

From: "Dr. Jane Lubchenco" <announcement@noaa.gov>
Subject: Laura Furgione named as acting assistant administrator of NOAA's National Weather Service
Date: May 25, 2012 8:34:48 AM HST
To: Undisclosed recipients:



May 25, 2012

Hello everyone,

I write to announce that on Tuesday May 29, Laura Furgione will take on the role of Acting Assistant Administrator for the National Weather Service (NWS). Laura has been part of the NOAA family for almost 20 years, most recently serving as the Deputy Assistant Administrator for NWS and the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Program Planning and Integration. As most of you know, Laura spent many years in Alaska, where she was the Director of the NWS Alaska Region. As Director, she was responsible for all operational and scientific climatological, meteorological, hydrological, volcanic ash and tsunami warning programs for the state of Alaska and its surrounding waters.

Laura has been instrumental in advancing a comprehensive NOAA strategy in the Arctic, examining ways to improve NOAA workforce planning, and spearheading the complete redesign of how NOAA does strategic planning agency wide. As I have come to know Laura, I have appreciated her thoughtfulness, her dedication to the NOAA mission, and her ability to get things done. I think she will be a strong leader and skilled steward of the NWS organization. Please join me in congratulating her and thanking her for taking on this new role.

Laura is taking over this vital position from Dr. Jack Hayes who announced today that he is retiring from NOAA. Under his watch, the National Weather Service (NWS) has pursued a number of important advancements that have resulted and will continue to result in lives saved throughout the country. I commend his accomplishments and thank him for his service. We wish him well in all his future endeavors.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jane
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From: "Dr. Jane Lubchenco" <announcement@noaa.gov>
Subject: Commerce and NOAA announce corrective actions to improve accountability in budgeting and finance
Date: May 25, 2012 9:03:02 AM HST
To: Undisclosed recipients:



May 25, 2012

Hello everyone,

I would like to let everyone know about information that is being released today regarding an internal investigation on the reprogramming of funds without appropriate Congressional notification within the National Weather Service (NWS) and about the actions I and the rest of NOAA leadership are taking to address these problems.

This past December, following a preliminary investigation that was triggered by a complaint from within the NWS to the Inspector General, the Department of Commerce and NOAA leadership launched an investigation into existing budget practices within NWS. This investigation, which focused on FY 2010 and FY 2011, was completed on Friday May 11. The investigation found that government employees engaged in the reprogramming of funds without Congressional notification as required by the applicable Federal Appropriations Act. The investigation also found that no funds were spent on inappropriate items, they were simply spent in different categories than originally budgeted, and there was no corruption or personal financial gain in these actions. The

Department of Commerce leadership, NOAA leadership, and I believe this is a very serious matter that must be addressed.

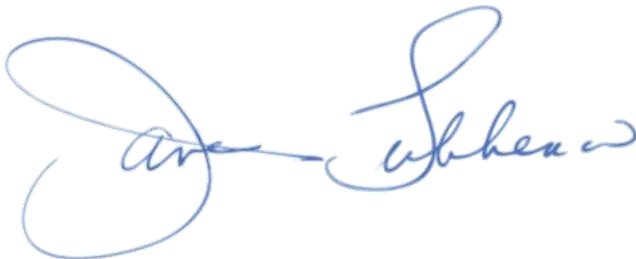
Today I am issuing a decision memo outlining corrective actions and measures to prevent inappropriate budgeting and accounting in the future. NOAA will be submitting a reprogramming package to Congress for FY 2012. I have also directed staff to initiate an independent financial and programmatic audit of NWS back to 2006. Concurrently, the Department of Commerce is releasing a decision memo initiating department-wide actions to bring more rigor and transparency to the budget formulation and execution process at the sub-bureau level. The Department will also initiate actions to provide more training to managers on appropriations law and appropriate ways to address complaints in a timely and appropriate manner. If you have ideas for how to improve current processes or know of agency procedures that could benefit from additional training, please contact your Assistant Administrator so that these ideas can be considered in this process going forward.

I know we all consider carrying out NOAA's mission our great responsibility. NWS officials acted improperly, but let me assure you, life and property were not put at risk and weather forecasts and warnings were not compromised. I would like to commend the people within the NWS who reported this problem in the first place and encourage staff to remain vigilant about reporting real problems you see in the course of your work.

In this case, only a few people acted inappropriately, but their actions affect each of us, and they harm NOAA's reputation and our ability to deliver on our critically important mission. NOAA is comprised of outstanding staff in every line office, which is why we must all redouble our efforts to ensure that this does not happen again. All of us at NOAA take great pride in the services we deliver to the nation, and I know that you will continue to deliver these critical services every day.

I am counting on everyone to do your part in moving the agency forward by helping to improve transparency and accountability, continuing to report problems as they arise, and continuing to pursue and deliver high-quality NOAA science and services. In return, I will do everything I can to promote and support your hard work and dedication and advance the mission of our agency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jane Lubchenco". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.

Dr. Jane
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