

**Waiver of \$500,000 Single Conference Limitation
2016 Annual American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting
December 12-16, 2016**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has requested approval to exceed the \$500,000 single-conference limitation in order to send members and affiliates of NOAA to the 2016 Annual American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting from December 12 through 16, 2016.

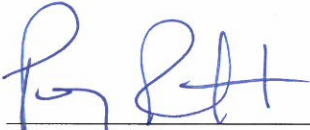
In submitting its waiver request, NOAA has indicated that:

- The 2016 AGU Fall Meeting is of the highest importance and priority to the effective operations and conduct of NOAA's mission science. Specifically, there will be more than 23,000 oral and poster presentations, 1,700 sessions, and 300 exhibits that offer the latest scientific innovations that may support NOAA's mission;
- The 2016 AGU Fall Meeting offers a forum for the advancement of science through the presentation and discussion of new scientific discoveries among the leading scientific minds of our time. The presentations and discussions range from quantification of the processes in the atmosphere and ocean that govern weather and climate to next-generation climate model projections of future change from seasons to century;
- Attendance by NOAA's young scientific professionals provides crucial career opportunities that promote training and education toward excellence in the next generation of leaders and innovators in a diverse array of scientific disciplines. In addition, NOAA and Department of Commerce support for employees to participate in AGU demonstrates commitment to enhancing training and career development – an integral element of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS);
- The 2016 AGU Fall Meeting provides an important venue for NOAA scientists to exchange ideas with members of the U.S. and international research communities and to bring back the resulting new knowledge to incorporate into the environmental intelligence provided by NOAA to inform decision-making;
- The 2016 AGU Fall Meeting will address topics of importance to NOAA, including atmospheric chemistry, meteorology, climatology, hydrology, oceanography, biogeochemistry, ecology, physics, geomorphology, social science, risk assessment, space weather, air quality, data assimilation, remote sensing, science communication, and modeling;
- This meeting provides the opportunity for NOAA scientists to present their research and to promote the authority of NOAA as a science-based service organization. The exchange of information and exposure to new ideas will enhance NOAA research, thereby enabling the agency to carry out its mission more effectively;
- Attending the AGU Fall Meeting is essential to maintain insight and judgment in making decisions that guide NOAA research and operations for the coming year;
- AGU serves as a collection of meetings in one venue, and NOAA has determined that attendance at the conference is the most cost-effective option to achieve a compelling purpose;
- No other conferences or professional organizational meetings during the year cover the same broad range of topics (such as gravity, earth rotation, and geoid models and methods of data

collection) and bring together the same diverse collection of NOAA's seasoned and young scientific professionals as AGU;

- Participation in this meeting will foster new international collaborations based on our bilateral agreements and common scientific challenges and will ensure that NOAA science stays current and cutting-edge;
- NOAA plays prominent leadership roles in the AGU organization, and its participation is important to maintaining its partnerships. It is critical for NOAA scientists to exchange information about their findings with other leading scientists, thereby adding to the stature of NOAA as a leader in using science to inform the public;
- NOAA Line Offices have carefully scrutinized all other travel for FY 2017 and have made appropriate decisions on reductions elsewhere in order to meet the FY 2017 travel reduction targets and carry out the travel contained in this request;
- The list of attendees is confined only to appointed AGU members and a limited number of invited affiliates and has been carefully scrutinized to ensure the personnel selected to attend would provide the most benefit to NOAA;
- Approximately 88 percent of this year's attendees are delivering oral presentations and/or poster presentations; and
- The estimated budget in this context would be \$785,572.

In this context, I hereby waive the \$500,000 single-conference limitation for the NOAA- attended 2016 AGU Fall meeting such that NOAA may proceed consistent with its estimated budget.



Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Commerce

DEC - 6 2016

Date

Conference Synopsis

Bureau:	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Conference Title:	2016 Annual American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting
Dates/Total Number of Days:	December 12-16, 2016/5 days
Location/Venue:	San Francisco, CA/The Moscone Center
Number of DOC Attendees:	213
Number of Other Federal Attendees:	0
Number of Non-Federal Attendees:	1
Total Number of Attendees:	214
Net Cost to DOC:	\$785,572
Gross Conference and Travel Costs:	\$785,572
Transportation Costs:	\$536,420
Other Costs:	\$249,152
Funded by:	NOAA
Procurement Method:	N/A
Total Average Cost per Attendee:	\$3,671

Description: The AGU Fall Meeting brings together the entire Earth and Space sciences community for discussions of emerging trends and the latest research. The technical program includes presentations on new and cutting edge science, much of which has not yet been published. With more than 1,700 sessions, this year's AGU Fall Meeting's scientific program offers a unique mix of more than 23,000 oral and poster presentations, a broad range of general sessions, more than 50 formal and informal networking and career advancement opportunities, and an exhibit hall packed with nearly 300 exhibitors showcasing new and relevant research tools and services that could help scientists and researchers streamline their work. The world's leading scientists in a wide range of scientific disciplines congregate to focus on presenting scientific findings and exploring potential new frontiers of scientific pursuit.

Notes:

1. The American Geophysical Union sponsors the AGU Annual Meeting. NOAA provides support through attendance and participation.
2. There are no optics that may draw public attention regarding this meeting.
3. Federal funds will not be used to procure alcohol.
4. Abstract fees are \$65 per presentation.
5. Registration fees depend on AGU membership status. For members, registration before November 3 is \$480 and after November 3 is \$585. For non-members, registration before November 3 is \$625 and after November 3 is \$730. Attendee's length of stay at the meeting will also play a role in determining their registration fee. Registration for the 2016 Fall Meeting includes all general and breakout sessions; communication, educational outreach, and career workshops; access to non-ticketed events; daily refreshment breaks; and access to all presentations. No meals will be included in the registration fee.
6. Per diem for lodging is \$267 and M&IE is \$74.

7. The travelers will only be compensated for the number of nights required to attend the conference. If the travelers decide to arrive early and depart late, the associated additional expenses will be paid by the traveler. There are a few instances where there are travelers that are required arrive days earlier as they are part of pre-AGU committee/board meetings.
8. Transportation fees are determined by airfare pricing from CWTSATO, whom the government uses to book all contract carrier flights for government employees and invitational travelers.
9. Other costs include audio visual equipment and service, registration fees, ground transportation, telephone/fax/internet, and meeting space rental that includes the exhibit booth fee, which is higher this year because NOAA is expanding the exhibit presence. In past years, NOAA had a 10' x 30' booth space. This year, NOAA will have a 20' x 20' booth along with the additional space, the cost of everything else goes up, including carpet and audio visual.
10. Miscellaneous costs include ATM and metro fees, checked baggage and poster material fees.
11. Federal employees are exempt from paying occupancy taxes in the city of San Francisco. Employees will be told to use the CA tax exempt form upon departing the hotel.
12. Below is information regarding special events at this year's meeting:
 - Sunday, December 11 - Planetary Sciences Space Physics and Aeronomy Career Night Mixer
 - Monday, December 12 - Ice Breaker
 - Tuesday, December 13 - Recruitment Luncheon: Tickets are free; seating is limited.
 - Wednesday, December 14 - Career Opportunities Networking Lunch: Tickets are free; seating is limited.
 - Wednesday, December 14 - AGU 5K Fun Run and Walk; however, NOAA will inform travelers that they should not participate in this event.
13. Historical Information:
 - The approved request for the December 2015 AGU Annual Meeting was for 202 employees for an estimated total of \$702,000. The actual costs were \$373,000 with 158 travelers.
 - The approved request for the December 2014 AGU Annual Meeting was for 160 employees for an estimated total of \$474,000. The actual costs were \$343,000 with 141 travelers.
 - The approved request for the December 2013 AGU Annual Meeting was for 181 slots for an estimated total of \$477,000. The actual costs were \$281,000 with 131 travelers.
14. The reason for increased NOAA attendance:
 - The Fall Meeting AGU is the primary annual event that brings the world's scientific community together. The event is the largest Earth and Space science meeting in the world and provides a network of scientists to discuss the latest discoveries, trends, and challenges that span every scientific discipline.
 - The number of participants is larger this year than in previous years for a number of reasons, and some include: that there is increased progress made toward completing research projects begun in past years; the heightened emphasis provided by NOAA leadership on increasing training activities; and the priorities placed on Organizational Excellence by NOAA's Under Secretary.
 - Because of its breadth, there is widespread interest in NOAA and other agencies and the total number of attendees is substantially larger than any other US geophysical meeting. Thus, a total meeting cost limit threatens this meeting more than any other. A more balanced perspective is that AGU is really a collection of meetings occurring in one venue, i.e. the geology professionals generally do not attend atmospheric sessions and vice versa.

- Presenting scientific results at scientific meetings by early, mid, and senior scientists is an essential aspect of reaching career goals. For those not presenting, there is justification based on learning and networking with like-minded colleagues, as noted above. For those in management positions, such as Program Leaders and Deputy Directors, attending the AGU meeting is essential to maintain insight, intuition, and judgment in making decisions that guide NOAA research and operations for the coming year. There will be more than 1,700 sessions and 300 exhibits that offer the latest scientific innovations that may support NOAA's mission.
- The AGU Annual Meeting is of the highest importance and priority to the effective operation and conduct of NOAA's mission science. In order to submit this travel request with its number of travelers and associated expenses, NOAA Line Offices have carefully scrutinized all other travel for FY 2017 and made appropriate decisions on reductions elsewhere in order to meet the FY 2017 travel reduction targets and carry out the travel contained in this request. NOAA management used several factors while evaluating NOAA-wide participation to meet mission requirements:
 - Approximately 88 percent of this year's attendees are delivering oral presentations, poster presentations, and/or are speakers.
 - NOAA plays prominent leadership roles in the organization and its participation is very important to maintaining its partnerships. It is critical for NOAA scientists to exchange information about their findings with other leading scientists.
 - NOAA will be presenting scientific papers on topics that range from space weather prediction to climate, hurricane, and numerical weather modeling and prediction.
- AGU represents the most significant annual conference for the National Geodetic Survey with experts on gravity, earth rotation, geoid models and methods of data collection.
- NOAA determined that the AGU annual meeting, December 12-16, 2016, will provide NOAA attendees with a unique opportunity to meet our expanding mission requirements.
- For this year's meeting, we are requesting 214 slots, including 180 oral or poster presenters, 10 speakers, and 10 exhibit booth supporters.



Department Of Commerce Office of Administrative Programs Conference Reporting

Bureau:	NOAA
Tracking Number:	2017-NOAA-00298
Updated:	11/15/2016 12:36

Conference Title

The 49th American Geophysical Union Annual (AGU) Fall Meeting

Point of Contact Name

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POC Email

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Alternate Email Addresses

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Conference purpose

The AGU meeting is the largest Earth and space science meeting in the world. The AGU meeting is the place to present research, hear about the latest discoveries, trends and challenges in the field, network, and make connections that can enhance careers. The meeting brings together the entire Earth and space sciences community for discussions of emerging trends, oral and poster presentations, a broad range of sessions, and more than 50 formal and informal networking and career advancement opportunities.

Mission Critical?



Funds Obligated?



Department of Commerce Participation

Attending



Co-sponsors

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Location

San Francisco, CA

Facility name

The Moscone Center

Federal facility



Start date

12/12/2016

End date

12/16/2016

Conference Days

5

Travel Days

2

Website

fallmeeting.agu.org/2016/

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Procedures/procurement method

N/A

Contracts awarded on competitive basis? ☐

Cost comparison description

N/A

Costing methodology

N/A

	Estimated	Actual
Grant funding	\$0.00	\$0.00
IAA funding	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other funding	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total non-DOC funding	\$0.00	\$0.00

Other Funding Description

N/A

Reception? ☐

Reception Description

N/A

Alcohol consumption? ☐

Description of how alcohol will be funded

Government funds will not be used to procure alcohol.

Special Events

Sunday, December 11 - Planetary Sciences Space Physics and Aeronomy Career Night Mixer; Monday, December 12 - Ice Breaker; Tuesday, December 13 - Recruitment Luncheon; Wednesday, December 14 - Career Opportunities Networking Lunch; Wednesday, December 14 - AGU 5K Fun Run and Walk; NOAA will inform travelers that they should not participate in this event.

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Attendees	Estimated	Actual
Department of Commerce Local	0	0
Department of Commerce Travelers	213	0
Invitational Travelers	1	0
Non-Department of Commerce	0	0
Non-Federal	0	0
Total attendees	214	0

Costs	Estimated	Actual
Transportation	\$119,228.00	\$0.00
Lodging	\$320,400.00	\$0.00
Meals and incidental expenses (M&IE)	\$96,792.00	\$0.00

Food/Meals Provided		
Breakfast	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lunch	\$0.00	\$0.00
Dinner	\$0.00	\$0.00
Food subtotal <input type="checkbox"/> Deduct from M&IE	\$0.00	\$0.00

Other Costs (Must Be Explained in General Comments Section)		
Meeting space rental	\$34,000.00	\$0.00
Audio visual equipment and service	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Conference planner	\$0.00	\$0.00
Trainer/instructor/facilitator	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interpreters	\$0.00	\$0.00
Registration fees	\$154,760.00	\$0.00
Printing/design work	\$0.00	\$0.00
Supplies and materials	\$0.00	\$0.00
Translation of materials	\$0.00	\$0.00
Visa/passport fees	\$0.00	\$0.00
Ground Transportation	\$37,413.00	\$0.00
Refreshments/Breaks	\$0.00	\$0.00
Receptions (food and/or alcohol)	\$0.00	\$0.00
Telephone/Fax/Internet	\$1,820.00	\$0.00
Evacuation Insurance	\$0.00	\$0.00
*Miscellaneous	\$13,159.00	\$0.00
Total conference costs	\$785,572.00	\$0.00
Net conference costs	\$785,572.00	\$0.00
Average Cost per attendee	\$3,670.90	

***Description of Miscellaneous costs**

Miscellaneous costs include baggage fees, ATM fees, and poster material fees.

General Comments

The Meeting Space Rental is a \$34,000 exhibit booth fee. The exhibit cost fee includes: the Booth space - \$12,000; the Carpet and Carpet padding - \$2,500; the Booth Furnishings - \$9,000; Material Handling - \$2,000; Labor - Installation and Dismantle - \$3,000; Booth Electrical Service - \$1,500; Booth Internet Service - \$2,000; Exhibit Freight - Inbound and Outbound - \$2,000. There are 10 travelers who are working at the exhibit booths most of the time while there and their registration fees are waived.