

Washington Update 3-12-09

The Six-Month Continuing Resolution is Over!

As you have heard in the news, the Senate approved HR 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009, which was signed by the President on Tuesday. Agencies will be able to operate at their new spending levels as soon as they finalize their operating plans at the new levels and after OMB approves them -- this should take 30-60 days to complete. The Omnibus bill provides NSF with a 7.6% increase over FY08. DOE Office of Science is up 18.8%, NASA is up 3%, and NOAA is up 12%. For more detail on these budgets, Lewis-Burke has provided a very good summary: http://www.ucar.edu/oga/pdf/FY_2009_Omnibus_Summary.pdf.

John Holdren and Jane Lubchenco Approved by Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee

The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee gave unanimous approval this afternoon for John Holdren to head the Office of Science and Technology Policy and Jane Lubchenco to lead NOAA. The panel's approval sends the nominees to the Senate floor, where they should pass by unanimous consent within the coming week, according to leaders of the committee from both sides of the aisle.

President Signs Memorandum on Scientific Integrity

Following years of controversy over the previous Administration's interpretations of climate change research, President Obama on Monday signed a Presidential Memorandum on scientific integrity, "...to ensure that in this new Administration, we base our public policies on the soundest science; that we appoint scientific advisors based on their credentials and experience, not their politics or ideology; and that we are open and honest with the American people about the science behind our decisions. That is how we will harness the power of science to achieve our goals – to preserve our environment and protect our national security; to create the jobs of the future, and live longer, healthier lives."

The full memo to agency heads can be found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Memorandum-for-the-Heads-of-Executive-Departments-and-Agencies-3-9-09/