



FEB 1 2013

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the Disposal of NOAA Ships and Aircraft

LOCATION: NOAA Marine Operations Centers, Newport, Oregon and Norfolk, Virginia;
NOAA Ship Homeports; and NOAA Aircraft Operations Center, MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Florida

SUMMARY: OMAO proposes to dispose of NOAA ships and aircraft, as needed, via the process established under OMAO Procedure 1501-01, Approval Process for Aircraft/Ship Asset Disposals, and GSA Federal Property Management Regulations governing the exchange or sale of federally owned ships and aircraft, resulting in the transfer of NOAA ships and aircraft to a third party as described in the PEA.

RESPONSIBLE

OFFICIAL: Michael S. Devany, Rear Admiral, NOAA
Director, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations,
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
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The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI), including the programmatic environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information.



Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed PEA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patricia A. Montanio', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure



NOAA SHIP AND AIRCRAFT DISPOSAL

Programmatic Environmental Assessment



**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Office of Marine and Aviation Operations
December 2012**

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List of Acronyms

ACM – Asbestos Containing Material

ANS – Aquatic Nuisance Species

APPS – U.S. Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships

BWMP – Ballast Water Management Plan

CAA – U.S. Clean Air Act

CEQ – Council on Environmental Quality

CERCLA – Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

CFR – Code of Federal Regulations

CWA – U.S. Clean Water Act

CZMA – Coastal Zone Management Act

EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

ESA – Endangered Species Act of 1973

FAA – Federal Aviation Administration

GSA – General Services Administration

HSWA – Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984

ICAO – International Civil Aviation Organization

IMO – International Maritime Organization

MARAD – U.S. Maritime Administration

MARPOL – International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships

NAAQS – National Ambient Air Quality Standards

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

NISA – National Invasive Species Act

NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NAO – NOAA Administrative Order

NPDES – National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

OMAO – Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

OSHA – U. S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration

PCB – Polychlorinated Biphenyl

PEA – Programmatic Environmental Assessment

RCRA – Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

SIP – State Implementation Plan

TSCA – Toxic Substances Control Act

USCG – U. S. Coast Guard

NOAA SHIP AND AIRCRAFT DISPOSAL

Programmatic Environmental Assessment

1. Introduction. This document is a programmatic environmental assessment (PEA) for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) prepared pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and NOAA Administrative Order 216-6. The PEA assesses environmental impacts associated with the need for OMAO in the foreseeable future to dispose of NOAA owned and operated ships and aircraft, collectively referred to in this assessment as NOAA platforms.

2. Ship and Aircraft General Descriptions. OMAO currently owns and operates a fleet of 19 research ships and 12 research aircraft.

The ships are located at homeports on the east, west, and gulf coasts as well as in Hawaii and Alaska. The ships range in age from newly built to over 30 years old and range in size from approximately 100 feet to over 200 feet in length. The ships are of welded steel construction with diesel engine propulsion and power systems. They have a standard suite of ship-service auxiliary systems, such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning; potable water generation and distribution; fuel oil transfer; oily waste handling; and sewage processing and disposal equipment. They are outfitted with a wide array of electric- and hydraulic-driven deck equipment, and are also outfitted with various electronic navigation, communications, and data-gathering systems and equipment.

The aircraft are stationed at, and operated by the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center (AOC), located at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. The aircraft were built during the 1970's and 1980's with the exception of one built in 1994 and one built in 2009. The aircraft range in size from 37 feet long with a 49 foot wingspan to 117 feet long with a 100 foot wingspan. They are of fixed-wing aluminum construction, most of which have multiple turbine-engine propeller-driven propulsion with the exception of two piston-engine propeller-driven aircraft and one aircraft having multiple jet-engine propulsion.

There are several sets of "sister" ships in the fleet as well as several sets of aircraft of the same type that make up the fleet. An inventory of NOAA ships and aircraft is provided as Appendix A listing the particulars described above. In addition, information describing the physical attributes of each ship and aircraft owned and operated by NOAA is available via the OMAO webpage www.oma.noaa.gov.

3. Purpose of and Need for Action. The number and make-up of NOAA's fleet of ships and aircraft is primarily driven by mission needs and budget considerations. Those needs and considerations will dictate when it would be necessary or desirable to dispose of a given ship or aircraft. Other factors influencing the need to dispose of a ship or aircraft include efficiency and effectiveness of existing ships and aircraft verses that of newer ships and aircraft. These factors are typically captured in

capital improvement plans and supporting studies. Given current needs, constraints, age of the fleet, and other factors, NOAA foresees the need to potentially dispose of one or more of its ships and aircraft possibly on a recurring basis over the next several years.

4. Description of Proposed Action. OMAO proposes to enact a program allowing for the disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft as needed during the course of OMAO operations. In addition, the program requires disposal actions to be carried out as expeditiously as possible in order to minimize costs and liability associated with retaining and maintaining in-active platforms.

NOAA's administrative procedures for platform disposal are set forth in OMAO Procedure 1501-01, Approval Process for Aircraft/Ship Asset Disposals. Procedure 1501-01 comports with Federal Property Management Regulations administered by the General Services Administration (GSA) governing the exchange or sale of federally owned property, resulting in the transfer or sale of the ships and aircraft to a third party.

Note that OMAO Procedure 1501-01 indicates only the internal NOAA procedures to be followed to verify all legal requirements have been met during platform disposal.

OMAO Procedure 1501-01 does not dictate:

- 1) What individual platforms would be disposed of;
- 2) Any schedule or plan for specific platform disposal actions;
- 3) Conditions under which disposal would be undertaken; or
- 4) The method(s) of platform disposal.

A copy of OMAO Procedure 1501-01 is provided as Appendix B. The outcome of the transfer or sale could lead to any of the following outcomes: the ships and aircraft continue to be operated by the new owner; the ships and aircraft are dismantled, recycled, and scrapped; or the ships and aircraft are re-used to function as (or in) a museum.

5. Background. Following the decision to designate a platform as excess property, legal requirements, namely Federal Property Management regulations administered by GSA, govern and dictate the process by which NOAA sells, exchanges, donates, or otherwise disposes of its ships and aircraft. Under the GSA disposal process, there is no certainty regarding the final disposition of a given platform until the process is completed.

The GSA disposal process as described in the Federal Management Regulations, Title 41 of the Code of Federal Regulations, is as follows:

§102-36.35—What is the typical process for disposing of excess personal property?

(a) You must ensure personal property not needed by your activity is offered for use elsewhere within your agency. If the property is no longer needed by any activity within your agency, your agency declares the property excess and reports it to GSA for possible transfer to eligible recipients, including Federal agencies for direct use or for use by their contractors, project grantees, or cooperative agreement recipients. All executive agencies must, to the maximum extent practicable, fill requirements for personal property by using existing agency

property or by obtaining excess property from other Federal agencies in lieu of new procurements.

(b) If GSA determines that there are no Federal requirements for your excess personal property, it becomes surplus property and is available for donation to State and local public agencies and other eligible non-Federal activities. Title 40 of the United States Code requires that surplus personal property be distributed to eligible recipients by an agency established by each State for this purpose, the State Agency for Surplus Property.

(c) Surplus personal property not selected for donation is offered for sale to the public by competitive offerings such as sealed bid sales, spot bid sales or auctions. You may conduct or contract for the sale of your surplus personal property, or have GSA or another executive agency conduct the sale on behalf of your agency in accordance with [Part 102-38](#) of this chapter. You must inform GSA at the time the property is reported as excess if you do not want GSA to conduct the sale for you.

(d) If a written determination is made that the property has no commercial value or the estimated cost of its continued care and handling would exceed the estimated proceeds from its sale, you may dispose of the property by abandonment or destruction, or donate it to public bodies.

Furthermore, regarding the disposal of ships and aircraft, applicable regulations state:

§102-36.470—What must we do when disposing of excess vessels?

(a) When you dispose of excess vessels you must indicate on the SF 120 the following information:

(1) Whether the vessel has been inspected by the Coast Guard.

(2) Whether testing for hazardous materials has been done. And if so, the result of the testing, specifically the presence or absence of PCB's and asbestos and level of contamination.

(3) Whether hazardous materials clean-up is required, and when it will be accomplished by your agency.

(b) In accordance with 40 U.S.C. 548 the Federal Maritime Administration (FMA), Department of Transportation, is responsible for disposing of surplus vessels determined to be merchant vessels or capable of conversion to merchant use and weighing 1,500 gross tons or more. The SF 120 for such vessels shall be forwarded to GSA for submission to FMA.

(c) Disposal instructions regarding vessels in this part do not apply to battleships, cruisers, aircraft carriers, destroyers, or submarines.

§102-36.340—What must we do when disposing of excess aircraft?

(a) You must report to GSA all excess aircraft, regardless of condition or dollar value, and provide the following information on the SF 120:

(1) Manufacturer, date of manufacture, model, serial number.

(2) Major components missing from the aircraft (such as engines, electronics).

(3) Whether or not the:

(i) Aircraft is operational;

(ii) Dataplate is available;

(iii) Historical and maintenance records are available;

(iv) Aircraft has been previously certificated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and/or has been maintained to FAA airworthiness standards;

(v) Aircraft was previously used for non-flight purposes (i.e., ground training or static display), and has been subjected to extensive disassembly and re-assembly procedures for ground training, or repeated burning for fire-fighting training purposes.

(b) When the designated transfer or donation recipient's intended use is for non-flight purposes, you must remove and return the data plate to GSA Property Management Branch

(9FBP), San Francisco, CA 94102-3434, prior to releasing the aircraft to the authorized recipient. GSA will forward the dataplates to FAA.

(c) You must also submit a report of the final disposition of the aircraft to the Federal Aviation Interactive Reporting System (FAIRS) maintained by the Office of Travel, Transportation, and Asset Management (MT), GSA, 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20405. For additional instructions on reporting to FAIRS see [Part 102-33](#) of this chapter.

6. Scope of the Environmental Review. The scope of this review is limited to assessment of the physical disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft and resultant effect on the natural and human environment. It does not address in detail the decision-making process regarding whether or not a NOAA ship or aircraft will be declared excess, however, it recognizes that budget considerations will factor into any decisions regarding proposed actions and preferred alternatives. As a PEA, it covers disposal options in broad terms, and does not focus on any specific or singular proposed action or actions. In addition, it does not inform decisions regarding the effect, environmental or otherwise, that disposal actions may have on the accomplishment and performance of NOAA's scientific mission. Effects on NOAA's scientific mission are evaluated and assessed separately.

Given the broad nature of the proposed action, and the fact that the final disposition of the platform is not known prior to completion of the disposal process, this assessment first considers a global view of potential environmental effects that may be brought about by the proposed action. It next examines potential regional and local effects that may be caused by the action to the extent possible, and relates those effects back it to the global view as may be appropriate. Should the expected environmental effect of any specific disposal action be outside the range of effects described herein, NOAA would prepare a ship-specific or aircraft-specific environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

7. Description of Alternatives. OMAO initially identified four alternatives for disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft. Upon further review, OMAO determined the preferred alternative is Alternative 2, to dispose of NOAA ships and aircraft via GSA using established procedures in accordance with Federal Property Management Regulations. Alternative 2 has three possible outcomes each of which will be assessed individually.

7.1. Alternative 1. No Action. This alternative assumes all NOAA platforms will be retained regardless of their operational status. All NOAA platforms which are no longer considered operational would be placed in an inactive status. Inactive platforms would be stored at current NOAA locations and minimally maintained to keep them from falling into a state of disrepair. This will likely require occasional operation of ship and aircraft onboard systems for short durations. The no action alternative is required by NEPA and serves as a benchmark for decision makers and the public to compare the magnitude of environmental effects of the no action alternative with the action alternatives. It is recognized that the no-action alternative does not satisfy the need for NOAA to dispose of obsolete and inefficient platforms.

7.2. Alternative 2. Dispose of NOAA Platforms under Established Federal Property Management Procedures (Preferred). This alternative involves designating a given ship or aircraft excess property and assigning control of the platform to the GSA in accordance with Federal Property Management Regulations.

Under this alternative, NOAA would have no further discretion with regards to the disposition of the platform. Upon designating the platform excess, it is controlled by and subject to GSA procedures. Pending outcome of the procedures, NOAA, via GSA, would transfer ownership of the platform either through sale or direct transfer to a third party, which could lead to any of the following outcomes:

- a. **Alternative 2, GSA Option A. (2.A).** Following designation, GSA directs NOAA to transfer the platform to a buyer or recipient who continues to operate the vessel or aircraft;
- b. **Alternative 2, GSA Option B. (2.B).** Following designation, GSA directs NOAA to transfer the platform to a buyer or recipient who dismantles, recycles, and/or scraps the vessel or aircraft; or
- c. **Alternative 2, GSA Option C. (2.C).** Following designation, GSA directs NOAA to transfer the platform to a recipient who re-uses the vessel or aircraft as (or in) a museum. Under this scenario, the recipient would most likely be a state or local government or nonprofit organization.

8. Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration.

Alternatives 3 and 4 will be given no additional consideration.

8.1. Alternative 3. Platform is Sunk to Create an Artificial Reef. Under this alternative, NOAA would transfer the platform to a state government having an established artificial reefing program. Significant resources would be required to identify potential recipients, and to evaluate whether or not NOAA platforms available for disposal at a given time match potential recipients' requirements. Should a potential match be discovered, the environmental considerations relative to the given platform and the disposal site would be so specific in nature that it is beyond the scope of this PEA. As a result, this alternative significantly prolongs the disposal process and adversely impacts NOAA's program needs and operational costs. Implementation of this alternative does not meet NOAA's programmatic requirement to dispose of platforms in as expeditiously a manner as possible and is therefore eliminated from further consideration.

8.2. Alternative 4. Congressional Mandate to Transfer Ownership.

Under this alternative Congress, at its discretion, would direct through legislation, in the public interest, that a particular NOAA platform be transferred directly from NOAA to another federal agency, a state or local government entity, a private entity or group, or a

nonprofit organization. With respect to Alternative 4, NOAA as a federal agency does not control the legislative process and as such does not know and cannot determine the details, timing, or outcome of the transferring legislation. The transferring legislation would take precedent over NEPA requirements unless an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement is specifically required by the legislation mandating the transfer. It is recognized that the legislation may include specific environmental protections in addition to those protections already required under existing environmental laws. Examples could include legislation designed to protect the environment by placing specific restrictions on a new owner that must be followed regarding the use, maintenance, or future sale of the platform. Further analysis of a mandated action under the auspices of a programmatic environmental assessment is not possible at this time.

9. Affected Environment. Presently, NOAA operates and maintains 19 ships and 12 aircraft. NOAA ships are located throughout the coastal U.S. operating out of NOAA's Marine Operations Centers in Norfolk, VA, and Newport, OR. Additional homeports are located in Woods Hole, MA; Newport, RI; Davisville, RI; Charleston, SC; Pascagoula, MS; Kethikan, AK; and Honolulu, HI. NOAA aircraft are operated out of NOAA's Aircraft Operations Center at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL. NOAA platforms are capable of operating in the global environment worldwide. Precisely where a ship or aircraft ends up in the environment as a result of the proposed action is unknown and becomes a function of who ultimately acquires the platform as part of the disposal process. Implementation of the alternatives identified above may result in changes in the make-up and total number of ships or aircraft in the fleet, and changes in their physical condition.

In order to assess environmental impacts, as a baseline, NOAA considered what areas of the natural and human environment may be affected by the proposed action. Under the no action alternative, inactive platforms would be required to be stored and minimally maintained to keep them from falling into a state of disrepair. This would likely include occasional operation of select onboard systems for short durations. In addition, implementation of the preferred alternative may result in: continued operation and maintenance of the platform; dismantling/recycling/scraping of the platform; or reuse of the platform as (or in) a museum. A table containing examples of regulations, laws, and Executive Orders that might reasonably be expected to apply to the proposed action is included in Appendix C. The various environmental laws and regulations listed in Appendix C were reviewed to aid in the determination of what constitutes the affected environment.

Changes to the physical attributes of NOAA ships and aircraft, and changes in the relationship of those attributes to the natural and cultural environment brought about due to the proposed action, are considered in this assessment. The following environmental topics and resources constitute the affected environment and serve as the basis for continued analysis presented in this PEA.

9.1. Airspace and Land Use. It is conceivable that NOAA platforms may impact airspace and land use at the locations and within the regions at which, and from which

NOAA platforms are located, operated, and maintained. Operation, maintenance, and storage, as well as dismantling, recycling, and scrapping of NOAA platforms require facilities and infrastructure to be in place. Airspace and land use will be analyzed to the extent that NOAA platforms may be moved and operated from locations other than their current location.

9.2. Natural Resources and Utilities. Utilities: namely water; waste water treatment; and electrical power are required to keep NOAA platforms minimally powered, heated, and maintained while in port and while on the ground. In addition, fuel is consumed by NOAA platforms when they are in operation. In addition, the effect on other natural resources, namely raw materials, may be impacted as a result of the proposed action.

9.3. Protected Resources and Specially Managed Areas. This includes coastal zone management, National Marine Sanctuaries, and essential fish habitat. The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 requires federal agency activities to be consistent with states' federally approved Coastal Zone Management Programs. Under the CZMA, many states have established no discharge zones for ships when operating within the boundaries of their coastal waters.

9.4. Air Quality. Air quality effects from ships and aircraft may be an environmental issue if a platform or platforms were allowed to become a potential source of air pollution. Air quality in a given locale is judged based on the attainment status of criteria pollutants per the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Air pollution from ships is regulated by International Maritime Organization (IMO) Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). Air quality standards have been established for shipboard diesel engine exhaust, refrigerants used in heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment, other ozone depleting substances, and onboard incineration of shipboard generated trash. Aircraft engine manufacturers and operators are required to meet emission standards established by the U.S. EPA and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Airport air emissions from all sources also are constrained by the General Conformity regulations of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Similarly, maritime port authorities are regulated to improve air emissions at marine terminals from all sources.

9.5. Water Quality. Water quality is not anticipated to be an issue as it relates to disposal or continued operation of NOAA aircraft under the proposed action. As it pertains to NOAA ship operations and the proposed action, water quality is clearly part of the affected environment. All waterborne craft, including NOAA ships, have the potential to affect water quality especially if allowed or operated in a manner that causes them to become a potential source of water pollution. Effluents from ships are regulated by federal and international laws and regulations that are in place to prevent pollution from ships. Effluents and potential sources of pollution from ships that may affect water quality include: sewage; gray water; oily waste; trash and garbage; and releasing fuel through accidents (groundings and collisions) or spills during refueling operations.

9.6. Invasive Species. Invasive species are not anticipated to be an issue as it relates to disposal or continued operation of NOAA aircraft under the proposed action. As it pertains to NOAA ship operations and the proposed action, this may be an environmental issue if aquatic nuisance species (ANS) were present aboard a NOAA ship and allowed to enter the environment knowingly or unknowingly.

Large quantities of ballast water from all over the world are discharged into United States waters daily. Carried in this water are plants, animals, bacteria, and pathogens. These organisms range in size from microscopic to large plants and free-swimming fish. These organisms have the potential to become ANS which may displace native species, degrade native habitats, spread disease, and disrupt human social and economic activities that depend on water resources.¹

Ballast water discharged from ships is one of the pathways for the introduction and spread of ANS. In response to national concerns, the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 (NISA) amended the Non-indigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (NANPCA). The USCG has established regulations and guidelines to prevent the introduction and spread of ANS.²

9.7. Noise. Ships and aircraft are a potential source of environmentally disruptive noise when operated and maintained, or dismantled. Noise produced by aircraft, ships, and supporting facilities while in-port, on an airfield, or in transit can combine with other noise sources to affect nearby communities and natural resources. Noise will be evaluated accordingly. Factors that make noise undesirable in the human environment include interference with communication, damage to hearing, and physiological changes effecting human behavior. In the natural environment, noise can interfere with behaviors of animals, birds, fish, and aquatic organisms. In either environment, the type and characteristics of the noise, the distance between the noise source and receptor, receptor sensitivity, and time of day are important considerations when estimating the impacts of a noise source. The primary concerns regarding noise and potential environmental effects relate to the human environment, both onboard and in proximity to NOAA platforms, and potential effects on natural biological resources.

9.8. Historic and Cultural Considerations. The cultural environment may be an issue primarily if there is historic, recreational, or educational value associated with any NOAA platforms, or if the disposal method would affect other historic properties.

9.9. Socioeconomic Considerations. The socioeconomic environment may be an issue primarily due to industrial economic activity associated with owning, maintaining, or disposing of NOAA platforms.

9.10. Hazardous Materials. It has been determined that hazardous materials including asbestos-containing materials, polychlorinated bi-phenols, metal-based paints

¹ Source: USCG <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg522/cg5224/ans.asp>

² Source: USCG <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg522/cg5224/bwm.asp>

and coatings to varying degrees have been integral to the construction of NOAA ships and aircraft. In addition, chlorinated solvents, chemical cleaning agents, petroleum-based lubricants, and fuel oils were used during operation of the ships and aircraft and may be present in residual amounts and varying quantities at the time of the proposed action.

10. Environmental Topics Eliminated from Further

Consideration. Listed below are environmental resources and conditions that are often assessed under NEPA requirements that have been omitted from detailed analysis in this PEA for the reasons described.

10.1. *Threatened and Endangered Species.* NOAA platforms in their current locations and condition do not affect the environment of threatened and endangered species, nor is it anticipated that the proposed action will have any effect on threatened and endangered species in the future. The proposed action, in and of itself, and activities resulting from the proposed action will not increase the disturbance, disruption, or alter the existing environment in which threatened and protected species are located.

10.2. *Land Resources including Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection.* It is not known specifically to what geographic location a NOAA platform may be taken as a result of the proposed action. Regardless of the location to which a platform is taken, it is not anticipated that the proposed action will require acquisition of real property or construction of new infrastructure, facilities, or buildings at that location. Given that the environment affected by NOAA ships and aircraft is primarily waterborne and airborne, i.e., not land-based, OMAO does not foresee any additional impacts to land resources, including soils, vegetation, geologic features, wetlands, floodplains, and prime and unique farmlands, as a result of the proposed action and given alternatives. Concerns regarding the geographic location to which a NOAA platform may be taken are addressed in Sections 9.1 and 11.1 in terms of airspace and land use.

11. Environmental Consequences and Impacts of

Alternatives. NOAA considered the current environment in terms of the no action alternative and what changes would occur in the environment if a NOAA platform or platforms were taken from their current location and transferred to a new location at which, and from which, they either: continue to operate, are transformed, or are otherwise deposited into the environment based on the alternatives and sub-alternatives described in Section 6. The environmental consequences, in terms of the affected environment, associated with each alternative are discussed below.

11.1. *Airspace and Land Use*

Alternative 1. No action. Platforms, no longer in use, would continue to be properly stored and maintained to an acceptable degree to prevent them from falling into a state of disrepair which could lead to contamination of local land and water resources. Existing NOAA facilities have requisite capabilities and processes, programs, and procedures are

in place and will continue to be implemented to prevent deterioration of inactive platforms. Under those circumstances, there are no appreciable environmental consequences associated with the no action alternative on airspace and land use.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner.

Under this alternative, NOAA platforms would be relocated to an area suitably developed for that purpose and would be operated and maintained from that area and within the confines of global waters and global airspace in which the platforms currently operate. Under those circumstances, no new or unique activities affecting airspace and land use will take place at their new locations regardless of the location to which they are moved. Implementation of Alternative 2.a would have no global impact on airspace and land use, and given the relative number of ships and aircraft in a given location, would have minimal impact on local airspace and land use.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. It is not known precisely where NOAA platforms will ultimately end up in the environment following dismantling, recycling, and scrapping. What is known is that the disposal process will move the platforms to locations with existing infrastructure necessary to perform the disposal process or otherwise support activities similar to the activities currently being performed at their current locations. Surveys of NOAA platforms will be conducted to determine quantity, location, and condition of hazardous materials, harmful substances and contaminants. It is anticipated minimal if any hazardous materials will remain on board NOAA platforms when they are released to GSA for their final disposition. For any harmful substances and contaminants that remain, provisions under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) intended to prevent contamination of the environment would apply to final disposition of platform components. Provisions and standards established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) would also be applicable to protect worker safety and public health from potential release and exposure to harmful contaminants. Under the conditions and provisions described, implementation of Alternative 2.b would result in no significant impacts on airspace and land use.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Potential impacts on airspace and land use under Alternative 2.c would be the same as those described under Alternatives 1 and 2.a. Local zoning laws and ordinances would prevent establishment of improper activities at a given location. Implementation of Alternative 2.c. would result in no significant impact to airspace and land use.

11.2. Natural Resources and Utilities

Alternative 1. No action. Implementation of the no action alternative, due to the inactive status of NOAA platforms, would result in reduced consumption of water, fuel, and utilities compared with the amount consumed by active platforms. Under the no action alternative NOAA platforms affected by the proposed action would require to be retained and minimally maintained. This would involve storage of the platforms and may involve occasional use of internal systems and equipment which would result in minimal

consumption of water and energy utilities. Similarly, waste water generation would be significantly reduced and minimal. The net change in consumption of natural resources and utility requirements, although positive, would be minimal.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner.

Continued operation of NOAA platforms regardless of the new owner would result in no significant changes or impacts on global natural resources. Other than fuel consumption which would not substantively change regardless of ownership, at-sea operations of NOAA ships and in-flight operations of NOAA aircraft would not affect natural resources because of the platforms existing capabilities, namely self generation of power aboard ships and aircraft, generation of water and internal waste water processing aboard ships. Potential changes to the local environment due to the presence of NOAA platforms while in port and on the ground would be accommodated by existing infrastructure and would result in minimal impact to local natural resources and utilities including water usage, waste water treatment requirements, and energy consumption. Implementation of Alternative 2.a. would have little environmental consequence on natural resources and utilities.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. NOAA platforms disposed of for scrap have the potential to be a fairly significant source of recycled material. Implementation of Alternative 2.b represents an overall saving of natural materials from the disposal of NOAA platforms primarily on account of the value of their scrap steel and specialty metals, and reuse of select parts and equipment. The collective weight of NOAA ships, most of which is due to the weight of the steel used in their construction is over 36,000 tons. The amount of specialty sheet metal used in the construction of NOAA aircraft is in excess of approximately 23,000 square feet. Any utilities and resources consumed to recover recyclable material from NOAA platforms will be offset by the need to not remove additional natural resources from the environment. Implementation of Alternative 2.b would have a slight positive impact on natural resources and utilities.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. The impact of implementation of Alternative 2.c on natural resources and utilities would be minimal and similar to those described under the no action alternative.

11.3. Protected Resources and Specially Managed Areas.

Alternative 1. No action. Under the no action alternative, NOAA platforms designated out of service will remain at NOAA locations that currently have no impact on protected resources and specially managed areas. For maintenance purposes during inactive status, operation of onboard systems would be minimal and of short duration. Implementation of the no action alternative will have no effect on protected resources and specially managed areas.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner.

NOAA ships currently have pollution control technologies and adequate waste water storage capabilities in place that permit operation of limited duration in no discharge

zones established by given states under the CZMA. NOAA ships depart from these areas as needed in order to conduct discharge operations in an environmentally compliant manner. Similarly, potential new owner/operators of NOAA ships would be required to continue to operate the ships in accordance with requirements when in no discharge zones. In addition, no new construction is anticipated to be needed to accommodate NOAA ships and aircraft regardless of their final location under the proposed action. The sites to which NOAA platforms may be taken would be in conformance with established water types and shoreline features as designated by a given State's Coastal Zone Management Program. No new impacts on protected resources and specially managed areas are anticipated as a result of implementation of Alternative 2.a.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. Similar to the circumstances described under Alternative 2.a, based on review of data, given alternatives, and initial analysis, the sites to which NOAA platforms may be taken would be in conformance with established water types and shoreline features as designated by a given State's Coastal Zone Management Program. OMAO anticipates disposal activities will be consistent with the policies of potentially affected states' Coastal Zone Management Programs, and implementation of Alternative 2.b will not impact protected resources and specially managed areas.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Potential impacts on protected resources and specially managed areas under Alternative 2.c would be similar to those described under Alternative 1. Local zoning laws and ordinances would prevent establishment of improper activities at a given location. Implementation of Alternative 2.c. would result in no significant impact to protected resources and specially managed areas.

11.4. Air Quality

Alternative 1. No action. Under the no action alternative, operation of NOAA platforms designated out of service will be minimal and of short duration. No effects on air quality are expected from implementation of the no action alternative.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner. If platforms are kept in operation by any entity, there would be some potential for minimal adverse impacts on air quality in the region of operation. However, it is anticipated that any potential impacts would be insignificant. Air emissions from ships, aircraft, airports and marine terminals are regulated under the Clean Air Act. Cognizant federal agencies including the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) along with international regulatory bodies including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) have established standards to ensure compliance with the CAA. NOAA platforms are in compliance and meet applicable air emission standards. In addition due to the relative number of NOAA platforms compared with the total number of ships and aircraft operating at any given location, changes in locations of NOAA platforms would result in very minor intermittent changes in emissions at any given location. It would be very unlikely that the potential impact would affect the NAAQS attainment status of the

region. Implementation of Alternative 2.a. will have minimal environmental impact on air quality.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. For inoperable platforms, no harmful emissions will be produced and changes in air quality are not anticipated to result in any measurable effect. Under provisions of the CAA, ozone-depleting substances, for example chlorofluorocarbon containing refrigerants and Halon fire extinguishing agents, would be required to be evacuated and captured from systems and equipment prior to disposal as part of the dismantling, recycling, and scrapping process. It is not expected that the dismantling, recycling, and scrapping process itself will have any significant impacts on air quality. Implementation of Alternative 2.b will result in minimal environmental impact on air quality.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Systems and equipment remaining in operation would be required to be maintained in accordance with Clean Air Act provisions and other regulations cited under Alternative 2.a. The impact on air quality as a result of implementation of Alternative 2.c is not anticipated to result in any measurable effect.

11.5. Water Quality

Alternative 1. No action. Under the no action alternative, the risk of operational leaks and spills potentially impacting water quality would be greatly reduced because the platforms would be in operation infrequently. Platforms, no longer in use, if not properly maintained could deteriorate and contribute to contamination of local waters. NOAA facilities, resources, and procedures are in place to properly store and maintain platforms to an acceptable degree, so as to prevent them from falling into a state of disrepair. Given the above considerations, no significant impacts on water quality are anticipated as a result of the no action alternative.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner. If NOAA ships were to be kept in operation by any entity as a result of the proposed action, there would be at a minimum, slightly increased potential for negligible adverse impacts on water quality. Global waters are protected under provisions of the U.S. Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (APPS) and standards established by IMO MARPOL and are implemented and enforced under USCG regulations promulgated in Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters, and Title 46, Shipping, of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations. Local waters are protected under provisions of the CWA and the EPA National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). NOAA ships operating in U.S. coastal waters and in international waters are required to have capabilities in place and are required to be operated in compliance with USCG regulations and under terms of the NPDES Vessel General Permit (VGP)³ that ensures compliance with the CWA and APPS. NOAA

³The Vessel General Permit (VGP) regulates discharges incidental to the normal operation of vessels. The VGP includes general effluent limits applicable to all discharges; general effluent limits applicable to 26 specific discharge streams; narrative water-quality based effluent limits; inspection, monitoring, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements; and additional requirements applicable to certain vessel types (source: USCG <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg5/cg522/cg5224/vgp.asp>).

vessels acquired for continued use and operation by any entity as a result of the proposed action would still be governed by all applicable laws in place to protect water quality. Any potential impacts resulting from implementation of Alternative 2.a. on water quality would be anticipated to be insignificant.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. NOAA platforms dismantled, recycled, and scrapped, as a result of the proposed action, have the potential to have adverse impacts on water quality. Facilities to which the platforms are taken for processing would need to be established and be properly permitted for the activities in which they are engaged. The activities would need to be conducted in a manner to prevent contamination of local water resources as described in Section 10.1.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Potential impacts on water quality under Alternative 2.c would be the similar to those described under Alternatives 1 and 2.a. It is likely that most fluids would be drained and the platform would be maintained at a level that is appropriate for use as a museum and human interaction. Local zoning laws and ordinances would prevent establishment of improper activities at a given location. Implementation of Alternative 2.c. would result in no significant impact to water quality.

11.6. Invasive Species

Alternative 1. No action. Under the no action alternative, operation of NOAA platforms designated out of service will be minimal and of short duration. No ballasting or de-ballasting is required. Transport of invasive species will not occur. Implementation of Alternative 1 will have no environmental impacts associated with issues related to control of invasive species.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner. Ballast water discharges from ships are regulated by the IMO and USCG. USCG regulations are consistent with international standards. USCG ballast water regulations require all applicable ships to develop a ballast water management plan (BWMP) intended to ensure ballast water discharges meet USCG standards for the allowable concentration of living organisms in ballast water discharged from ships in waters of the United States. The regulations also establish an approval process for equipment in ballast water management systems that are used to achieve allowable concentration standards. Approved ballast water management plans required by USCG regulations are in place aboard NOAA ships. New owners of NOAA ships as a result of the proposed action are subject to, and will be required to continue to comply with ballast water management plans and standards in accordance with USCG regulations to prevent the transfer of invasive species in the environment. Implementation of Alternative 2.a is not expected to result in any environmental impacts associated with control of invasive species.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. Prior to disposal, ballast water will be discharged in an environmentally acceptable manner in

accordance with the ships BWMP and USCG regulations. Similarly, sediment from ballast tanks will be removed and properly disposed of prior to the scrapping of NOAA ships as required by regulation. Implementation of Alternative 2.b is not expected to result in any environmental impacts associated with control of invasive species.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum.

Implementation of this alternative will most likely result in the platform being non-operational. No ballasting or de-ballasting is anticipated. Transport of invasive species will not occur. Implementation of Alternative 2.c will have no environmental impacts associated with issues related to control of invasive species.

11.7. Noise

Alternative 1. No action. The criteria used to determine the significance of noise is typically based on a combination of land use compatibility guidelines, factors related to duration and magnitude of the noise level, including the time of day and the conduct of operations, and the noise level produced relative to ambient noise levels. Federal and state laws and local ordinances establish standards and limitations for noise output from ports, airfields, industrial facilities, and motor vehicles. NOAA activities are operated in accordance with all federal and state laws and local ordinances. Once decommissioned and deemed inactive, operation of a NOAA platform and associated machinery and equipment, would not take place or would be so infrequent and of short duration to deem any resulting noise as insignificant. Implementation of the no action alternative is not anticipated to result in significant impacts due to noise on either the human, atmospheric, or aquatic environment.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner.

NOAA platforms operate in an environment where they are either in open waters or in airspace distant from people, or they are in near-shore waters or airfields where numerous other ships and aircraft are also operating. Ship operations create relatively low levels of airborne noise outside the surrounds of the immediate shipboard environment. Ship operations do however contribute to underwater transmitted sound. Research indicates that fish and cetaceans exhibit avoidance behavior in response to shipboard engine noise, up to a distance of 400 meters away for the noisiest vessels. Research also suggests that this response is transient, lasting only until the vessel passes out of the response zone, and therefore poses negligible potential for long-term impacts on these resources.⁴ It is also acknowledged that aircraft taking off and landing create fairly high levels of sporadic short term noise. It is presumed that continued operation of NOAA ships and aircraft will occur at and from locations in which ships and aircraft are currently operated. There would be no significant cumulative effects due to continued operation of NOAA platforms regardless of location. Implementation of Alternative 2.a. would result in no change to the current global environment and minimal short term impact to the local environment.

⁴ Acoustic Ecology. 2001. The Acoustic Ecology Institute—Ocean Issues: Ship Traffic. Available online at <http://www.acousticecology.org/oceantraffic.html>.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. Relocation of NOAA platforms to facilities that dismantle, scrap, and recycle ships and aircraft may result in noise of short duration due to operation of the platform to and at those locations. It is presumed that facilities to which NOAA platforms will be taken for scrapping and recycling exist in the current environment, and current noise levels at those facilities meet standards established for that activity at that location. In addition, it is recognized that the noise levels that result from multiple sources are not arithmetically additive. In other words, if two sources of noise are each producing 60 decibels of sound, the resulting noise level is not 120 db, but 64 db. Multiple additional sources of noise contribute even less to the established ambient noise level. As a result, noise associated with industrial activities attributable to work on NOAA platforms at facilities currently engaged in similar work would have very little impact on the environment.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Activities associated with Alternative 2.c. would result in lower noise levels than are currently produced. Impacts due to implementation of Alternative 2.c would be insignificant.

11.8. Historic and Cultural Considerations

Alternative 1. No action. There are no NOAA platforms having known cultural ties to a given location or community. As it relates to final disposition, the ships and aircraft that make up the NOAA fleet are not culturally unique or unique from an engineering or technologic perspective. NOAA platforms have not been recognized formally as having any intrinsic historic value, nor is it anticipated that the proposed action will affect other historic resources. Should the current status change, coordination under the National Historic Preservation Act, if required, would be undertaken on a per-disposal basis. Implementing the no action alternative, i.e., retaining all NOAA platforms regardless of their operational status will not have an impact on the cultural environment.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner. Implementation of Alternative 2.a would result in continued operation of NOAA platforms under new ownership and would not impact the cultural environment for the reasons cited under Alternative 1.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. Similarly, implementation of Alternative 2.b would result in the dismantling, recycling, and scrapping of NOAA platforms and would not impact the cultural environment for the reasons cited under Alternative 1.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Implementation of Alternative 2.c. would result in re-use of NOAA platforms as museums and may impact the cultural environment in a positive manor by providing recreational and educational value to area residents and visitors. Given the cultural value of NOAA platforms described under Alternative 1, the impact would be relatively minor.

11.9. Socioeconomic Considerations

Alternative 1. No action. As of year-end 2009, nearly 40,000 U.S. privately-owned vessels were available for operation in U.S. foreign and domestic trades.⁵ The total number of aircraft in the U.S. commercial airline fleet (including regional carriers) stood at an estimated 7,185 at the end of 2011.⁶ Retaining NOAA platforms, or not retaining them for that matter, will not have a significant impact on the current global socioeconomic environment. Slight short-term fluctuations to local economies are possible on account of decreased expenses associated with platform operations and maintenance, however these fluctuations are considered minor and relatively insignificant to the overall socioeconomic health of a given local area.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner.

Selling one or more NOAA ships or aircraft for reuse will result in relocation of the platforms. The locations to which a given ship or aircraft is likely to go, be it to an existing port facility or airfield would be equipped and operated in a manner similar to the location from which the ship or aircraft is departing, and would have minimal cumulative impact on the socioeconomic environment. Given the relative size of the NOAA fleet (19 ships and 12 aircraft) compared to the total universe of ships and aircraft in the environment, changes in locations of platforms in the current NOAA fleet will have minimal impact on the socioeconomic make-up of a given location or region, regardless of the location from which, or to which the platforms are moved.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. Selling one or more NOAA ships or aircraft, that ultimately are dismantled, scrapped and recycled for parts and equipment would result in fewer ships and aircraft operating in the environment. Given the relative size of the NOAA fleet compared to the total universe of ships and aircraft in the environment, not operating a portion of the existing fleet will have no measurable socioeconomic impacts. It is conceivable that area business could increase at locations near which a ship or aircraft is moved to be dismantled which could result in slight positive socioeconomic impacts to the local area, although impacts would be temporary and minor.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum.

Implementation of Alternative 2.c. would result in re-use of NOAA platforms as museums and may impact the socioeconomic environment in a positive manner by creating revenue for the acquiring party and possibly increasing local area business. Given the cultural value of NOAA platforms described in Section 10.7, under Alternative 1, the impact would be minor.

11.10. Hazardous Materials

Alternative 1. No action. Once a decision has been made that a given ship or aircraft is no longer needed, it is decommissioned and designated as excess property. The

⁵ U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, U.S. Water Transportation Statistical Snapshot, February 2011

⁶ U.S. Federal Aviation Administration Statistics, March 2012

decommissioning and disposal process includes steps to remove consumables, including hazardous materials, and other equipment or commodities that can be used by other NOAA platforms. Therefore, the effects on the generation, storage, usage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would be slightly positive from an environmental impact perspective under the No Action alternative.

Alternative 2, GSA Option A. Platform continues to be operated by new owner.

Operation of any ship or aircraft requires the use of various oils, lubricants, paints, anti-corrosives, degreasers and cleaning products. From that perspective, regardless of owner, all ships and aircraft contain and use similar hazardous materials and produce similar waste streams as it relates to ship and aircraft operation, maintenance, and final disposition. Environmental regulations, the intent of which is to minimize environmental impact, applicable to all owners of ships and aircraft govern the management and disposal of the various waste streams produced as a result of ship and aircraft operations and maintenance. Therefore, the effects on the generation, storage, usage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would remain unchanged and would be minimal under Alternative 2.a.

Alternative 2, GSA Option B. Platform is dismantled/recycled/scrapped. Ships and aircraft (aircraft to a lesser degree) may also contain additional hazardous materials integral to the platforms' design and construction that could be harmful if allowed to enter the environment including for example, residual oils in fuel tanks, metal-based paint, polychlorinated biphenyls and asbestos containing materials. Information regarding amounts and locations of potential hazardous materials, not required to be removed by law, must be disclosed in the platform description as part of the sale/property transfer process. There will be minimal environmental consequences as a result of scrapping the platforms provided the platforms are dismantled properly and final disposition of component parts are handled in an environmentally compliant manner. The new owner will be required to assume responsibility for final disposal of these materials in accordance with applicable environmental laws and regulations that prevent them from adversely affecting the environment.⁷ Therefore, the effects on the generation, storage, usage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials would be minimal under Alternative 2.b.

Alternative 2, GSA Option C. Platform is re-used as (or in) a museum. Removal and mitigation activities described under Alternatives 1, 2.a, and 2.b to prevent exposure to the public to potential hazards would also be necessary prior to implementation of Alternative 2.c. Considering the necessary actions prior to sale/transfer of NOAA platforms, implementation of Alternative 2.c would have minimal impact on the environment attributable to the presence of hazardous materials.

⁷ EPA has published "A Guide for Ship Scrappers: Tips for Regulatory Compliance." A copy of the document is available at <http://www.epa.gov/oecaerth/resources/publications/civil/federal/shipscrapguide.pdf>.

12. Summary of Potential Impacts.

The natural and human cumulative environmental impact associated with the proposed action is of relative minimal consequence and will not result in significant changes in the global or local environment.

Disposing of NOAA ships or aircraft for reuse would result in fewer ships and aircraft operated by NOAA, but the same number would be operating in the global environment. Locally, reuse would occur at and from locations with existing infrastructure in place to support operations. No new or unique types of activities will take place at those locations. Reuse of the ships or aircraft will have few if any environmental consequences since there will be no appreciable changes to ship or aircraft physical attributes. In addition, there will be little if any changes in the relationship of those attributes with the natural and cultural environment.

Given the scope of the proposed action, the effects of relocation of NOAA platforms and potential changes in industrial activities associated with any of the alternatives will be minor. Slight increases or decreases in fleet size and changes in the number of platforms owned and operated by NOAA as a result of implementing any of the alternatives, singularly or in combination, will result in minimal environmental impact.

The process by which NOAA ships and aircraft will be disposed involves the screening of potential recipients by GSA. It is NOAA's understanding that the screening process is used, in part, as a means to ensure potential recipients have demonstrated the wherewithal to comply with Federal, state, and local environmental laws. It is anticipated there will be no appreciable impacts on the environment considering any and all platforms associated with the proposed action, regardless of owner, are required to be managed, operated, and disposed of in accordance with applicable environmental laws and regulations.

As mentioned previously, maintenance and operation of NOAA ships and aircraft has required the use of various oils, lubricants, paints, anti-corrosives, degreasers and cleaning products. As part of the decommissioning process, presence of these materials will be minimized by NOAA to the fullest extent possible, and as required by law, prior to sale of a given ship or aircraft.

Given the aforementioned considerations, it is believed the proposed action would result in no significant environmental impacts. Collectively, impacts to the natural, cultural, and socioeconomic environment, both locally and globally, resulting from the proposed action are minimal. Implementation of the preferred alternative, Alternative 2, and any actions associated with the alternative, would have no significant impact on the natural, cultural, or socioeconomic environment.

13. Mitigation Measures.

OMAO will perform the actions listed below prior to, or as part of, the transfer process for disposal of NOAA platforms.

- Comply with all federal environmental laws and corresponding regulations regarding the disposal of federal property when selling a NOAA platform. Applicable environmental laws include the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), and the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) of 1984.
- Remove, abate, and mitigate to the extent possible, and as required by law, existing hazardous materials aboard any NOAA platform prior to its disposal, such as friable or damaged asbestos containing materials, polychlorinated biphenyls, fuel oils, lubricants, paints, anti-corrosives, degreasers and chemical cleaning products.
- Instruct GSA to disclose in the description of the platform, as part of the sale and as required by law, the presence of any remaining hazardous materials integral to the design and construction of the ship or aircraft such as residual oils in fuel tanks, metal-based paint, and asbestos containing materials.
- Instruct GSA to ensure that potential buyers are aware of their environmental responsibilities associated with operation, maintenance, and final disposal of ships and aircraft, including disposal of debris to a permitted off-site facility.
- Instruct GSA to ensure potential recipients of excess NOAA platforms will only relocate the platforms to locations at which proposed activities are permitted and that have existing infrastructure in place to perform those activities.

14. Prepared By and Persons Contacted

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Appendix A - Inventory of NOAA Ships and Aircraft

Inventory of NOAA Ships - September 2012									
NOAA Ship	Year Built	Vessel Class ¹	Length ²	Horse-power	Displacement ³	Complement ⁴	No. of Decks	Homeport	Major Repair or Conversion ⁵
<i>Oregon II</i>	1967	III	170	1800	952	31	4	Pascagoula, MS	n/a
<i>Miller Freeman</i>	1967	II	215	2200	1920	45	5	Newport, OR	1982
<i>Delaware II</i>	1968	IV	155	1230	897	32	4	Woods Hole, MA	1996
<i>Fairweather</i>	1968	II	231	2400	1800	53	5	Ketchikan, AK	2004
<i>Rainier</i>	1968	II	231	2400	1800	53	5	Newport, OR	2009
<i>McArthur II</i>	1982	III	224	1600	2301	37	6	Newport, OR	2003
<i>Hi'ialakai</i>	1984	III	224	1600	2285	48	6	Honolulu, HI	2004
<i>Oscar Elton Sette</i>	1988	III	224	1600	2301	42	6	Honolulu, HI	2003
<i>Okeanos Explorer</i>	1988	III	224	1600	2312	46	6	Davisville, RI	2005
<i>Ka'imimoana</i>	1989	III	224	1600	2301	33	6	Honolulu, HI	1995
<i>Gordon Gunter</i>	1989	II	224	1600	2328	33	6	Pascagoula, MS	1998
<i>Nancy Foster</i>	1990	III	187	1850	1190	37	5	Charleston, SC	2003
<i>Thomas Jefferson</i>	1992	II	208	2550	2000	36	6	Norfolk, VA	2003
<i>Ronald H Brown</i>	1996	I	274	6000	3250	58	7	Charleston, SC	n/a
<i>Oscar Dyson</i>	2003	II	209	3000	2479	39	6	Kodiak, AK	n/a
<i>Henry B Bigelow</i>	2005	II	209	3000	2479	39	6	Woods Hole, MA	n/a
<i>Pisces</i>	2007	II	209	3000	2479	39	6	Pascagoula, MS	n/a
<i>Bell M Shimada</i>	2008	II	209	3000	2479	39	6	Newport, OR	n/a
<i>Ferdinand R Hassler</i>	2009	II	120	1200	738	14	4	New Castle, DE	n/a

¹A NOAA assigned number (based on a range) representing a combination of the ship's length plus horsepower.

²Length of the ship in terms of length overall (measured in feet).


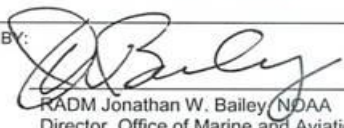
³Displacement is weight of the ship (measured in tons).

⁴Complement is the number of persons assigned, i.e., maximum number of persons aboard the ship.

⁵Major repair periods and conversions of NOAA ships typically included wholesale removal of asbestos aboard the ship.

Inventory of NOAA Aircraft - September 2012						
NOAA Aircraft	Tail Number	Year Built	Length x Wingspan	Cabin Dimensions	Engines	Location
<i>WP-3 Orion (P-3)</i>	N42RF	1975	117 ft x 100 ft	69ft x 11ft x 7ft 6in	4 turboprop - 4600 hp each	Tampa, FL
<i>WP-3 Orion (P-3)</i>	N43RF	1976	117 ft x 100 ft	69ft x 11ft x 7ft 6in	4 turboprop - 4600 hp each	Tampa, FL
<i>WP-3 Orion (P-3)</i>	N44RF	1984	117 ft x 100 ft	69ft x 11ft x 7ft 6in	4 turboprop - 4600 hp each	Tampa, FL
<i>Jet Prop Commander 1000</i>	N45RF	1984	43 ft x 52 ft	17ft 5in x 4ft 2in x 4ft 9in	2 turboprop - 800 hp each	Tampa, FL
<i>Twin Otter (DHC-6)</i>	N46RF	1985	52 ft x 65 ft	18ft 5in x 5ft 3in x 4ft 11in	2 turboprop - series 300	Tampa, FL
<i>Shrike Commander (AC-500S)</i>	N47RF	1975	37 ft x 49 ft	10ft 7in x 4ft 4in x 4ft 5in	2 Lycoming IO-540-E1B5 (piston)	Tampa, FL
<i>Twin Otter (DHC-6)</i>	N48RF	1981	52 ft x 65 ft	18ft 5in x 5ft 3in x 4ft 11in	2 turboprop - series 300	Tampa, FL
<i>Gulfstream IV-SP (G-IV)</i>	N49RF	1994	79 ft x 78 ft	33ft x 8ft x 6ft	2 Rolls Royce 611-8 jet engines	Tampa, FL
<i>Shrike Commander (AC-500S)</i>	N51RF	1977	37 ft x 49 ft	10ft 7in x 4ft 4in x 4ft 5in	2 Lycoming IO-540-E1B5 (piston)	Tampa, FL
<i>Twin Otter (DHC-6)</i>	N56RF	1982	52 ft x 65 ft	18ft 5in x 5ft 3in x 4ft 11in	2 turboprop - series 300	Tampa, FL
<i>Twin Otter (DHC-6)</i>	N57RF	1981	52 ft x 65 ft	18ft 5in x 5ft 3in x 4ft 11in	2 turboprop - series 300	Tampa, FL
<i>King Air 350ER</i>	N68RF	2009	47 ft x 58 ft	24ft 10in x 4ft 6in x 4ft 9in	2 turboprop	Tampa, FL

Appendix B – OMAO Procedure 1501-01, Approval Process for Aircraft/Ship Asset Disposals

	OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS	PROCEDURE	VERSION	
		1501-01	1.0	
	AUTHORIZED BY: 	EFFECTIVE DATE	April 18, 2012	
	RADM Jonathan W. Bailey NOAA Director, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations	REVIEW DATE	April 18, 2015	
		RESPONSIBLE POSITION		
		CFO, Resource Management Division		

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR AIRCRAFT/SHIP ASSET DISPOSALS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This document provides the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) process to be followed by the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) to obtain approval for disposal (i.e., exchange/sale, excess, scrap, recycle, transfer-out, donate, etc.) of aircraft and ship capital assets.
- 1.2 This process ensures OMAO has analyzed NOAA's fleet requirements and obtained all required approvals prior to disposing of and/or removing, in any way, aircraft or ship assets from NOAA's possession and/or records.
- 1.3 This document ensures OMAO fulfills the following requirements:
 - Congressional notifications for disposals of aircraft and ship assets
 - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 - General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Management Regulation (FMR)
- 1.4 This document provides required OMAO procedures for the approval of disposal/removal of aircraft and ship capital assets.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all OMAO personnel managing aircraft and ships under OMAO's control and area of responsibility; guided by the OMAO Chief Financial Officer.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Congressional notification is required for the disposal of OMAO aircraft and ship assets. In the U.S. Department of Commerce's (DOC) Appropriations Acts, General Provisions, Section 103, Congress requires:

"Provided further, That the Secretary of Commerce shall notify the Committees on Appropriations at least 15 days in advance of the acquisition or disposal of any capital asset (including land, structures, and equipment) not specifically provided for in this Act or any other law appropriating funds for the Department of Commerce."

4. RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Recommendation of Aircraft and/or Ship Asset Disposal

Written recommendations from the NOAA Line Offices (LOs), the NOAA Long-Term Goal Leads (LGLs), the NOAA Fleet Council (FC), and/or from within OMAO to dispose of an aircraft and/or ship asset must include a reason for disposal. Factors that may lead to a formal recommendation include, but are not limited to, underutilization, end of asset service life, changing requirements, or lack of fiscal resources.

4.2 Review of Recommendation for Aircraft and/or Ship Asset Disposal

After consulting with the OMAO Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to determine the financial impact to the fleet and if the proposed disposal and method of disposal is in the best interest of OMAO, and upon review and concurrence of recommendation for disposal of an aircraft and/or ship asset, the Director, Marine and Aviation Operation Centers (DIR/M), shall forward the recommendation memorandum to the Director, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (DIR/O), with supporting/dissenting opinion; include the OMAO CFO/Deputy CFO.

The DIR/O shall review disposal recommendation from DIR/M and forward the recommendation to the FC for review; include DIR/M and OMAO CFO/DCFO in notification of DIR/O asset disposal recommendation.

4.3 Required Notifications and Environmental Requirements

Upon DIR/O review:

A. Notification to NOAA Budget Office/NOAA Finance Office/NOAA Chief Administrative Office

OMAO CFO/DCFO shall notify and consult with the NOAA Budget Office (NBO) to determine Congressional notification requirements.

OMAO DCFO shall notify the NOAA Comptroller/Director of Finance and NOAA Logistics Operations Division Director of recommended asset disposals.

B. Notification to NOAA Long-Term Goal Leads

OMAO's FC Executive Secretariat shall forward written notification of upcoming FC asset disposal recommendation to the Long-Term Goal Leads (LGLs).

C. National Environmental Policy Act Requirement

In accordance with the provisions of: (1) NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6, Environmental Review Procedures for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); and (2) the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing The Procedural Provisions of The National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR Parts 15001508), the OMAO Safety and Environmental Compliance Division (SECD) shall:

1. Consult with NOAA's Program Planning and Integration (PPI) office and General Counsel (GC) regarding the proposed action.
2. Unless a Categorical Exclusion is available and appropriate (under NAO 216-6) or a programmatic analysis has been undertaken that covers the proposed action, prepare and coordinate an Environmental Assessment (EA). Pending the outcome of the EA, prepare follow up documentation for DIR/O approval. In the event a programmatic analysis is being relied on, appropriate review shall be undertaken to ensure the proposed action was included and adequately addressed in the programmatic analysis.
3. If the outcome of the EA:
 - a. Results in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), obtain approval and written concurrence of the FONSI for the proposed action from the NOAA NEPA Coordinator that, subject to a request from the public, the documents be released for public review.

- b. Does not result in a FONSI, conduct follow-up actions outlined in NAO 216-6, including preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), additional consultation with cooperating agencies, and public notification.

- 4. Implement any mitigation measures identified during the EA or EIS process as a part of the disposal action.

4.4 NOAA Fleet Council Recommendation

The FC shall review all proposals and provide concurring comments/approval or dissenting opinions, and vote on the recommendation.

4.5 NOAA Executive Panel Briefing and Request for Approval (NOAA Decision Memorandum)

Upon receipt of FC recommendation, DIR/O shall brief the NOAA Executive Panel (NEP) on the asset disposition recommendation requesting approval; a NOAA Decision Memorandum is required to document asset disposal approval.

The Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board (FASAB)'s Technical Release (TR) #14 for Implementation Guidance on the Accounting for the Disposal of General Property requires NOAA to report asset disposals when the asset's use is terminated and when there is evidence of management's decision to permanently remove, retire and/or dispose of the asset. The NOAA Decision Memorandum, reflecting NEP approval of asset disposal request, will be the evidence used to reflect disposal activity for this reporting requirement.

4.6 Congressional Notification and Required Approval

OMAO's Marine and Aviation Operations Center (MAOC) shall provide technical aircraft and/or ship asset information for recommended asset disposals.

Upon receipt of FC recommendation, OMAO DCFO shall prepare required Congressional notification memorandums and forward to MAOC for review and approval. Once approved, MAOC shall forward final draft memorandums to NOAA General Council (GC) in Silver Spring and coordinate GC clearance. Once cleared by GC, MAOC shall forward final memorandums to the OMAO Executive Affairs Division (EAD) to coordinate DIR/O signature and submit final signed memorandums to NOAA.

NOAA Decision Memorandum, reflecting NEP approval, should accompany Congressional notification memorandum submission to NOAA.

DOC requires NOAA await explicit approval and letter from Congress before beginning the disposal process. This approval will come from DOC to NBO to OMAO's Resource Management Division (RMD) and then to MAOC.

4.7 Asset Disposals/Removals – Prerequisite Approvals and Guidance

Prior to taking any action to dispose of and/or remove an aircraft and/or ship asset, the following items are required:

- Written approval from Congressional notification process to proceed, accompanied by a Congressional memorandum (required as supporting documentation in property package) – receipt of approval must be received prior to posting an aircraft and/or ship asset for exchange/sale with the GSA and/or disposing of, in any way, the asset or any part of the asset.
- Written concurrence (for either an EA or EIS) from the NOAA NEPA Coordinator or Categorical Exclusion Memo to the Record (if available and appropriate).
- Written approval, via NOAA Decision Memorandum, from NEP (required as supporting documentation in property package).
- Explicit written approval, via signature/initials on property forms prior to any action taken, from OMAO DCFO.
- Written approval, via signature on property disposal forms, from OMAO Property Manager (PM).

IMPORTANT – Prior to taking any action to dispose or “final event” an aircraft and/or ship asset, all required approvals mentioned above must be received.

Refer to NOAA's National Disposal Plan for Personal Property Management for disposal procedures and approval requirements, including hard copy final event paperwork, PM signature requirements on hard copy paperwork, etc. All capital asset disposals/removals require involvement of the Property Custodian (PC), Property Accountability Officer (PAO) and PM, along with OMAO DCFO and the NOAA Personal Property Management Branch (PPMB).

OMAO Property Officials are not permitted to work directly with the GSA for asset disposals without explicit approval from OMAO's PM and Property Branch (excluding GSA FMR deviation requests to use exchange/sale authority for aircraft).

4.8 Federal Management Regulation Requirements

Federal Management Regulation (FMR) guidelines, Subchapter B, Personal Property, must be followed for disposition of personal property. Additionally, FMR guidelines for reuse of proceeds received from exchange/sale authority must also be followed per Part 102-39, Replacement of Personal Property Pursuant to the Exchange/Sale Authority.

Additionally, in the case of:

Aircraft: OMAO must also comply with FMR Subchapter B, Part 102-33, Management of Government Aircraft, Subpart D, regarding Disposal of Government Aircraft and Aircraft parts

Ships: OMAO must also comply with FMR Subchapter B, Part 102-36, Disposition of Excess Personal Property, Subpart 470 for ships.

Notification to OMAO DCFO is required for all proceeds received from any disposal process of OMAO's assets (i.e., exchange/sale, excess, scrap, recycle, transfer-out, donate, etc.).

GSA Deviation Request for Aircraft

Upon receipt of NOAA Decision Memorandum, reflecting NEP approval of asset disposal, the Aircraft Operations Center (AOC), through MAOC, shall make the required formal request to DIR/O and NOAA CFO for a GSA deviation to the FMR for approval to use exchange/sale authority and proceeds received during the disposal process of aircraft. If the request for deviation for reuse of proceeds is approved by GSA, AOC must notify OMAO DCFO and provide GSA approval memorandum.

OMAO DCFO shall ensure compliance in accordance with GSA's Part 102-39, Replacement of Personal Property Pursuant to the Exchange/Sale Authority, guidance and obtain approval by NOAA Finance. If/when reuse of proceeds is approved, RMD shall coordinate the budget apportionment request with NBO for proceeds.

4.9 Oversight

In the event of an aircraft or ship capital asset disposal, the OMAO PM and/or DCFO is responsible for providing guidance, as needed, ensuring compliance with regulations and providing required approvals.

5. RECORDS AND REPORTS

- FC Meeting Minutes reflecting further action (NEP)
- NEPA Documentation, as appropriate
- NOAA Decision Memorandum from NEP
- Congressional notification concurrence/approval memorandum

- GSA FMR Deviation approval memorandum (for aircraft only)

6. REFERENCES

NAO 216-104, Management and Utilization of Aircraft

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~ames/NAOs/Chap_216/naos_216_104.html

NAO 216-6, Environmental Review Procedures for Implementing the National Environmental Policy

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_216/216-6.html

Appropriations Act, General Provisions – Department of Commerce, Section 103

FMR Subchapter B-Personal Property:

- Part 102-39, Replacement of Personal Property Pursuant to the Exchange/Sale Authority
<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/ext/public/site/FMR/file/SubchB.html/category/21858/hostUri/portal>
- Part 102-33, Management of Government Aircraft, Subpart D-Disposing of Government Aircraft and Aircraft Parts
<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/ext/public/site/FMR/file/Part102-33.html/category/21858/#wp2021686>
- Part 102-36, Disposition of Excess Personal Property, Section 102-36.740, What must we do when disposing of excess vessels?
<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/ext/public/site/FMR/file/Part102-36.html/category/21858/>

NOAA National Disposal Plan for Personal Property Management PD

http://www.pps.noaa.gov/excess_disposal_board_of_review/060111_noaa_national_disposal_plan.pdf

7. DEFINITIONS

Capital Asset

Accountable personal property with an estimated useful life of 2 years or more, and an acquisition cost that meets the capitalization threshold of \$200,000 or more. Accountable property purchased in bulk with individual costs of less than \$200,000 but greater than \$25,000 is capitalized when the total purchase of items 'in bulk' is greater than \$1 million.

Disposal Process

Actions taken when an asset is determined to be permanently removed from service. FASAB Technical Release #14, Implementation Guidance on the Accounting for the Disposal of General Property, Plant and Equipment requires the asset's use is terminated and OMAO management has determined to permanently remove the asset from service. The asset is removed from NOAA's general ledger and includes actions such as exchange/sale, excess, scrap, recycle, transfer-out, donate, etc.

8. NOTES

Effect on Other Documents: Rescinds OMAO 1102-500, Aircraft Sale/Disposal Decision Process, effective date August 18, 2011

Distribution: CFO, DCFO, RMD, PM, MAOC Director, MAOC Deputy Director, MOC Director, MOC Deputy Director, AOC Commanding Officer, MAOC Budget Officers, MAOC PAOs, MAOC PCs

Document History:

<u>Version</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
1.0	4/18/12	Initial Document

Appendix C – List of Environmental-related Executive Orders and Federal Laws

Executive Orders

<i>Executive Order (EO) 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment</i>	All federal agencies are required to locate, identify, and record all cultural and natural resources. Cultural resources include sites of archaeological, historical, or architectural significance. Natural resources include the presence of endangered species, critical habitat, and areas of special biological significance.
<i>EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands</i>	Requires federal agencies to avoid undertaking or providing assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless there is no practicable alternative, and all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands has been implemented.
<i>EO 11988, Floodplain Management</i>	Provides direction regarding actions of federal agencies in floodplains, and requires permits from state and federal review agencies for any construction within a 100-year floodplain.
<i>EO 12372, Intergovernmental Review of federal Programs (as amended by EO 12416)</i>	Requires federal agencies to consult with state and local governments when proposed federal financial assistance or direct federal development has an impact on interstate metropolitan urban centers or other interstate areas.
<i>EO 12856, Federal Compliance with Right-to-Know Laws and Pollution Prevention Requirements</i>	Requires federal agencies to plan for chemical emergencies. Facilities that store, use, or release certain chemicals are subject to various reporting requirements. Reported information is made available to the public.
<i>EO 12898, Environmental Justice</i>	Requires certain federal agencies, including the Department of Defense (DoD), to the greatest extent practicable permitted by law, to make environmental justice part of their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.
<i>EO 13007, Indian Sacred Sites</i>	Requires federal agencies to accommodate access to, and ceremonial use of, sacred sites by practitioners and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sites.
<i>EO 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health and Safety Risks</i>	Makes it a high priority to identify and assess environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children. It also directs agencies to ensure that policies, programs, activities, and standards address such risks if identified.
<i>EO 13158, Marine Protected Areas</i>	Requires federal agencies whose actions affect the natural and cultural resources protected by a marine protected area (MPA) to identify such actions, and, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, to avoid harming the natural and cultural resources that are protected by an MPA.

<i>EO 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments</i>	Requires federal agencies to have an accountable process to ensure meaningful and timely input by tribal officials in the development of regulatory policies that have tribal implications.
<i>EO 13186, Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds</i>	Requires federal agencies to take steps to protect migratory birds, including restoring and enhancing habitat, preventing or abating pollution affecting birds, and incorporating migratory bird conservation into agency planning processes whenever possible.

Federal Laws

<i>American Indian Religious Freedom Act, 42 United States Code (USC) 1996, Public Law (P.L.) 95-341</i>	Protects and preserves the rights of American Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts, and Native Hawaiians to exercise their traditional religions. These rights include, but are not limited to, access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremony and traditional rites.
<i>Antiquities Act of 1906, 16 USC 431-433, P.L. 59-209</i>	Provides for the protection of historic and prehistoric ruins and objects of antiquity on lands owned or controlled by the federal government. Authorizes scientific investigation of antiquities on federal lands. Authorizes the establishment of national landmarks.
<i>Archaeological and Historical Preservation Act, 16 USC 469</i>	Protects and preserves historical and archaeological data. Requires federal agencies to identify and recover data from archaeological sites threatened by their actions.
<i>Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, 16 USC 470 et seq., P.L. 96-95</i>	Enacted to preserve and protect resources and sites on federal and Indian lands. Fosters cooperation between governmental authorities, professionals, and the public. Prohibits the removal, sale, receipt, and interstate transportation of archaeological resources obtained illegally from public or Indian lands.
<i>Clean Air Act, 42 USC 7401-7671q, July 14, 1955, as amended</i>	This Act, as amended, is known as the Clean Air Act of 1970. The amendments made in 1970 established the core of the clean air program. The primary objective is to establish federal standards for air pollutants. It is designed to improve air quality in areas of the country, which do not meet federal standards and to prevent significant deterioration in areas where air quality exceeds those standards.
<i>Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, 16 USC 1451-1464, P.L. 92-583</i>	Establishes a policy to preserve, protect, develop, and, where possible, restore and enhance the resources of the nation's coastal zone. Encourages and assists states through the development and implementation of coastal zone management programs.
<i>Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), 42 USC 9601-9675, P.L. 96-510, amended by Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), P.L. 99-499</i>	Also known as "Superfund," provides for liability, compensation, cleanup, and emergency response for hazardous substances released into the environment and cleanup of inactive hazardous substances disposal sites. Also established a fund financed by hazardous waste generators to support cleanup and response actions.

<i>Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f)</i>	Requires the Department of Transportation (DOT) to avoid or mitigate impacts to public parks and wildlife areas when approving transportation programs or projects.
<i>Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, 16 USC 1531 et seq., P.L. 93-205</i>	Protects threatened, endangered, and candidate species of fish, wildlife, and plants and their designated critical habitats. Under this law, no federal action is allowed to jeopardize the continued existence of an endangered or threatened species. The Endangered Species Act also requires consultation with USFWS and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the preparation of a biological assessment when such species are present in an area that is affected by government activities.
<i>Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949</i>	Guides the process for transferring government property.
<i>Federal Records Act</i>	Requires federal agencies to preserve federal records of potential historic value.
<i>Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act), 33 USC 1251-1387</i>	The Clean Water Act is a comprehensive statute aimed at restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. Primary authority for the implementation and enforcement rests with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).
<i>Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act Coordination Act, 16 USC 661 et seq., P.L. Chapter 55</i>	The purpose of this Act is to ensure that wildlife conservation receives equal consideration and be coordinated with other features of water-resources development programs.
<i>Historic Sites Act of 1935, 16 USC 461-467, P.L. Chapter 593</i>	Establishes a national policy to preserve for public use, historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance.
<i>Historical and Archaeological Data-Preservation, 16 USC 469et seq., P.L. 93-291</i>	Protects and preserves historical and archaeological data caused as a result of federal construction projects. Directs federal agencies to notify the Secretary of the Interior when the construction project may cause irreparable loss or destruction of significant resources or data. Provides a mechanism through which resources can be salvaged from a construction site.
<i>Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended through October 11, 1996, 16 USC 1801 et seq., P.L. 94-265</i>	Establishes regional fisheries councils that set fishing quotas and restrictions in U.S. waters. Federal agencies must consult with NMFS on all actions, authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect essential fish habitat.
<i>Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, 16 USC 1361 et seq., 1401-1407, 1538, 4107</i>	Establishes a moratorium on the taking and importation of marine mammals including harassment, hunting, capturing, collecting, or killing, or attempting the above actions. Requires permits for taking marine mammals. Requires consultations with USFWS and NMFS if impacts to marine mammals are possible.

<i>Migratory Bird Treaty Act 16 USC 703-712</i>	The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements various treaties and is for the protection of migratory birds. Under the Act, taking, killing, or possessing migratory birds is unlawful.
<i>National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended; P.L. 91-190, 42 USC 4321 et seq.</i>	Requires federal agencies to utilize a systematic approach when assessing environmental impacts of government activities. NEPA proposes an interdisciplinary approach in a decision-making process designed to identify unacceptable or unnecessary impacts to the environment.
<i>National Historic Preservation Act, 16 USC 470 et seq.</i>	Requires federal agencies to take account of the effect of any federally assisted undertaking or licensing on any district, site, building, structure, or object eligible or listed for inclusion in the NRHP. Provides for the nomination, identification (through listing on the NRHP), and protection of historical and cultural properties of significance.
<i>National Invasive Species Act of 1996, 16 USC 4701 et seq., P.L. 104-332</i>	Reauthorizes and amends the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention Control Act of 1990. Establishes ballast water information and requires guidelines to be issued for the Great Lakes.
<i>Noise Control Act of 1972, 42 USC 4901-4918, P.L. 92-574</i>	Establishes a national policy to promote an environment free from noise that jeopardizes their health and welfare. Authorizes the establishment of federal noise emissions standards and provides information to the public.
<i>Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention Control Act of 1990, 16 USC 4701 et seq., P.L. 101-646</i>	Establishes aquatic nuisance species.
<i>Occupational Safety and Health Act</i>	Establishes standards to protect workers, including standards on industrial safety, noise, and health standards.
<i>Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, 42 USC 6901, P.L. 94-580</i>	Establishes requirements for safely managing and disposing of solid and hazardous waste and underground storage tanks. Federal agencies must comply with waste management requirements.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for NOAA Ship and Aircraft Disposal

Purpose and Need

The number and make-up of NOAA's fleet of ships and aircraft is primarily driven by mission needs and budget considerations. Those needs and considerations will dictate when it would be necessary or desirable to dispose of a given ship or aircraft. Other factors influencing the need to dispose of a ship or aircraft include efficiency and effectiveness of existing ships and aircraft versus that of newer ships and aircraft. These factors are typically captured in capital improvement plans and supporting studies. Given current needs, constraints, age of the fleet, and other factors, NOAA foresees the need to potentially dispose of one or more of its ships and aircraft possibly on a recurring basis over the next several years.

NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) has prepared a programmatic environmental assessment (PEA) pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6. The PEA assesses environmental impacts associated with OMAO's proposed action.

Description of Proposed Action

OMAO proposes to enact a program allowing for the disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft as needed during the course of OMAO operations. The outcome of the transfer or sale would lead to any of the following outcomes: the ships and aircraft continue to be operated by new owner; the ships and aircraft are dismantled, recycled, and scrapped; or the ships and aircraft are re-used to function as or in a museum.

Environmental Consequences

The PEA evaluated the proposed action and found that there will be little or no global impact on the natural and human environment as a result of disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft. Potential impacts to the local environment as a result of disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft, if any, will be minimal, of little consequence, and of short duration. All alternatives associated with the proposed action may result in fewer ships and aircraft being operated. Collectively and cumulatively, the consequences of the proposed action will result in no significant impact to the natural or human environment.

Potential impacts to the local environment due to relocation and continued operation of NOAA ships and aircraft, regardless of final location, will be minimal. Compliance with

marine and aviation-related environmental laws and regulations is applicable to, and required of, all owners/operators of ships and aircraft.

Potential impacts to the local environment from hazardous materials with respect to the dismantling, recycling, and scrapping of NOAA ships and aircraft will be mitigated in accordance with all environmental laws and regulations.

Mitigation Measures

OMAO will perform the actions listed below prior to, or as part of, the transfer process to GSA for disposal of NOAA platforms.

- Comply with all federal environmental laws and corresponding regulations regarding the disposal of federal property when selling a NOAA platform. Applicable environmental laws include the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), and the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments (HSWA) of 1984.
- Remove, abate, and mitigate to the extent possible, and as required by law, existing hazardous materials aboard any NOAA platform prior to its disposal, such as friable or damaged asbestos containing materials, polychlorinated biphenyls, fuel oils, lubricants, paints, anti-corrosives, degreasers and chemical cleaning products.
- Instruct GSA to disclose in the description of the platform, as part of the sale and as required by law, the presence of any remaining hazardous materials integral to the design and construction of the ship or aircraft such as residual oils in fuel tanks, metal-based paint, and asbestos containing materials.
- Instruct GSA to ensure that potential buyers are aware of their environmental responsibilities associated with operation, maintenance, and final disposal of ships and aircraft, including disposal of debris to a permitted off-site facility.
- Instruct GSA to ensure potential recipients of excess NOAA platforms will only relocate the platforms to locations at which proposed activities are permitted and that have existing infrastructure in place to perform those activities.

Specific concerns regarding impacts to airspace and land use, natural resources, air quality, water quality, invasive species, noise, cultural value, and other environmental and socioeconomic considerations are addressed in the PEA and summarized below.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations state that the determination of significance using an analysis of effects requires examination of both context and intensity, and lists ten criteria for intensity (40 CFR 1508.27). In addition, NOAA

Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6 Section 6.01 b. 1-11 provides eleven criteria, the same ten as the CEQ Regulations and one additional, for determining whether the impacts of a proposed action are significant. Each criterion is discussed below with respect to the proposed action and considered individually as well as in combination with the others.

1. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to cause both beneficial and adverse impacts that overall may result in a significant effect, even if the effect will be beneficial?

No. The proposed action's effects have been analyzed for both beneficial and adverse environmental impacts. The proposed action will not result in significant environmental effect, beneficial or adverse, in part or collectively because: the proposed action does not involve any new or unique activities; potential impacts are controlled and governed via existing environmental regulations; similar actions are performed daily in the public and private sector resulting in minimal impact to the environment; and the scope of the proposed action is insignificant given the size of the NOAA fleet of ships and aircraft relative to the number of ships and aircraft in the global and local environment.

2. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to significantly affect public health or safety?

No. The proposed action's effects have been analyzed relative to public health and safety. Disposing of NOAA ships and aircraft via federal property management regulations administered by the General Services Administration (GSA) will not significantly affect public health or safety. Regarding the alternative for the dismantling, recycling, and scrapping of NOAA platforms, it is anticipated public health and safety will be ensured via compliance with U. S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and the removal and proper disposal of hazardous materials prior to transfer.

3. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to result in significant impacts to unique characteristics of the geographic area, such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park land, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas?

No. NOAA anticipates that platform recipients would continue to undertake disposal activities in areas where similar activities are currently undertaken, and therefore will not result in significant impacts to unique characteristics of the geographic area, such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park land, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

4. Are the proposed action's effects on the quality of the human environment likely to be highly controversial?

No. The proposed action's effects on the quality of the human environment will not be highly controversial. The proposed action is not unique nor does it involve any unique

activities. Actions similar to that which is proposed occur daily throughout the U.S. and the world.

5. Are the proposed action's effects on the human environment likely to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks?

No. The proposed action's effects on the quality of the human environment will not be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The proposed action and resultant activities have been analyzed and no uncertainties or unique or unknown risks have been identified. The activities that have potential to harm the environment are currently governed by existing environmental, health, and safety laws and regulations established to mitigate known risks. Actions similar to that which is proposed occur daily throughout the U.S. and the world.

6. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represent in principle about a future consideration?

No. The proposed action is limited to disposal of NOAA ships and aircraft. There is nothing unique about the proposed action and no precedents would result for future actions with significant effects or would a decision in principle about a future consideration be made without implementing NEPA requirements applicable to the future action. In addition, should any of the expected impacts for a given action or actions in the future exceed what is proposed and described in the PEA, a ship-specific or aircraft-specific environmental assessment would be conducted.

7. Is the proposed action related to other actions that when considered together will have individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts?

No. The proposed action along with related actions (past, present, and foreseeable future) have been considered and analyzed individually and collectively as part of the PEA process. The scope of the proposed action collectively, and its potential cumulative impacts, is not significant. The scope of the proposed action and potential cumulative impacts is insignificant relative to the scope of similar activities that occur in the global and local environment. The proposed action and related actions, whether considered individually or collectively, will not have significant impacts.

8. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources?

No. The PEA has considered and analyzed geographic locations, infrastructure, land use, historic, cultural and socioeconomic impacts. The proposed action is not expected to adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. There are no NOAA platforms that

have been identified as having any unique intrinsic historic or cultural value, nor would their disposal affect other historic resources. Geographic areas to which NOAA platforms may be relocated will have existing infrastructure in place and no new types of activities will take place at the new locations. In addition, activities at those locations will be subject to local zoning laws and ordinances further safeguarding against any adverse effect the proposed action may have on districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

9. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to have a significant impact on endangered or threatened species, or their critical habitat as defined under the Endangered Species Act of 1973?

No. Disposing of NOAA ships and aircraft is not reasonably expected to have a significant impact on endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat. It is reasonably expected that activities that will take place at new locations will not have any significant impact on endangered or threatened species. It is anticipated that any relocation of NOAA ships and aircraft by the recipient for continued operation or for dismantling, recycling, and scrapping will be to locations currently established for that purpose. As a result, it is expected that the proposed action will not have a significant impact on endangered or threatened species, or their critical habitat as defined under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

10. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to threaten a violation of Federal, state, or local law or requirements imposed for environmental protection?

No. The effect of the proposed action on the human environment has been analyzed in the PEA with respect to applicable Federal, State, and local environmental laws and regulations. It is reasonably expected that GSA and the recipients of NOAA ships and aircraft will comply with applicable Federal, State, and local environmental laws and regulations. The process by which NOAA ships and aircraft will be disposed involves the screening of potential recipients. The screening process is used as a means to ensure potential recipients have demonstrated the wherewithal to comply with Federal, state, and local environmental laws. No regulatory violations or other significant environmental impacts are expected as a result of the proposed action.

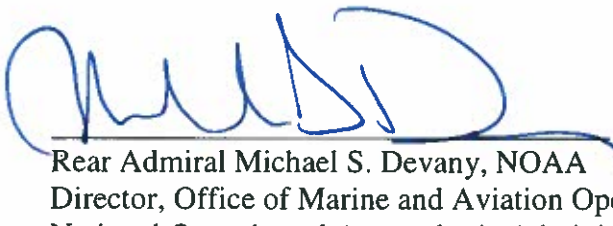
11. Can the proposed action reasonably be expected to result in the introduction or spread of a non-indigenous species?

No. The proposed action does not change, nor is it reasonably expected that it will result in an increase in the likelihood, of the introduction or spread of a non-indigenous species. Disposal of NOAA aircraft does not result in the creation of a vector for the introduction or spread of non-indigenous species. Regarding disposal of NOAA ships, prior to disposal, ballast water will be discharged in an environmentally acceptable manner in accordance with the ships ballast water management plan (BWMP) and USCG regulations. New owners of NOAA ships as a result of the proposed action are subject to, and will be required to continue to comply with ballast water management plans and

standards in accordance with USCG regulations to prevent the transfer of non-indigenous species in the environment. In addition, sediment from ballast tanks will be removed and properly disposed of prior to the scrapping of NOAA ships as required by regulation.

Determination

After thorough consideration of the PEA, the undersigned NOAA official finds the proposed federal action is consistent with applicable environmental policies and objectives and the requirements set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act, and it will not affect the quality of the human environment. As described in Section 5.03.c of NOAA Administrative Order 216-6, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is supported and appropriate for the Proposed Action.



Rear Admiral Michael S. Devany, NOAA
Director, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

1/22/13
Date