

Ocean Exploration Advisory Board

Meeting 29

March 18 - 19, 2026

10am - 5pm EDT (UTC-4)

FINAL AGENDA

Meeting Objective: Ocean Exploration Advisory Board (OEAB) Members will convene over two days to receive updates from NOAA; consider the annual NOAA Ocean Exploration proposal review process; and discuss strategy with NOAA leadership.

Meeting Outcomes: Context received during these sessions will enable OEAB to advise the NOAA Administrator as per 33 USC Chapter 47 § 3405.

Location: Virtual. Public attendance via WebEx; registration required for all attendees; registration form is available on the [OEAB meeting website](#).

(see next)

Meeting 29 - Session 1 of 2, Wednesday, March 18 ** Times are EDT (UTC-4) **

10:00 am - 10:15 am	Opening Remarks & Agenda Review	Liz Tirpak, OEAB Designated Federal Officer (DFO) & Dr. Vicki Ferrini, OEAB Chair
10:15 am - 10:45 am	Annual Ethics Training	Maria Colic, Attorney-Advisor, DOC
10:45 am - 11:45 am	NOAA Ocean Exploration Program Status Report	CAPT Bill Mowitt , OER Acting Director
11:45 am - 12:00 pm	Break	
12:00 pm- 1:00 pm	Remarks from NOAA Leadership Suggested topic: Administration priorities and resourcing for ocean exploration	Dr. Timothy R. Petty , AS for Oceans & Atmosphere
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch	
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Discussion: Strengthening the U.S. ocean exploration toolkit—innovation needs, development pathways, and opportunities for commercialization	Hans Van Sumeren , Director, Marine Technology Society’s Ocean Enterprise Initiative
3:00 pm - 3:15 pm	Break	
3:15 pm- 4:30 pm	Discussion: Critical Marine Minerals Development: an opportunity to promote integrative tech for deep sea characterization & monitoring	Dr. Elif Demir-Hilton , Consultant; Dr. Chris Meyer , Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History; Dr. Beth Orcutt , Associate Director of the COBRA Crustal Ocean Biosphere Research Accelerator
4:35 pm - 4:50 pm	Public Comment Period (10 minutes)	Liz Tirpak, OEAB DFO
4:50 pm - 5:00 pm	Adjourn the Meeting	Dr. Vicki Ferrini, OEAB Chair & Liz Tirpak, OEAB DFO

Meeting 29 - Session 2 of 2, Thursday, March 19 ** Times are EDT (UTC-4) **

10:00 am - 10:15 am	Opening Remarks & Agenda Review	Liz Tirpak, OEAB DFO & Dr. Vicki Ferrini, OEAB Chair
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Remarks from OAR Leadership Suggested topic: investments across NOAA Research (OAR) for enhancing deep ocean mapping, characterization and data utilization and access	Nancy Wallace , NOAA Research (OAR) Deputy Assistant Administrator for Programs & Administration
11:15 am - 12:00 pm	FY2025 & FY2026 Competitive Grant Process	Dr. Adrienne Copeland, OER Grants Manager
12:00 pm - 12:15 pm	Break	
12:15 pm - 1:00 pm	Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute (OECI): FY26 Plan	Dr. Heather Coleman, OER CI Manager
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch	
2:00 pm - 3:15 pm	NOAA Ship <i>Discoverer</i>: status and capabilities for deep water mapping, exploration and characterization	Kelley Suhre, OAR <i>Discoverer</i> Project Manager
3:15 pm - 3:40 pm	Q&A with NOAA Ocean Exploration Program	CAPT Bill Mowitt , OER Acting Director; Dr. Aurora Elmore, OER Deep-sea Resources Science Advisor; Dr. Mashkoor Malik, OER Science & Tech Division Chief
3:40 pm - 3:45 pm	OEAB Intersessional Activities	Liz Tirpak, OEAB DFO
3:45 pm - 4:00 pm	Adjourn the Meeting	Dr. Vicki Ferrini, OEAB Chair & Liz Tirpak, OEAB DFO