

UNOLS Updates

Alice Doyle / UNOLS office



R/V Endeavor concluded its remarkable 50 year career!!



Congratulations to URI's Graduate School of Oceanography and all the Sailors, Marine Techs, Scientists and Students who have sailed on this great ship - the last of its class!!



Safer Seas Act Video & Audio System Installation Update

- **Installations Completed**

- Global Vessels
- Ocean Class (aka “Astronaut Class”)

- **All systems inspected and approved by the USCG**
- **RCRV program is working on solicitation for installations**
- **Each institution has their own process for responding to requests for the audio/video data to support investigations**
 - Systems are NOT monitored for activity.
 - Data is stored on the secure onboard server.
 - Specific data has to be requested by the appropriate investigative authority to the institution’s designated official(s).
- **Plans for the rest of the fleet are pending**



Other Updates

- Committee & Sub-committee Meetings Continue! (and there are A LOT of them)
- 2026 Ship Scheduling
 - 2026 Schedules are being posted.
 - Cruises are proceeding as funding allows.
 - Instructed to plan
- MATE program – another successful year
 - 15 interns, Long Term intern with Alvin Team
- Marine Facilities Planning - continue to make small improvements



Oceans & Shipbuilding are a part of the Federal Priorities

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR MAPPING, EXPLORING, AND CHARACTERIZING THE UNITED STATES EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE



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S.1541 - SHIPS for America Act of 2025

119th Congress (2025-2026) | [Get alerts](#)

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Sponsor: [Sen. Kelly, Mark \[D-AZ\]](#) (Introduced 04/30/2025)

Committees: Senate - Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Latest Action: Senate - 04/30/2025 Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. ([All Actions](#))

Tracker: 1 [Introduced](#) > [Passed Senate](#) > [Passed House](#) > [To President](#) > [Became Law](#)



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20502



September 23, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Polar Regions Research: As an Arctic nation, the United States is affected by rapidly changing conditions in the Arctic that have national security, commerce, infrastructure, and transportation implications. Agencies should prioritize research and associated research infrastructure investments that enhance America's ability to observe, understand, and predict the physical, biological, geologic, and socioeconomic processes and interacting systems of the Arctic to protect and advance American interests and ensure prosperity of America's Arctic residents. Agencies should invest in R&D that assures America's uncontested navigation and strategic utilization of the Arctic. Additionally, the dominant presence of the United States in Antarctica, under the Antarctic Treaty, is expressed through a world-leading science program. Agencies should maintain and, where feasible, strengthen Antarctic research infrastructure.

Ocean Exploration and Observation: Agencies should prioritize new and emerging technologies and collaborative approaches to efficiently map, explore, and characterize the resources of the United States exclusive economic zone and sea beds under international waters, particularly in connection with deep-sea mining. Agencies should also focus on increasing their capacity to effectively and efficiently manage large volumes of ocean observation and research data.



◀ PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

RESTORING AMERICA'S MARITIME DOMINANCE

What are we doing?

In Person Advocacy

- RECOS – Research & Education Coalition for Ocean Sciences
- UNOLS met with Ocean Studies Board
- Multiple in person meetings with agencies
- ARF Govt. Affairs working Group



NOMEC

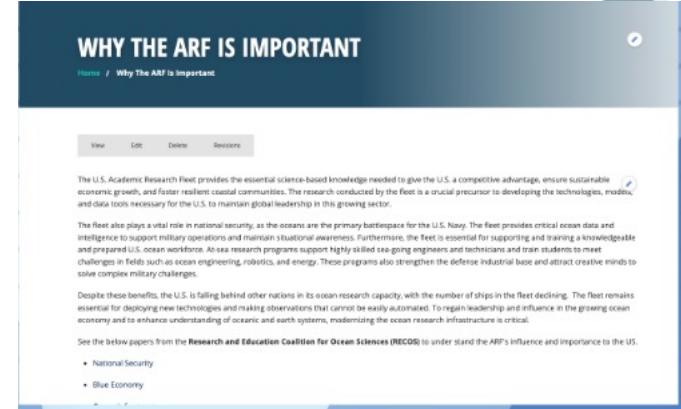
- Letters from Council and MSROC to Agencies - **We can do it!**
- Article on ARF Capabilities in upcoming NOMEC Newsletter
- Continued conversation with the NOMEC Council
- Ongoing Brainstorming at each Council Meeting
- Website Updates highlighting the fleet

Leveraging the US Academic Research Fleet for Accelerated Seabed Exploration and Characterization

UNOLS Council

Updated: 24 October 2025

The United States possesses a critical national asset in its Academic Research Fleet (ARF), a network of advanced oceanographic research vessels. This asset enables the nation's leadership in deep-sea science and technology and offers an immediate and outstanding domestic capability to significantly accelerate the mapping and characterization of seabed mineral resources and associated biological communities within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and in international waters. The current strength and capability of the U.S. ARF is built upon decades of stable and consistent support from both the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Navy's Office of Naval Research (ONR). This foundational backing has enabled the development and maintenance of a world-class fleet, equipped



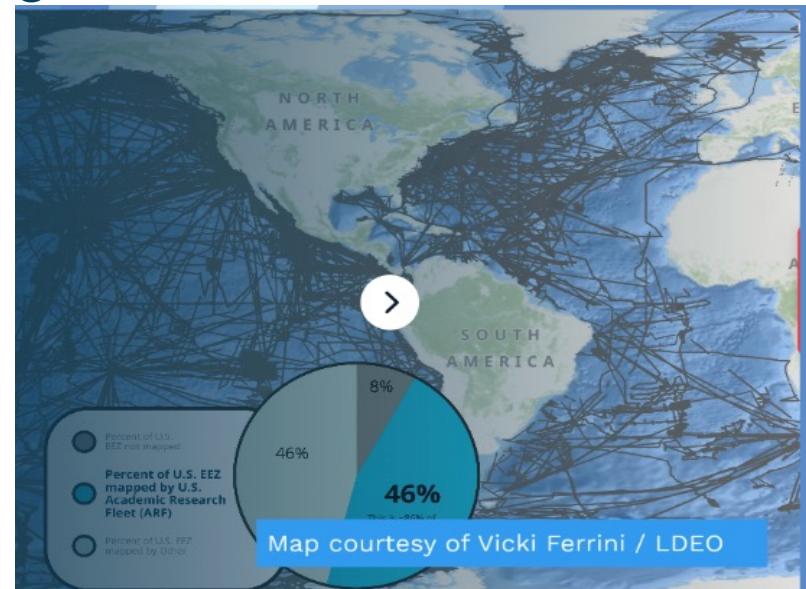
The U.S. Academic Research Fleet provides the essential science-based knowledge needed to give the U.S. a competitive advantage, ensure sustainable economic growth, and foster resilient coastal communities. The research conducted by the fleet is a crucial precursor to developing the technologies, models, and data tools necessary for the U.S. to maintain global leadership in this growing sector.

The fleet also plays a vital role in national security, as the oceans are the primary battlespace for the U.S. Navy. The fleet provides critical ocean data and intelligence to support military operations and maintain situational awareness. Furthermore, the fleet is essential for supporting and training a knowledgeable and prepared scientific workforce. On-sea research programs support highly skilled sea-going engineers and technicians and train students to meet challenges in fields such as ocean engineering, robotics, and energy. These programs also strengthen the defense industrial base and attract creative minds to solve complex military challenges.

Despite these benefits, the U.S. is falling behind other nations in its ocean research capacity, with the number of ships in the fleet declining. The fleet remains essential for deploying new technologies and making observations that cannot be easily automated. To regain leadership and influence in the growing ocean economy and to enhance understanding of oceanic and earth systems, modernizing the ocean research infrastructure is critical.

See the below papers from the Research and Education Coalition for Ocean Sciences (RECOR) to understand the ARF's influence and importance to the U.S.

- National Security
- Blue Economy



Fleet Improvement Committee

- **Keeps on moving!**
- Letter to Agencies outlining the need for more Global Capacity
- Detailed reviews of NOAA Class A & Class B vessels looking for potential opportunities
- Fleet Improvement Plan
- Aging Fleet
- Need for Global Recapitalization
- Updating the Ocean Class Science Mission Requirements SMRs



Arctic Initiatives

- USCG awarded 2 contract for 11 USCG Polar Cutters
- USCG S&T tasked to figure out the needed science requirements

AMRCC in ACTION

- Created science requirements to outfit the newly received STORIS
- Creating Science Mission Requirements to provide guidance to U.S. federal agencies regarding future icebreaker support for Arctic marine research.

