



Progress Report

Project Title: the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA):
Inflation Reduction Act, 2022 Topic 1

Award number: #NA24NOSX012C0024-T1-01

Period of Activity: 08/01/2024 – 01/31/2025

Principal Investigator(s): Debra Hernandez, SECOORA Executive Director

I. PROJECT MILESTONES:

Milestone Table. Goals and Milestones from the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA): Inflation Reduction Act, 2022 Topic 1 award are identified by SECOORA subsystem in Section II Progress and Accomplishments. High-level milestones/deliverables, accomplishments and any issues are included for each objective. Status of each milestone/deliverable is reported as complete, on-track, delayed, or not started. If the milestone is delayed, a justification for the delay and description of activities employed or to be employed to mitigate the delay are provided.

II. Progress and Accomplishments

Project and Task(s)	Status
Goal 1: Build capacity to meet stakeholder needs and participate in pan-regional and national endeavors	
Objective A: Build and sustain human resource capacity to support IRA Topic 1 and Topic 2 activities, and overall program management.	
Accomplishments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Coordination: SECOORA staff (Hernandez and Dorton) participate on IOOS Association IRA coordination calls. Additionally, Theo Jass, the WebCOOS Manager is working with each RA to identify potential camera locations, identify infrastructure and hardware requirements, and act as a POC for camera questions. Cotie Alsbrooks, Water Level Manger, has participated in two RA-wide calls to discuss water level needs across regions and the potential for tiering data based on the data use/need. Tiering means that some stations may need to be installed to higher standards with more stringent vertical controls (i.e. for accurate elevation data) v/s less strict standards that are required for community flood monitoring. These conversations are ongoing. • SECOORA advertised for an Engagement Specialist; however, due to funding uncertainties, we have not moved forward with hiring for this role. During the next reporting period, we hope to hire a contractor to fulfil this role. 	On-track



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SECOORA hired Laura LaBree as a contractor for the Grant Management Specialist position. Laura has extensive experience with grants and audits and is a valuable member to the SECOORA team. • Staff training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cotie Alsbrooks, Water Level Manager, has participated in a Coursera on-line training course that focused on Public Speaking and Professional Engagement ○ The SECOORA Human Resources contractor is developing a list of professional training opportunity for staff to participate in during Spring 2025. 	
<p>Objective B: Develop new products tuned to meet specific community needs.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SECOORA has issued the contract to Axiom Data Science for continued assistance for water level data integration, metadata development, and data management. Axiom is working with the Tetra Tech contracts team to execute the contract. We anticipate that the contract will be in place during the next reporting period. • SECOORA has not posted the RFQ for data product service development nor have we posted a position announcement for a project management contract. We are evaluating and drafting standards for both and hope to post both opportunities during the next reporting period. 	<p>Delayed</p>
<p>Goal 2. Recapitalize and modernize SECOORA assets</p>	
<p>Objective A: Recapitalize HFR and buoys on the east coast</p>	
<p><u>UNC Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) HFR Recapitalization:</u> UNC-CH is refurbishing the CORE HFR installation (Core Banks, NC). The following activities have been initiated:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CODAR computer will be replaced, as it is too old to support the newer software provided by the vendor. The new computer has been ordered and should be received in February 2025. 2. Electronic components of the radar are currently being tested for failures and are being repaired or replaced as needed. This includes repair of the Transmit Amp LP and replacement of the DC Power Supply Board, Share Module, and AWG-3 Module. All replacement items will ship from CODAR by late February. 3. Completely replace the CORE power system. UNC-CH has received the new batteries, solar controller, and battery charger. The field work to integrate all the new power components and replace the electronic components (#2) will take place once items from CODAR are received. 4. The cooling system to manage heat buildup in the HFR shed is being completely redesigned. UNC-CH started purchasing supplies and anticipates delivery by early April. <p>UNC Wilmington (UNCW) Buoy Recapitalization: UNCW is investing in new equipment and supplies to replace aging infrastructure. This will help UNCW maintain their buoy program and provide marine weather and sea state data to SECOORA. The following activities have been undertaken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three (3) Seabird SBE-37SIP Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth (CTD) sensors have been ordered and received. 2. Two (2) Sofar Spotter wave buoys have been ordered and received. 	<p>On-track</p>

<p>3. One (1) Datawell Waverider buoy has been ordered and has an estimated delivery date of 8/15/25.</p> <p>4. UNCW has purchased and received data loggers, weather stations, connectors, and cables needed to fabricate 3 new back-up weather systems. The team will assemble and test the new weather systems during the next reporting period.</p>	
<p>Goal 3. Establish and deepen partnerships with users and communities</p>	
<p>Objective A: Develop and operate a Savannah State University (SSU) progressive internship program to support students in marine sciences and computer sciences.</p>	
<p>SSU Marine Sciences program has a long history of supporting students as they matriculate through their educational career. The Marine Sciences program offers on-campus and off-campus internships and field experiences. SSU and SECOORA are establishing an intern-mentor program to provide marine science and computer science students with faculty mentors that will help guide the students through their undergraduate research experience and internships and help prepare the students for Graduate School.</p> <p>SSU executed the subaward with SECOORA in September 2024. The internship opportunity was announced within the SSU College of Sciences and Technology in November and four interns were selected among the applicant pool in December. Three students are focused on Marine Science degrees, and one is focused on Data Analytics. The interns were paired with their faculty mentor in January 2025.</p>	<p>On-track</p>
<p>Objective B: Host community meetings to learn about community priorities and needs for data products and tools, highlight data availability, and further refine data products</p>	
<p>The SECOORA Deputy Director, Water Level Manager, and WebCOOS Manager are working with the four Sea Grant offices to establish requirements for station stewards. Community meetings to identify flooding concerns and scope locations for sensors is delayed as the SECOORA Engagement Specialists has not been hired. We anticipate making more progress on this objective during the next reporting cycle.</p>	<p>Delayed</p>
<p>Goal 4. Leverage investments in the national IRA Topic 2 proposals</p>	
<p>Objective A: Host workshops/training events for water level operators</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SECOORA Water Level Manager is leading discussions with NOAA National Geodetic Survey (NGS) staff to plan a pan-regional training opportunity at NGS facilities in Woodford, VA. Training will focus on vertical elevation survey techniques, finding and establishing benchmarks, and processing survey data. The training will be able to accommodate up to 20 people. So far individuals from MARACOOS, SECOORA, GLOS, NERACOOS, and CARICOOS are interested in participating. We anticipate that the training will take place in May or June 2025. 	<p>On-track</p>
<p>Objective B: Conduct two hurricane glider runs annually</p>	

<p>The SECOORA glider team, led by UGA’s Skidaway Institute of Oceanography (SkIO) has focused on preparing gliders for the 2025 hurricane season. Angus is currently being repaired by Teledyne Webb and project team members from the University of South Florida (USF) have completed repairs to Salacia. The forward pump and science bay for both Franklin and 1091 are with Teledyne Webb undergoing repairs and recalibrations.</p> <p>Once repairs are complete, all four gliders will be available for service.</p>	<p>On-track</p>
<p>Objective C: Continue developing pan-regional Sargassum Watch product</p>	
<p>This project starts in Year 2 of the IRA Topic 1 award.</p>	<p>Not started</p>

III. PROJECT CHALLENGES/MODIFICATIONS:

The pause on hiring the SECOORA Engagement Specialist has impacted our ability to conduct community outreach in flood-prone communities. However, the Water Level Manager is working directly with Sea Grant Partners to identify locations for new water level installations and evaluate the sites.

IV. BUDGET SUMMARY:

- Were the oldest ASAP TAS BETC accounting lines invoiced first?
 - This is Year 1 of the award and there is only 1 ASAP line for this award. SECOORA has processed invoices against the one ASAP line.
- Give details on any delays with initiating a contract/subaward. Note any issues with the previous year funds or other issues that occurred during the reporting period. Will this result with a work stoppage or cause significant problems with the partnership?
 - SECOORA has issued all subawards related to this award.
 - There has been a delay in issuing an RFQ for data product development services and to hire the Project Management Coordinator. We anticipate issuing the RFQ for product development services during the next reporting period. The Executive Director and Deputy Director are meeting the week of Feb. 24 to outline the requirements for the Project Management Coordinator which will be hired as a contractor.
- Give a brief update on project invoicing for the reporting period. Were there any delays with invoicing or payment?
 - SECOORA has received invoices from subawardees. There is always a delay between when a subawardee conducts work and when SECOORA is given an invoice for that work. SECOORA regularly monitors invoicing frequencies with subawardees/subcontractors. Most subawardees invoice quarterly.
 - All invoices received by SECOORA are paid within 30 days of receipt.
- Provide details on any property or equipment charged directly to the award having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit during the period.
 - No equipment was purchased by SECOORA during this reporting period.
- Include changes in key scientific, technical or management personnel, not included in certification.
 - No changes have been made this reporting period.
- Include changes to the organizational structure such as: changes in status or partners organizations and points of contact.
 - No changes to organizational structure have been made this reporting period.
- Provide an update about travel completed during the reporting period.
 - No travel has been charged in this reporting period

- What are the total travel expenditures to date on the award through the reporting period?
 - None
 - Are there any plans to initiate a new partnership (contract or subaward) during the next reporting period?
 - No
-