warranting additional protection, and a plan for technical assistance for protecting areas outside U.S. jurisdiction to assist in achieving the international goal. The report is to be submitted within two years and updated annually thereafter.

Section 203. Initiate designation process for successful sanctuary nominations and technical corrections to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act

Directs the Secretary of Commerce to initiate the process for designating as national marine sanctuaries each area included in the inventory of successful nomination for such designation maintained by NOAA and complete each designation process within 30 months.

Section 204. Increased protection for deep sea corals

Directs NOAA to designate Deep Sea Coral Marine Conservation Areas in which use of bottom-tending fishing gear is prohibited under the Magnuson Stevens Act, prohibits anchoring or alteration of the seafloor (including oil and gas exploration and development, and other destructive fishing practices. Directs NOAA to make recommendations every two years to the Regional Fishery Management Councils regarding additional areas warranting such protection.

Section 205. Marine biodiversity gap analysis

Directs the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a marine biodiversity gap analysis within 18 months and updated biennially. The gap analysis must be consistent with the policy in Section 201, analyze habitats, species, and ecosystems across the U.S. ocean, identify the types

of ecosystems and the percentage needed to protect biodiversity and mitigate climate change, and be made publicly available. Authorizes \$2,000,000 annually to carry out this section.

TITLE III—OFFSHORE ENERGY

Subtitle A—Oil and Gas Leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf

Section 301. Prohibition of oil and gas leasing in all areas of the Outer Continental Shelf

Except pursuant to lease issued before the date of enactment, prohibits geological or geophysical activities in support of oil, gas, or methane hydrate exploration and development in any area of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Requires lessees conducting geophysical exploration on the OCS to use the best commercially available technology to reduce acoustic pressure levels.

Subtitle B—Offshore Renewable Energy

Section 311. Sense of Congress on the importance of offshore wind energy

Expresses the sense of Congress on the importance of increasing electricity production from offshore wind, consistent with environmental protection, in achieving a national goal of net-zero emissions.

Section 312. National offshore wind goal

Directs the Secretary of the Interior to seek to permit not less than 12.5 gigawatts of offshore wind energy production on the OCS by January 1, 2025 and not less than 25 gigawatts of offshore wind energy production by January 1, 2030. Requires DOI to submit an annual report to Congress detailing progress toward those targets.

Section 313. Removing roadblocks for data sharing

Amends confidentiality requirements to allow the Secretary of Commerce to share certain fisheries-related data with the Secretary of the Interior for offshore wind activities.

Section 314. Increasing funding for scientific research

Makes a portion of funds derived from offshore wind lease sales available without appropriation to NOAA to conduct research in support of responsible long-term development of offshore wind.

Section 315. Extending collaboration with industry

Allows the Secretary of the Interior to accept contributions of money and services from public and private sources to assist in orderly development of offshore wind on the OCS.

Section 316. Developing strategies to protect wildlife

Authorizes a National Academies study to review existing research and best practices for managing effects on wildlife of offshore wind development, including consideration of the effect of reducing carbon emissions.

Section 317. Offshore wind for the territories

Amends the Outer Continental Shelf Leasing Act to allow for offshore wind leasing and development in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Directs the Secretary of the Interior to study, , in consultation with the governors of the territories, the feasibility of conducting offshore wind lease sales in areas of the OCS within the jurisdiction of U.S. territories. For each territory in which offshore wind leasing is determined to be feasible and appropriate, the Secretary is directed to conduct at least one lease sale

Section 318. Marine energy research

Directs the Secretary of Energy to conduct RD&D to accelerate development of hydrokinetic and marine thermal energy production, including research to identify and prevent adverse impacts on the environment and navigation. Direct the Secretary to provide grants to existing National Marine Energy Centers and to establish new centers to further these ends. Authorizes \$150 million for each of FY 2021 and 2022 for these activities.

Section 319. Increasing funding for coastal conservation and resilience Directs 30% of revenue from federal offshore wind energy leases to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's national coastal resilience program.

TITLE IV—CLIMATE-READY FISHERIES, EFFICIENT FISHERY VESSELS, AND BUY AMERICAN SEAFOOD

Subtitle A—Eat American Fish**Section 401. Sense of Congress**

Expresses the sense of Congress that U.S. government agencies that purchase seafood should prioritize purchase of seafood caught or harvested in the United States to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the seafood supply chain.

Section 402. Caught in the U.S.A.

Provides authority to the Secretary of Commerce to make grants from the Saltonstall-Kennedy fund to promote consumption of seafood products that are local or domestic, environmentally or climate-friendly, or from well-managed but less known species.

Section 403. Eliminate fish subsidies in trade agreements

Directs federal trade negotiators to include among their “priority objectives” the elimination of subsidies that contribute to excess fishing capacity, overfishing, or illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

Section 404. Fuel efficient fishing vessels

Prohibits federal loan guarantees for fishing vessels unless the construction, reconstruction or reconditioning that is the subject of the federal guarantee will increase fuel efficiency or reduce fuel usage of the resulting vessel.

Section 405. Climate and Fisheries Research and Management Program

Establishes a new program within the Department of Commerce to identify, develop, and implement strategies to improve the management of fisheries under current and anticipated effects of climate change. Within three years, the Secretary is to commission and submit to Congress an independent evaluation of the results of the program.

Section 406. Climate-Ready Fisheries Innovation Program

Establishes a program to develop innovative tools and approaches to increase the capacity of fisheries management to adapt to climate change. The program is to be carried out through a variety of activities including research and development, consultation, provision of technical assistance, and grants.

Section 407. Shifting Stocks Task Force

Creates a federal task force to develop criteria for, and undertake, science-based review of jurisdiction and allocation concerns for shifting stocks of fish.

Section 408. Essential fish habitat consultation

Prohibits federal agency actions, including funding and permits, that would harm areas designated as habitat areas of particular concern under the Magnuson Stevens Act. Requires consultation and mitigation of activities that would have an adverse effect on essential fish habitat.

Section 409. Ocean Aquaculture Research and Policy Program

Establishes a program in the Department of Commerce to promote aquaculture that maximizes ecosystem benefits and minimizes negative impacts in US coastal waters and the EEZ. Directs the Secretary to use existing grant and research programs within the Department to support the program and to prioritize restorative ocean aquaculture when carrying out programs within the Department related to aquaculture research and development. Directs the National Academies to review and synthesize existing technologies and assessments of restorative ocean aquaculture to inform ongoing research and technical assistance funded by the program.

TITLE V—COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCE ACT AMENDMENTS

Section 501. Undeveloped coastal barrier

Broadens the definition of a coastal barrier to include bluffs and areas that are or will be vulnerable to coastal hazards, such as flooding, storm surge, wind, erosion, and sea level rise.

Section 502. Coastal hazard pilot project

Establishes a pilot program to select and illustratively map an area consisting of up to ten percent of the System showing inclusion of coastal barriers under the new, broader definition of a coastal barrier set forth in section 502.

Section 503. Report on expanding Coastal Barrier Resources Act to the Pacific Coast, including Pacific territories and freely associated States

Directs the Secretary of the Interior to prepare and submit to Congress a report, including maps, describing the implications of expanding CBRS to the Pacific coast, islands and territories, including defining coastal barriers using the broader definition of section 502.

Section 504. Require disclosure to prospective buyers that property is in the Coastal Barrier Resources System

Prohibits the sale of any interest in real property located in the CBRS unless the seller has disclosed to the buyer that the property is in the System and subject to the limitations on federal infrastructure and development assistance. Creates a civil penalty for violation of this provision.

Section 505. Improve Federal agency compliance with Coastal Barrier Resources Act

Each agency affected by the Coastal Barrier Resources Act is required to report annually to the Secretary of the Interior and Congress regarding the agency's compliance with the Act, and the Secretary must certify agency compliance. Any agency not certified as in compliance must report to Congress within 90 days regarding how the agency will comply with the Act.

Section 506. Authorization of appropriations

Increases the authorization of appropriations to carry out the Act from \$2 million to \$5 million annually for fiscal years 2021 through 2024.

TITLE VI—COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT

Section 601. Grants to further achievement of Tribal coastal zone objectives

Creates a new program of grants under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) to assist Indian Tribes in managing and conserving coastal lands and resources under their jurisdiction. Authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to waive matching requirements under certain conditions and authorizes the use of \$5,000,000 per year for such grants from otherwise appropriated to carry out the CZMA.

Section 602. Eligibility of District of Columbia for Federal funding under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972

Deems the District of Columbia to be a coastal state under the definitions of the CZMA, making the District eligible to develop and implement a state coastal zone management plan, exercise federal consistency authority, and receive federal funding and other assistance under the Act.

Section 603. Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

Reauthorizes the Coastal and Estuarine Land Program at \$60 million per year from 2021-2025. Amends the purposes of the program to add mitigation of climate change to the original purposes of preserving conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values. Sets additional criteria for prioritizing grants for projects that mitigate the effects of climate change through carbon sequestration and/or reduction of coastal hazards.

Section 604. Coastal Zone Management Fund

Reauthorizes and amends the Coastal Zone Management Fund to provide grants to coastal states and Indian Tribes to address severe coastal flooding hazards, including emergency grants to address coastal flooding hazards following a major disaster declared under authority of the Stafford Act, and pre-disaster flooding mitigation projects. In addition to fees for coastal zone consistency appeal applications already deposited into the fund, authorizes appropriations into the fund of \$100 million annually for fiscal years 2021-2025.

Section 605. Authorization of appropriations

Authorizes appropriations to carry out the CZMA, which has not been reauthorized since 1999. Sets annual appropriations for the various grant programs under CZMA at \$123 million for FY 2021, with annual increases of \$4.5 million for each year thereafter.

Section 606. Amendments to National Estuarine Research Reserve System Program

Directs the Secretary of Commerce to designate at least five new National Estuarine Research Reserves within five years, and to do so in a manner that ensures that there is a reserve in each coastal state and in all biogeographic regions of the United States. Requires research guidelines for the program to include monitoring and methods for tracking and modeling the impacts of climate change on estuarine systems. Directs the program to undertake additional activities to promote and coordinate estuarine research. Authorizes land acquisition and the construction and renovation of facilities to carry out the purposes of the program.

TITLE VII—INSULAR AFFAIRS

Section 701. Definitions

Defines the term “territories” to mean the United States Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam; and the term “freely associated states” to mean the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, , and Palau.

Section 702. Coastal management technical assistance and report

Requires the director of the Coastal Zone Management Program to provide technical assistance to the territories and freely associated states to enhance their coastal management and climate change programs. Authorizes \$5,000,000 in appropriations for this purpose. Requires the director of the Coastal Zone Management Program to report annually to Congress on the status of wetlands and climate change impacts in the territories and freely associated states.

Section 703. Climate Change Insular Research Grant Program Establishes a program within NOAA to provide grants to institutions of higher education in the territories and freely associated States for monitoring, collecting, synthesizing, analyzing, and publishing local climate change data. Authorizes \$5,000,000 per fiscal year 2021 and 2022.

Section 704. Extreme weather and climate outreach to insular areas

Requires the NOAA Administrator to provide technical assistance to certain forecast offices in the territories and freely associated states to improve weather data collection, forecasting, and to provide science, data, information, and impact-based decision support services to reduce hurricane and typhoon impacts in the Territories and Freely Associated States. Authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to provide grants to academic, nonprofit, and local entities to conduct climate change research in the territories and freely associated States. Authorizes \$5,000,000 per fiscal year.

Section 705. Coral reefs

Authorizes the head of each federal agency represented on the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force to carry out prize competitions that promote coral reef research and conservation in the territories and freely associated States. Waives matching requirements under the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 for grants to implement State and territorial coral reef conservation cooperative agreements to sustain coral reef management and monitoring.

Section 706. Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act

Adds assessment of progress in the study of insular areas and the effects of climate change as an element of the biennial report to Congress on progress in coverage and modernization of ocean and coastal mapping required by the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act. Authorizes \$90 million for each of fiscal years 2021-2016 for carrying out the Act.

Section 707. Department of Interior Insular Affairs Technical Assistance Program

Authorizes \$5 million for fiscal year 2021 for the Department of the Interior to provide technical assistance for climate change planning, mitigation, and adaptation to territories and freely associated States.

Section 708. Disaster relief federal cost-share waiver

Exempts the territories and freely associated States from non-federal cost-sharing requirements for any funding for disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation received pursuant to the Stafford Act.

TITLE VIII—STRENGTHENING MARINE MAMMAL CONSERVATION

Section 801. Conservation of marine mammals adversely affected by climate change.

Amends the Marine Mammal Protection Act to direct NOAA, in consultation with the Marine Mammal Commission, to develop climate impact management plans for marine mammals that are at highly

threatened by climate change. These management plans must include strategies for mitigating the direct and indirect effects of climate change on the marine mammal population and may be integrated into Marine Mammal Protection Act conservation plans or Endangered Species Act recovery plans.

Section 802. Vessel speed restrictions in marine mammal habitat

Directs the NOAA Administrator to designate areas of importance to marine mammals within which all vessels greater than or equal to 49 feet in overall length shall observe a speed of 10 knots or less, consistent with safe navigation. Expands requirements for most large commercial vessels operating under the jurisdiction of the United States to be equipped with and operate an automatic identification system throughout the U.S. EEZ.

Section 803. Monitoring ocean noise for marine mammal health

Directs NOAA to work through the Integrated Ocean Observation System to maintain and expand a network of federal and non-federal systems to measure and observe underwater sound for the purposes of protecting and managing marine life. Authorizes \$1,000,000 for fiscal years 2021-2025 to carry out this section.

Section 804. Grants for seaports to establish programs to reduce the impacts of vessel traffic and port operations on marine mammals

Directs NOAA to establish a grant program for up to 10 ports to develop and implement programs to protect marine mammals, through activities that reduce noise and vessel strikes, enhance marine mammal habitat, and monitor threats to marine mammals. Priority is given to programs at ports that have a higher relative level of threat to marine mammals, reduce noise and vessel strikes, and track progress toward program goals. Authorizes \$4,000,000 for each fiscal year 2021 through 2025.

TITLE IX—INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, EFFORTS IN THE ARCTIC, AND BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS TRIBAL RESILIENCE PROGRAM

Section 901. United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the Senate should give its advice and consent to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Section 911. Reinstatement of executive order 13754; Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area

Rescinds President Trump’s executive order establishing an “America First” offshore energy policy and reinstates President Obama’s executive order creating and protecting the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area (including withdrawal of the areas from OCS leasing and development under section 12(a) of OCSLA).

Section 912. Plan for the United States to cut black carbon emissions to 33 percent below 2013 levels by 2025

Expresses the sense of Congress that black carbon contributes substantially to warming in the Arctic and that the United States should therefore reaffirm its international commitment to dramatically reduce this pollutant. Directs the Secretary of State to lead an interagency effort to develop and submit to Congress a plan to reduce black carbon emissions 33 percent below their 2013 level by 2025.

Section 921. Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Resilience Program

Establishes a grants program within the Department of the Interior to improve the resilience of Indian Tribes to the effects of climate change. Creates a subgroup on Tribal resilience within the White House Council on Native American Affairs. Establishes a Tribal resilience liaison within the Department of the Interior to coordinate with Indian Tribes and relevant Federal agencies to facilitate Tribal engagement in climate matters at the Federal level. Authorizes appropriations of \$200 million for each of fiscal years 2021-2025 to carry out these activities.

TITLE X—COASTAL RESILIENCY AND ADAPTATION

Section 1001. Living Shoreline Grant Program

Establishes within NOAA a grants program for the design and implementation of living shoreline projects. Grants are available to state, local and tribal governments, and non-profit organizations. Sets aside 10 percent of available funds for projects in the Great Lakes. Authorizes \$50 million for each of fiscal years 2020-2025.

Section 1002. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration research programs

Establishes a competitive extramural grants program to enhance the resilience and sustainability of coastal communities and reduce disaster recovery costs. To achieve these objectives, the program is to give priority to projects that protect life and critical infrastructure and provide analyses and decision support tools to enhance community and coastal ecosystem resilience.

Section 1003. Grants for recovering oysters

Establishes within NOAA a program of grants to members of the academic community, the seafood industry, nonprofit organizations, or state agencies for research on the conservation, restoration, or management of oysters in estuarine ecosystems. Authorizes \$6 million for each of fiscal years 2021-2025.

Section 1004. Improvements to the National Oceans and Coastal Security Act

Revises purpose and uses of a fund for grants administered by NOAA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Broadens the definition of Indian Tribe for purposes of the program. Revises the process and procedures for awarding state and national grants under the program. Limits state grants to 80 percent and national grants to 20 percent of annual funding. Suspends state grants if available funds fall below \$100 million in a fiscal year. Broadens the activities eligible for funding to include:

- Protection, conservation and restoration of ocean and coastal resources and infrastructure

- Planning for and management of coastal development
- Improve understanding of changing threats to the ocean and coasts
- Enhancing the resiliency of coastal infrastructure
- Acquiring property in support of the purposes of the program

Requires the program’s annual report to Congress to include blue carbon benefits of the program.

Permanently authorizes the program at \$100 million per year.

Section 1005. Shovel-ready restoration grants for coastlines and fisheries

Authorizes \$3 billion for fiscal year 2020 to support shovel-ready coastal restoration projects with priority to projects that help stimulate the economy, provide jobs for workers affected by COVID-19, and assist communities of color, low-income communities, Tribal communities, and rural communities.

Section 1006. Strategic Climate Change Relocation Initiative and Program

Establishes an initiative within the Council on Environmental Quality to coordinate Federal activities related to the voluntary relocation of communities that are impacted by sea level rise.

TITLE XI—OCEAN HEALTH: OCEAN ACIDIFICATION AND HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS

Subtitle A—Coastal Communities Ocean Acidification Act

Section 1101. State and United States Defined

Defines the United States and specifies that the term “state” includes territories and possessions of the United States for purposes of the vulnerability assessment in section 1102.

Section 1102. Coastal community vulnerability assessment

Amends the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act of 2009 to require the Secretary of Commerce to assess and issue a public report on the social and economic vulnerability to ocean acidification of coastal resource-dependent communities, including identification of key knowledge gaps and potential adaptation strategies. The report is to be updated every seven years. In addition, the Secretary is directed to collaborate with and support state, local and Tribal governments conducting their own vulnerability assessments related to Ocean Acidification, and to report to Congress on such efforts. Lastly, this section requires the Secretary to include in the ocean acidification strategic research plan already required under the Act recommendations on research needed to address knowledge gaps identified in the community vulnerability assessment.

Subtitle B—Ocean Acidification Act

Section 1111. Prize competitions

Authorizes federal agencies on the interagency working group on ocean acidification to offer prizes to advance understanding of ocean acidification or its impacts, or to develop management or adaptation options.

Subtitle C—COAST Research Act

Section 1121. Purposes

Amends the purpose of the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act of 2009 to include implementation of the research plan required to be developed under the Act and ensures that acidification of coastal waters is considered as well.

Section 1122. Definitions

Amends the definitions used in the Act to ensure that changes in water chemistry, not just pH, are assessed, and that such changes are studied in coastal estuaries and waterways, in addition to ocean waters. Includes U.S. territories and possessions within the scope of study.

Section 1123. Interagency working group

Re-designates a subcommittee of the National Science and Technology Council as a working group on ocean acidification. Adds additional federal agencies to the working group. Adds a new duty to support data and information exchange and archiving. Requires the working group's periodic reports to Congress to also be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget. Creates an advisory board of experts and stakeholders to review and advise the working group on progress in research on ocean and coastal acidification.

Section 1124. Strategic research plan

Requires the ocean acidification research plan to:

- Be updated every five years, published in the Federal Register, and subject to public comment;
- Include assessment of social and economic impacts of ocean acidification;
- Assess the effectiveness of strategies for adaptation, mitigation, education and outreach;
- Improve understanding of, and the interaction among, ocean acidification and other stressors to ocean and coastal ecosystems; and
- Identify monitoring needs to support affected stakeholders.

Section 1125. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ocean acidification activities

Expands NOAA's responsibilities under the Act by

- Making it the chair of the interagency working group and lead federal agency for ocean acidification research;
- Adding duties to coordinate federal research, improve monitoring and ocean observation, and require grantees follow uniform data collection and submission protocols;
- Including research on adaptation and mitigation strategies to address socioeconomic impacts; and
- Establishing and maintaining an ocean and data and information exchange and data-archiving systems.

Section 1126. National Science Foundation ocean acidification activities

Requires National Science Foundation (NSF) grantees to follow uniform data collection and submission protocols.

Section 1127. National Aeronautics and Space Administration ocean acidification activities

Requires NASA researchers to follow uniform data collection and submission protocols.

Section 1128. Authorization of appropriations

Authorizes \$30.5 million annually from 2020-2024 for NOAA to carry out its responsibilities under the Act. Authorizes \$20 million annually from 2020-2024 for NSF to carry out its responsibilities under the Act.

Subtitle D—South Florida Clean Coastal Waters

Section 1131. South Florida harmful algal blooms and hypoxia assessment and action plan

Requires the Interagency Task Force on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia to produce an interim assessment within 18 months and a final assessment and action plan within five years to address the causes, consequences, and potential approaches to reduction of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia in South Florida. Defines South Florida to include all lands and waters within the South Florida Water Management District, coastal waters adjacent to it, and the Florida Reef. These reports are to be submitted to Congress and the president. The assessment is to include the status of, and gaps within, current harmful algal bloom and hypoxia research, monitoring, management, prevention, response, and control activities that directly affect the region.

Subtitle E—Protecting Local Communities from Harmful Algal Blooms

Section 1141. Algal blooms

Qualifies harmful algal blooms as events eligible for federal disaster relief and emergency assistance under the Stafford Act.

Subtitle F—Harmful Algal Blooms Essential Forecasting

Section 1151. Designating certain harmful algal bloom services as excepted services under the Anti-Deficiency Act

Designates certain online and computational services for NOAA's Harmful Algal Bloom Forecast System as emergency services not subject to the Anti-Deficiency Act. *(The Anti-Deficiency Act generally prohibits federal agencies from making obligations or expending federal funds in advance or in excess of appropriations.)*

Section 1152. Centers of Excellence in Harmful Algal Bloom Research, Prevention, Response, and Mitigation.

Directs the Administrator of NOAA to designate new Centers of Excellence to improve and coordinate existing work to research and address harmful algal blooms, formalizing partnerships between local, State, and Federal stakeholders. Authorizes \$12,500,000 for fiscal years 2021-2025.

TITLE XII—NATIONAL OCEAN POLICY, DATA, AND COORDINATED WEBSITE FOR GRANT PROGRAMS

Subtitle A—Regional Ocean Partnerships

Section 1201. Findings; sense of Congress; purposes

Congressional findings on the importance of and threats to ocean and coastal waters, and the complexity of their management due to multiple jurisdictions and authorities. Expresses the sense of Congress that regional ocean partnerships (ROPs) can help to coordinate interstate management and that the federal government should support such efforts to advance shared regional priorities. Establishes the purpose of this subtitle to complement and expand voluntary efforts to manage and restore coastal areas and resources across state boundaries, authorize the establishment of ROPs, and make duly designated ROPs eligible to receive federal funding.

Section 1202. Regional Ocean Partnerships

Designates certain existing entities as ROPs. Authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to establish new ROPs on request from the governor of a coastal state. Establishes procedures and requirements for designation and governance of ROPs. Authorizes \$10 million for fiscal year 2021, with small increases each year thereafter through 2026, to carry out the purposes of the subtitle.

Subtitle B—Data and Scientific Coordination

Section 1211. Increased coordination among agencies with respect to data and monitoring

Amends duties and responsibilities of multiple federal interagency committees to harmonize and coordinate activities with respect to:

- Working with international bodies to ensure robust monitoring of the Great Lakes, the ocean, and bays;
- Computational and data storage capacity across the federal government;
- Data collection across multiple media and platforms; and
- Development of databases and improvement of data and model output accessibility.

Section 1212. Interagency Ocean Exploration Committee

Establishes a broad interagency committee to promote the exploration and improved understanding of the oceans.

Section 1213. Committee on Ocean Policy

Codifies the Committee on Ocean Policy previously established by executive order. Establishes purposes to coordinate and integrate federal activities in ocean and coastal waters, to engage and collaborate with ROPs and other stakeholders to address ocean-related matters, to evaluate and coordinate policies focused on coastal community resilience to sea level rise, and to ensure federal activities promote healthy ecosystems and climate resilience.

Section 1214. Building data sources

Directs NOAA to engage indigenous, subsistence, and fishing communities to understand the needs of those communities, provide improved products and services to those communities, and incorporate traditional information and knowledge into national datasets. Requires a report to Congress on opportunities to encourage voluntary actions and partnerships between NOAA and non-Federal partners to increase and enhance data collection.

Section 1215. National Sea Level Rise Risk Analysis

Directs NOAA to establish a National Coastal Data Information System that will combine existing observations, data, and models to map and communicate coastal flood risks, identify data gaps and data needs of stakeholders, and develop new data products to help coastal communities address current and future flooding risks.

Subtitle C—Digital Coast

Section 1221. Definitions

Defines the region of coverage to include coastal watersheds and the territorial sea.

Section 1222. Establishment of the Digital Coast

Formally authorizes NOAA's Digital Coast Program to enhance community resilience, ecosystem health and economic growth. Directs the program to:

- Make coastal data and data products accessible in online formats;
- Develop decision-support tools for use by state and local government;
- Document and archive data acquired by the program;
- Coordinate on data collection, sharing and integration with a broad range of governmental and non-governmental entities; and
- Provide support and grants to non-federal entities in support of the program goals.

Subtitle D—Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System

Section 1241. Staggered terms for National Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Advisory Committee

Establishes staggered terms for members of this advisory committee.

Section 1242. Integrated coastal and ocean observation system cooperative agreements

Authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to disburse funds to, in addition to receiving them from, entities with which the Secretary enters into cooperative agreements under the System.

Section 1243. Reauthorization of Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009

Reauthorizes the System at \$47.5 million annually from 2020-2024.

Section 1244. Advanced Research Projects Agency-Oceans

Authorizes the National Academies to assess the need for and feasibility of creating an Advanced Research Projects Agency-Oceans (ARPA-O). The assessment is to evaluate:

- Whether an ARPA-O could help the United States to overcome barriers in the development ocean technologies to enhance its economy, ecological health, and national security;
- Organizational structures necessary to establish an effective ARPA-O; and
- The scale of investment required to achieve these objectives.

The NOAA Administrator is to submit a report on the assessment to Congress.

Subtitle E—Centralized Website for Resiliency Grants

Section 1251. Centralized website for resiliency grants

Directs NOAA to create and maintain a publicly available website that provides links and information pertaining to all grants administered by NOAA to assist States and local communities with resiliency, adaptation, and mitigation of climate change and sea-level rise.

TITLE XIII—COASTAL WETLANDS

Section 1301. Definitions

Defines terms for use in the grants program established under this subtitle, including coastal wetlands, natural infrastructure, and a broad definition of Indian Tribe.

Section 1302. Coastal and Estuary Resilience Grant Program

Establishes a program under which the Secretary of Commerce awards grants to institutions of higher education, state and local governments, Indian Tribes, and nonprofit organizations for restoration of coastal wetlands. To be eligible for grants under the program, projects must be designed to sequester carbon dioxide or reduce carbon dioxide or methane emissions. Priority will be given to projects that also reinforce ecosystem adaptation and resilience or provide social and economic co-benefits.

Section 1303. Data collection

NOAA is directed to establish and maintain a coastal wetland restoration database to collect information about projects that receive grants under the Program.

Section 1304. Outreach and technical assistance

NOAA is directed to establish a technical assistance program to help entities outside of NOAA in all phases of coastal wetland restoration project work, including outreach to potential applicants for grants under this subtitle.

Section 1305. Annual restoration and funding

Establishes a goal for grants under the program to restore 1.5 million acres of coastal wetlands over 10 years. Authorizes \$200,000,000 a year for fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

Section 1306. Prevailing wage requirement.

Requires all contractors and subcontractors on a project funded under the program to pay prevailing wages for the locality or, where a collective-bargaining agreement covers the employee, according to the terms of that agreement.

Section 1307. Department of the Interior coastal wetland restoration; funding

Directs the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), to undertake restoration of coastal wetlands on Department lands to halt GHG emissions and/or sequester carbon. Sets a restoration target for the NPS of 620,000 acres over the next ten years and 160,000 acres for each year after that. Sets a restoration target for the FWS of 240,000 acres over the next ten years and 30,000 acres for each year after that. For fiscal years 2021-2025, authorizes \$200,000,000 per year for NPS and \$200,000,000 per year for FWS to carry out this subtitle.

TITLE XIV-- MEASURES TO ADDRESS GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION FROM SHIPPING VESSELS

Section 1401. Greenhouse gas emissions from shipping.

Establishes monitoring, reporting, and verification requirements of greenhouse gas emissions for vessels over 5,000 GT. Vessels must measure and report CO₂ emissions on an annual basis. Directs NOAA to publish an annual report on the shipping sector's CO₂ emissions and efficiency.

Section 1402. Quiet seas and clear skies vessel speed reduction award program

Directs NOAA to establish a program to reduce air pollution, underwater noise, and the risk of vessel strikes by encouraging voluntary reduction in the speed of shipping vessels operating within the EEZ.

TITLE XV—STUDIES AND REPORTS

Section 1501. Deep sea mining

Authorizes a National Academies study of the GHG emissions associated with deep seabed mining, including potential emissions associated with the release of GHG sequestered in the seabed.

Section 1502. National Academies Assessment of Oceanic Blue Carbon

Authorizes a National Academies study of the global GHG mitigation potential of protecting or restoring oceanic blue carbon, including natural carbon storage in the deep seafloor environment and marine mammals, and the impacts of ocean activities like mining on such carbon storage.

Section 1503. Ocean climate impacts and action report

Requires an annual report to Congress from the Secretary of Commerce on the impacts of climate change on the ocean and coastal ecosystems and steps the United States is taking to minimize such impacts.

Section 1504. Report on the ecological and economic effects of a moratorium on high seas fishing

Authorizes a National Academies study to explore the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing a moratorium on fishing on the High Seas and to evaluate the economic and ecological effects of such an action.

Section 1505. National Academies assessment of public access to the coasts

Authorizes a study by the National Academies to assess public access to the nation's coasts, including the Great Lakes. This study must include the quality and quantity of existing public access points by state, opportunities and barriers for low income communities, communities of color, Tribal communities, and rural communities, the impacts of sea level rise and extreme weather, and strategies to prevent the loss of public access.

Section 1507. Study examining the impact of ocean acidification and other environmental stressors on estuarine environments

Authorizes the National Academies to conduct a study examining the existing science of ocean acidification in estuarine environments, including challenges to studying the phenomenon and the combined effect of ocean acidification and other environment stressors in estuarine environments. The study is to provide recommendations for improving research on ocean acidification and identify pathways for applying science in management and mitigation decisions.