

National Boating Federation
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July 2011

House hearing on potential GPS interference:

As reported by Holland and Knight the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure conducted a hearing on potential GPS interference. The hearing focused primarily on plans by the company LightSquared, to build a nationwide broadband internet infrastructure that uses radio frequency bandwidth right next to existing GPS bandwidth which will probably cause interference and affect GPS reliability. Preliminary government testing has validated concerns that the high-powered signal proposed by LightSquared may adversely impact the GPS signal. NBF has voiced its concern in a letter to the Chairman of the FCC urging them to withhold authorization for LightSquared operations until all valid concerns of the GPS user community have been resolved.

Meanwhile, the House Committee on Appropriations issued a press release stating that it approved the FY 2012 Financial Services Appropriations Bill, as amended. Among the amendments included in the bill is one that prohibits the FCC from removing conditions on or to permit certain commercial broadband operations until the FCC has resolved concerns of harmful interference by these operations on GPS devices.

Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Workshop:

At the invitation of the National Oceans Council, I attended the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) Workshop on 21 June at the Dept of the Interior in Washington DC. There were over 500 in attendance and 200 more through a webinar. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together Federal, State, public and regional representatives to develop an understanding of the CMSP process, build a community of CMSP users and consider future steps for regional implementation. The Workshop was also used to gather public feedback toward implementing "a National Policy for the stewardship of the Ocean, our Coasts and the Great Lakes (National Ocean Policy), as established by Executive Order 13547, under President Obama." Following the opening remarks and various panel sessions, a question and answer period was provided for. I pointed out that with 14 million registered boats, and 60 million participants recreational boating is a significant contributor to our GDP and that full consideration should be given to boating in any oceans policy planning.

To facilitate ocean planning, Dr. John Oliver, USCG, indicated there will be nine regional ocean areas. To create their plans, a Regional Planning Body will be established in each region. They will hold meetings and from that create a final CMS plan and then submit it to the National Ocean Policy. At the Workshop conclusion Andy Lipsky, the Ocean Policy Advisor, indicated all questions and answers will be provided in the Workshop summary which is now in preparation. This will be provided at www.whitehouse.gov/ocean and then go to Workshop and find play back.