

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6475

To authorize the Secretary of Commerce, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program that collects priority coastal geospatial data and supports an information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision support tools, training, and best practices to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 20, 2012

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER (for himself and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Commerce, through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program that collects priority coastal geospatial data and supports an information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision support tools, training, and best practices to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Digital Coast Act of
3 2012”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 The Congress finds that—

6 (1) the lack of current, accurate, uniform, and
7 standards-based geospatial information to charac-
8 terize the United States coastal region presents a
9 significant liability to adequately manage and main-
10 tain the Nation’s—

11 (A) environment;

12 (B) infrastructure;

13 (C) economy; and

14 (D) public safety and homeland security;

15 (2) more than half of all people of the United
16 States (153 million) currently live on or near a coast
17 and an additional 12 million are expected in the next
18 decade;

19 (3) coastal counties in the United States aver-
20 age 300 persons per square mile, compared with the
21 national average of 98;

22 (4) on a typical day, more than 1,540 permits
23 for construction of single-family homes are issued in
24 coastal counties, combined with other commercial,
25 retail, and institutional construction to support this
26 population;

1 (5) over half of the Nation’s economic produc-
2 tivity is located within coastal regions;

3 (6) highly accurate, high-resolution remote
4 sensing and other geospatial data play an important
5 role in management of the coastal zone and econ-
6 omy, including for flood and coastal storm surge
7 prediction; hazard risk and vulnerability assessment;
8 emergency response and recovery planning; commu-
9 nity resilience to longer range climate change im-
10 pacts; permitting and zoning decisionmaking; habitat
11 and ecosystem health assessments; and landscape
12 change detection; and

13 (7) the Digital Coast is a model approach in ef-
14 fective Federal partnerships with local and State
15 government, nongovernmental organizations, and the
16 private sector.

17 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this Act:

19 (1) The term “Digital Coast” means a con-
20 stituent-driven effort led by the Secretary to provide
21 an enabling platform that integrates geospatial data,
22 decision support tools, training, and best practices to
23 address coastal and emergency management issues
24 and needs. The Digital Coast strives to sustain and
25 enhance coastal economies and ecosystem services by

1 helping communities address their issues, needs, and
2 challenges through cost-effective and participatory
3 solutions.

4 (2) The term “remote sensing and other
5 geospatial” means collecting, storing, retrieving, or
6 disseminating graphical or digital data depicting
7 natural or manmade physical features, phenomena,
8 or boundaries of the Earth and any information re-
9 lated thereto, including surveys, maps, charts, sat-
10 ellite and airborne remote sensing data, images,
11 lidar, and services performed by professionals such
12 as surveyors, photogrammetrists, hydrographers, ge-
13 odesists, cartographers, and other such services.

14 (3) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary
15 of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of
16 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
17 tion.

18 (4) The term “State”—

19 (A) means a State of the United States in,
20 or bordering on, the Atlantic, Pacific, or Arctic
21 Ocean, the Chesapeake Bay, the Gulf of Mex-
22 ico, Long Island Sound, or one or more of the
23 Great Lakes; and

24 (B) includes Puerto Rico, the United
25 States Virgin Islands, Guam, the Common-

1 wealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the
2 Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, Amer-
3 ican Samoa, and any portion of a State that is
4 located within 100 kilometers of the Atlantic or
5 Pacific Ocean, the Chesapeake Bay, the Gulf of
6 Mexico, or the Great Lakes.

7 (5) The term “coastal region” means the area
8 of United States waters extending inland from the
9 shoreline to include coastal watersheds and seaward
10 to the territorial sea.

11 (6) The term “Federal Geographic Data Com-
12 mittee” means the interagency committee that pro-
13 motes the coordinated development, use, sharing,
14 and dissemination of geospatial data on a national
15 basis.

16 **SEC. 4. BUILDING THE DIGITAL COAST.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish
19 and implement the Digital Coast to collect the fol-
20 lowing priority supporting data and integrate such
21 data with other available data for the benefit of the
22 broadest measure of coastal resource management
23 constituents and applications:

24 (A) Coastal elevation data.

25 (B) Land use and land cover data.

1 (C) Benthic habitat and submerged aquat-
2 ic vegetation data.

3 (D) Parcels data.

4 (E) Planimetric data.

5 (F) Socioeconomic and human use data.

6 (2) FOCUS ON FILLING NEEDS AND GAPS.—In
7 implementing this section, the Secretary shall—

8 (A) recognize that remote sensing and
9 other geospatial data acquisition for naviga-
10 tional and positioning purposes is carried out
11 through other authorities and programs; and

12 (B) focus on filling data needs and gaps
13 for critical coastal management issues.

14 (b) DATA INTEGRATION, TOOL DEVELOPMENT,
15 TRAINING, DOCUMENTATION, DISSEMINATION, AND AR-
16 CHIVE.—The Secretary shall—

17 (1) make data and resulting integrated prod-
18 ucts developed under this section readily accessible
19 via the Digital Coast and other related Internet
20 technologies;

21 (2) develop decision support tools that use and
22 display resulting integrated data and provide train-
23 ing on use of such tools;

24 (3) document such data to Federal Geographic
25 Data Committee standards; and

1 (4) archive all raw data acquired under this Act
2 at the appropriate National Oceanic and Atmos-
3 pheric Administration data center or other appro-
4 priate Federal data center.

5 (c) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate
6 the activities carried out pursuant to this Act to maximize
7 data sharing and integration and minimize duplication
8 by—

9 (1) coordinating activities, when appropriate,
10 with—

11 (A) other Federal efforts, including efforts
12 under the Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integra-
13 tion Act (33 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the Coastal
14 Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C.
15 1451 et seq.), and the Integrated Coastal and
16 Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (33
17 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.);

18 (B) coastal States and United States terri-
19 tories;

20 (C) local governments; and

21 (D) representatives of nongovernmental en-
22 tities;

23 (2) participating, pursuant to section 216 of
24 Public Law 107–347 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note), in the
25 establishment of such standards and common proto-

1 cols as are necessary to assure the interoperability
2 of remote sensing and other geospatial data with all
3 users of such information within—

4 (A) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
5 Administration;

6 (B) other Federal agencies;

7 (C) State and local government; and

8 (D) the private sector;

9 (3) coordinating with, seeking assistance and
10 cooperation of, and providing liaison to the Federal
11 Geographic Data Committee pursuant to Office of
12 Management and Budget Circular A-16 and Execu-
13 tive Order No. 12906; and

14 (4) providing for the utilization of contracts
15 with the private sector, to the maximum extent prac-
16 ticable, to provide such products and services as are
17 necessary to collect remote sensing and other
18 geospatial data; which contracts shall be considered
19 “surveying and mapping” services as such term is
20 used and as such contracts are awarded at the dis-
21 cretion of the Secretary in accordance with the selec-
22 tion procedures in chapter 11 of title 40, United
23 States Code.

1 **SEC. 5. COASTAL SERVICES CENTERS.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish,
3 within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
4 tion, the Coastal Services Centers to facilitate the develop-
5 ment of products and services that address the needs of
6 local, State, and regional entities involved with coastal and
7 ocean decisionmaking including those State coastal man-
8 agement and research reserves benefitting from this Act,
9 and to lead development and maintenance of the Digital
10 Coast.

11 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Coastal Services
12 Centers shall be to—

13 (1) support the environmental, social, and eco-
14 nomic well-being of the coast by linking people, in-
15 formation, and technology;

16 (2) identify and assess coastal and ocean man-
17 agement needs and increase the capabilities and ca-
18 pacities of managers to address them at the local,
19 State, and regional levels;

20 (3) manage the Digital Coast program to carry
21 out the intent of this Act;

22 (4) convene and engage coastal managers and
23 decisionmakers in dialog concerning coastal issues
24 and share information and best practices across this
25 audience; and

1 (5) collaborate with various programs of the
2 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
3 other Federal agencies, and nongovernmental enti-
4 ties to bring data, information, services, and tools to
5 the Nation’s coastal and ocean decisionmakers.

6 (c) FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS.—To carry out this
7 Act, including to provide program support to non-Federal
8 entities that participate in implementing this Act, the Sec-
9 retary—

10 (1) may enter into financial agreements includ-
11 ing grants, cooperative agreements, interagency
12 agreements, and contracts with other Federal, tribal,
13 State, and local governmental and nongovernmental
14 entities; and

15 (2) may collect registration fees in support of
16 training, workshops, and conferences that advance
17 the purposes of this Act.

18 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

19 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-
20 retary \$85,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2013 through
21 2018 to carry out this Act.

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