

Panel to Guide Ocean Exploration

NOAA has appointed 13 members to a new federal Ocean Exploration Advisory Board that will provide guidance to NOAA and the nation on the exploration of the US ocean. This distinguished board will advise NOAA on priority areas for exploration, investments in new technologies and a strategic plan for greater understanding of our planet's last frontier, according to NOAA chief scientist Richard W. Spinrad, PhD, who will serve as liaison to the board for NOAA Administrator Kathryn Sullivan, PhD.

The new members represent government agencies, private sector leaders, academic institutions and not-for-profit institutions involved in all areas of ocean exploration, from advanced technology to citizen exploration. The members are:

- VADM Paul Gaffney USN (ret) will chair the board. He is currently a fellow at the Monmouth University Urban Coast institute and served as a commissioner on the U.S. Ocean Policy Commission.
- James A. Austin, Jr., Ph.D., senior research scientist, University of Texas Institute for Geophysics.
- Amanda Demopoulos, Ph.D., research ecologist, U.S. Geological Survey.
- Jacqueline Eaby Dixon, Ph.D., dean, College of Marine Science, University of South Florida.
- Christopher R. German, Ph.D., senior scientist, geology and geophysics, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.
- Ambassador Cameron Hume, business consultant.
- John R. Kreider, senior vice president, advanced technology, Oceaneering International, Inc.
- David Lang co-founder, OpenROV.
- Darlene Lim, Ph.D., research scientist, NASA Ames Research Center.
- Nicolette Nye vice president for communications and external relations, National Ocean Industries Association.
- Dominique Rissolo, Ph.D., executive director, Waitt Institute.
- Richard J. Rikoski Ph.D., CEO and chief scientist, Hadal, Inc.
- Lance M. Towers, director, advanced technology programmes, the Boeing Company.

Through its Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, NOAA coordinates the only federal programme that systematically explores the largely unexplored ocean to address national marine environmental, economic and national security priorities, to catalyse new areas of scientific inquiry, and to increase the overall knowledge and understanding of the US ocean. NOAA expects the board will reinforce the relationship between ocean exploration and NOAA's priorities to provide information and services to make communities more resilient and to invest in global observing systems that sustain and improve the environmental intelligence upon which citizens and businesses rely.

Congress designated NOAA the coordinator of a national ocean exploration programme and mandated the creation of an Ocean Exploration Advisory Board under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The board is expected to meet twice a year and will report directly to the NOAA administrator on matters relevant to a coordinated national program of ocean exploration and on NOAA's own ocean exploration activities. The Ocean Exploration Advisory Board will meet for the first time on 2 and 3 December 2014 in Washington D.C., for informational briefings about NOAA and national ocean exploration activities.