

A PROPOSAL FOR A NATIONAL COASTAL MAPPING STRATEGY

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The National Ocean Policy (NOP) established by Executive Order 13547 on July 19, 2010 recognizes that coastal mapping provides critical information for protecting human lives and property from marine hazards, enhancing homeland security, predicting the effects of global climate change, and promoting the protection, sustainable use, and enjoyment of ocean resources. Moreover the NOP Implementation Plan requires relevant federal agencies to “coordinate and leverage ocean and coastal mapping efforts to improve access to existing data and efficiently collect future data.” Accordingly, the Interagency Working Group on Ocean and Coastal Mapping (IWG-OCM) has drafted a proposed National Coastal Mapping Strategy with an initial focus on elevation, and a goal to survey/map the Nation’s coasts, including nearshore areas, on a five to eight year cycle for multipurpose use. This strategy encompasses the following broad elements: 1) Development of an 8-year mapping cycle across coastal mapping federal agencies; 2) An explicit and ongoing process for interagency coordination via an Annual Mapping Coordination Summit, 3) Development of a single set of standards/specs for coastal mapping, 4) Definition of a “Whole Life Cycle” data approach and, 5) Research and development on new tools and techniques for data collection and use.