



SECOORA

2026-2031 SECOORA IOOS Proposal Development

Welcome to the Question & Answer session for the open Letter of Intent and Water Level Request for Qualifications opportunity.

Table of Contents

Quick Links

About SECOORA

- Strategic Plan
- Organizational Chart
- About Us
- Funding Trends

IOOS 5 Year Proposal Process

- Overview
- LOI Opportunity
- Water Level RFQ
- Timeline
- LOI & RFQ review process
- Proposal Writing



VISION

SECOORA is the recognized regional leader, valued partner, and the trusted source for coastal ocean information.

MISSION

SECOORA's mission is to observe, understand, and increase awareness of our coastal ocean; supporting community, economic, and ecosystem resilience through strong partnerships.

SECOORA – Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association – is the [coastal ocean observing system](#) for the Southeast U.S. SECOORA is one of 11 [regional coastal observing systems](#) that comprise the NOAA led [United States Integrated Ocean Observing System](#) (U.S. IOOS®).

Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC GOALS

1 Expand and broaden usage of SECOORA's information and products

- Develop products and services based on specific key customer and user needs
- Implement engagement strategies that target specific user groups, highlighting cross-sectoral utility of SECOORA data products and services
- Broaden awareness and usage of coastal ocean observing data, products and services
- Enhance tracking of SECOORA products to assess use and effectiveness

2 Meet societal needs by using a science-based observing system strategy to maximize impact

- Evaluate SECOORA observing assets and associated products and services regularly to ensure applicability and usefulness
- Advance new technologies and optimize use of current technologies throughout the region
- Maintain a relevant RCOOS Plan and incorporate new technologies and priorities as needed

3 Expand and strengthen partnerships, including members and stakeholders, to increase SECOORA's capabilities and impact

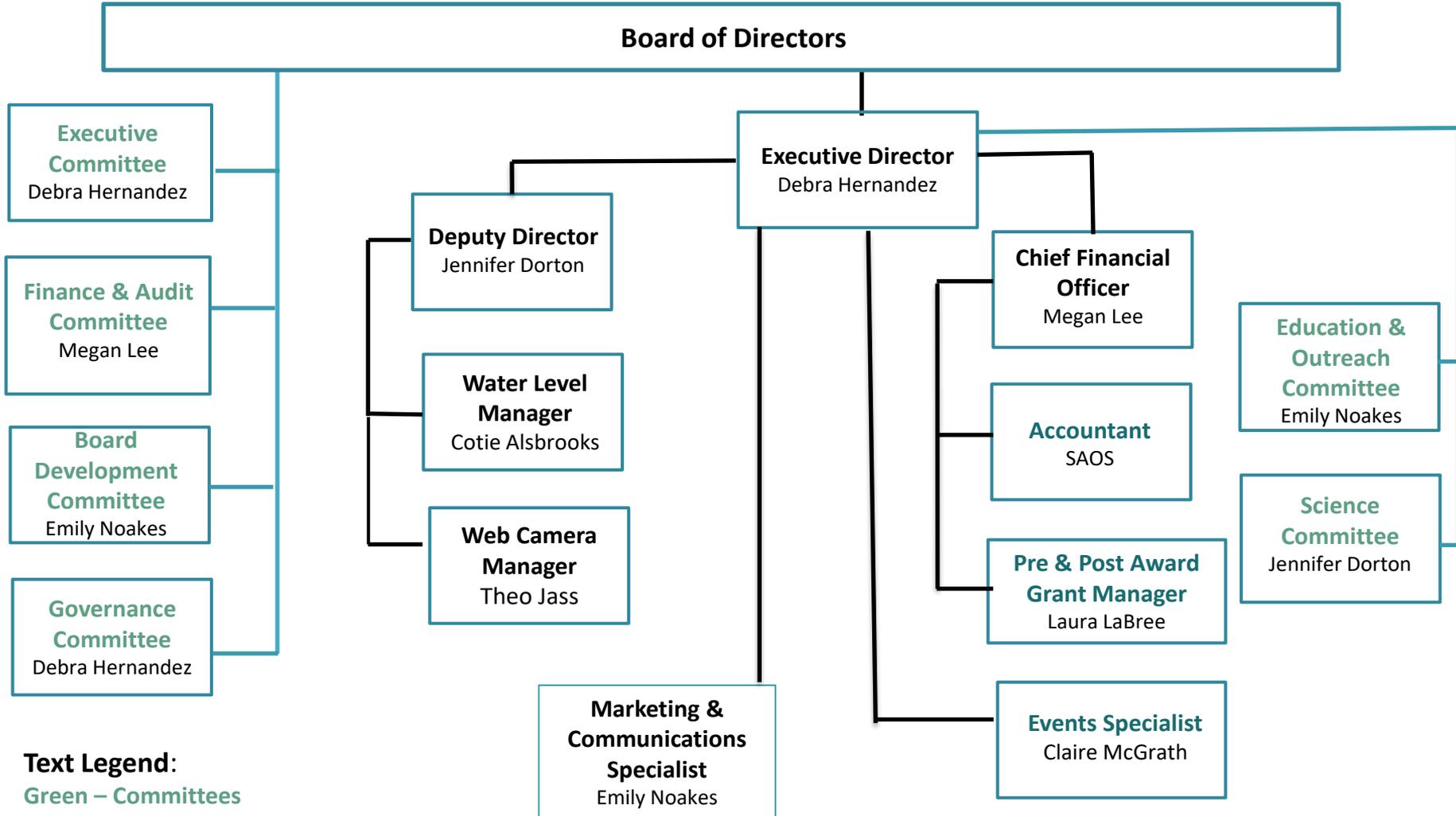
- Promote effective outreach strategies
- Incubate emerging communities of practice/professional networks whose priorities align with SECOORA's mission
- Foster multi-sector and community participation throughout SECOORA's organizational structure
- Pursue funding opportunities beyond core IOOS funding

4 Maintain SECOORA's organizational capabilities

- Ensure SECOORA's organizational structure enables us to achieve our vision
- Seek additional funding to increase organizational capacity
- Manage effective implementation of all grants
- Evolve organizational and technical infrastructure support
- Build staff capacity by supporting on-going education and training that leads to career growth

About SECOORA

Organizational Chart



Text Legend:

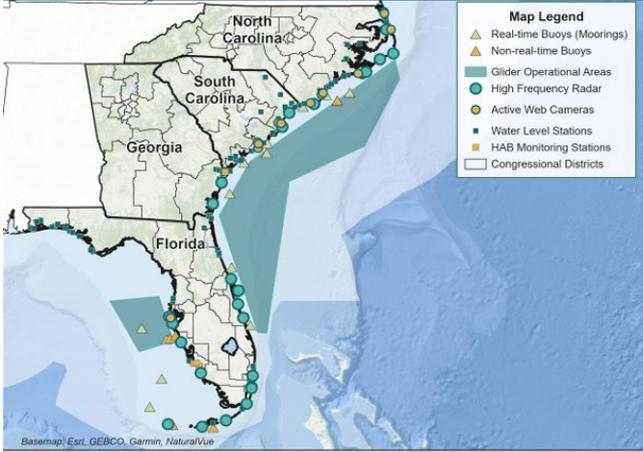
Green – Committees

Teal – Contractors

About SECOORA

One Pagers

SECOORA Serves the Southeast



Map Legend

- Real-time Buoys (Moored)
- Non-real-time Buoys
- Glider Operational Areas
- High Frequency Radar
- Active Web Cameras
- Water Level Stations
- HAB Monitoring Stations
- Congressional Districts

Basemap: Esri, GEBCO, Garmin, NaturalView

Real-time water level sensors measure water height to monitor flooding and tidal changes in communities.

Web cameras allow scientists to monitor various weather, ocean, ecological, and public health hazards.

Gliders collect data used in hurricane intensity forecasts, like subsurface water temperature.

High frequency radars measure speed/direction of surface currents, aiding Coast Guard search & rescue.

Buoys collect meteorological and wave data to improve weather forecasts and models, including hurricane tracks.

Debra Hernandez
Executive Director
843-906-8686
Debra@secoora.org
www.secoora.org

SECOORA is one of the eleven Regional Associations that partner with the NOAA led Integrated Ocean Observing System, U.S. IOOS. U.S. IOOS is essentially the weather service for the coastal oceans and Great Lakes, providing the ability to "see" what is happening both above and below the surface, and making that information ready available.

Each year SECOORA produces one pagers that highlight hot topics.

Funding



SECOORA's main funding comes through IOOS's five-year cooperative agreement. It provides support for continuing and expanding SECOORA observing, modeling, and related activities in the southeast

What We Do

DATA & RESEARCH

We are dedicated to ensuring coastal ocean observing data are available and accessible to facilitate understanding and generate actionable insights for decision-making. Our observing systems provide historical and real-time coastal ocean data to advance science, technology, and product development that safeguards coastal ocean ecosystems and communities.

COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATIONS

We bring government, industry, academics, and NGOs together to solve problems, observe, and raise awareness of our coastal ocean. We offer a support network and expertise pool to promote knowledge sharing, interdisciplinary collaborations, and funding opportunities.

INNOVATION & DECISION SUPPORT

Our data and network are essential to science-based policy and management decisions and informing regional research priorities. We ensure local and regional voices are heard at a national level and work with our network to identify and address data gaps so policy-makers have the information they need to make the best decisions possible.



SECOORA Funding Trends

	FY19 Millions	FY20 Millions	FY21 Millions	FY22 Millions	FY23 Millions	FY24 Millions	FY25 Millions
Core	\$ 2.94	\$ 3.03	\$ 3.06	\$ 3.06	\$ 3.06	\$ 3.1	\$ 3.1
Supplemental	\$ 0.45	\$ 1.12	\$ 1.49	\$ 1.54	\$ 1.60	\$ 1.6	\$??
WebCOOS National		\$ 0.35	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.40	\$ 0.4	\$ 0.4
BIL				\$ 0.95	\$ 0.96	\$ 0.0	\$ 1.0
Hurricane Gliders				\$ 0.42	\$ 0.23	\$ 0	\$
Inflation Reduction Act T1 and T2						\$ 1.9	\$ 1.9
Hurricane Ian						\$ 0.6	\$ 0.6
TOTAL (Millions)	\$ 3.39	\$ 4.50	\$ 4.90	\$ 6.32	\$ 6.25	\$ 7.6	\$ 7.0



2026 – 2031 IOOS 5 Year Proposal: Timeline

December 2024

- Approve 5 Year Proposal Process

July 2025

- Solicit nominees for Subject Matter Experts and Comprehensive Review Panel
- Advertise proposal process to members
- Release LOI solicitation

August 2025

- Q & A Webinar

September 2025

- IOOS PO Call for proposals is released (?)
- LOIs are due

October 2025

- Subject Matter Expert reviews due back to SECOORA
- SECOORA staff assembles all Subject Matter Expert reviews
- Comprehensive Review Panel ranks LOIs

November 2025

- Identify proposal writing team and write proposal

December 2025

- Final Proposal draft sent to Board for review
- Board endorses proposal – vote

Late December 2025

- SECOORA submits proposal

2026-2031 Proposal Documents

- All materials and the proposal development timeline are found on the SECOORA website
 - <https://secoora.org/secoora-priorities-2026-ioos-letter-of-intent/>
- The LOI solicitation memo provides details on the LOI opportunity and everyone is encouraged to read this document before drafting their LOI
 - <https://secoora.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/LOI-Solicitation-Memo-on-Letterhead.pdf>

LOI Solicitation Memo

- Scope of the Solicitation
- Weighted Review Criteria for the LOIs
- Eligible Activities
- Budget Targets
 - Anticipate writing a proposal for \$4M; however, the exact proposal budget targets will be identified in the IOOS Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
 - The proposal total budget value may change after the NOFO is published
 - Anticipate IOOS publishing the NOFO in September 2025 with a proposal due date of December 31, 2025

LOI Solicitation Memo

- LOIs are requested that focus on:
 - Observing platforms and sensors
 - Modeling
 - Education & outreach
- LOIs must be consistent with:
 - 2026-2030 SECOORA Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System Strategic Operational Plan ([RCOOS Plan](#)),
 - Current Administration priorities including Executive Orders:
 - Restoring American’s Maritime Dominance
 - Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

LOI Solicitation Memo

SECOORA seeks projects that:

- Are regional in scope or contribute to a regional-scale enterprise
 - Note: LOIs that propose sub-regional scale activities will be considered, provided they complement and support the overall regional system
- Include measurable partnerships with end-users
- Address at least one of the following SECOORA priority theme areas as listed in the RCOOS Plan:
 - Coastal Hazards and Climate Variability
 - Ecosystems: Living Marine Resources and Water Quality
 - Marine Operations
- Include a sustainability plan that describes the feasibility of continued operation of assets and models after the funding period

Budget Targets

Assuming \$4M budget target

1. Observing: \$2M (~50%)

- Maintenance and/or enhancement of observing components
- Installation of new observing components

2. Data Management and Cyberinfrastructure (DMAC) and Product Development: \$600K/yr (~15%)

- Separate DMAC and product development solicitation will be posted by late 2025.

3. Modeling: \$400K/yr (~10%)

4. Community Engagement & Outreach: \$200K/yr (~5%)

- SECOORA staff will conduct a significant portion of SECOORA's community engagement and outreach efforts.

5. Governance and Management: \$800K (~20%)

- SECOORA staff will prepare this part of the proposal

LOI Solicitation

- Proposals can have a five-year period of performance (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2031)
- LOIs are due September 9, 2025.
- LOIs should include a 5-year budget table
 - LOI and budgets do not have to be submitted through institutional sponsored research offices at this time.



LOI Solicitation

- **New for the 2026-2031 Proposal** – for projects that were part of the 2021-2026 funding SECOORA IOOS proposal
 - ❖ You must complete a project assessment (3 pages max), submit as a separate document (this will not go to SMEs)
 - ❖ See items 16-18 in the request for LOIs
 - ❖ Up-time metrics must be provided for the previous 3 years for real-time assets and model:
 - July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023
 - July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024
 - July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025



Water Level RFQ

- SECOORA is soliciting Requests for Qualifications to identify contractors to install and maintain water level sensors.
- SECOORA staff will work with selected contractors to maintain high priority existing water level sensors and to install sensors in locations identified by SECOORA.
- Responses to the RFQ are due to SECOORA by September 9, 2025.



Water Level RFQ

- The anticipated budget level for water level is \$250,000 total annually
- Requesting basic estimates of per station costs
- Identifying multiple contractors to work across region
- RFQs will undergo reviews by SMEs and the Comprehensive Review Panel
- SECOORA will negotiate per station installation and maintenance costs based on station location



Reviewer Terms of Reference

Two-part LOI review: Subject Matter Expert (SME) reviews and Comprehensive Review Panel

Part 1: SMEs

- SMEs: non-conflicted members of the Science Committee; Staff and Board to identify SMEs (e.g. other RA members, Sea Grant staff, NOAA staff, non-conflicted staff from member institutions)
- Anticipate needing 20-35 SMEs
- SECOORA staff review LOIs for completeness
- Each LOI reviewed by 3 SMEs
- SME reviews due by October 3



LOI Reviewer Terms of Reference

Two-part LOI review: Subject Matter Expert (SME) reviews and a Comprehensive Review Panel

Part 2: Comprehensive Review Panel

This panel is responsible for the final selection of LOIs that are part of the SECOORA IOOS proposal

- Staff will tally the SME scores for each LOI submission
- LOIs and blinded LOI scores are provided to the Comprehensive Review Panel
- Comprehensive Review Panel will meet in late October 2025 to review all LOIs and select LOIs that will be part of the SECOORA proposal



Questions?

Q&A summary found here: https://secoora.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/QA_-2026-2031-IOOS-LOI-Solicitation-Process-2.pdf

