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April 6, 2009
2009-68

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Sen. Begich Announces Over \$20 million of NOAA Recovery Spending

Alaskan projects include marine research and facility work in Barrow, Fairbanks and Nome

In a letter to Congress from Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has announced \$830 million of spending under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Senator Mark Begich is proud that Alaska will benefit with over \$20 million in projects which span facility construction, renovations, hydrographic surveys, and vessel maintenance and repair.

“With a wealth of renewable resources surpassing any other state, Alaska is proud to host the research efforts of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,” said Begich. “NOAA operates in more than 25 Alaskan communities and funding for these projects is essential to continue Alaska’s invaluable scientific contributions to research.”

Alaska’s NOAA projects funded by ARRA include...

- \$9 million to accelerate Weather Forecasting Office (WFO) upgrades and modernization projects in Barrow and Nome, as well as upgrades to HVAC systems of other WFOs. This construction program will bring the National Weather Service into full compliance with federal law and national and local building codes.
- \$9 million to continue the replacement of the Fairbanks Operations Building. This facility is one of two that control and track NOAA’s geostationary and polar orbiting environmental satellites. Operating 24 hours a day since the late 1960’s the Army Corps of Engineers have identified the facility as ‘at-risk.’ The new Fairbanks Short Term Operations Facility will allow NOAA to continue satellite missions until 2026.
- \$3 million will be awarded for hydrographic surveys, NOAA estimates that Alaska will receive between 8 – 9% of a larger \$40 million. These funds will be utilized to conduct modern surveys of some 1,700 square nautical miles.
- \$20 million will allow NOAA to complete major repairs and equipment replacement projects for research and exploration vessels including the *Rainier* and *Fairweather*, ships that conduct hydrographic surveys in Alaska waters. The work involves major repairs for the *Rainier* and accelerated replacement of survey launches on both ships.

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