

Dear Dr. Benitz-Nelson,

Thank you for submitting the report to the Committee of Visitors (COV) for the Ocean Science Facilities Programs within the Integrative Programs Section of the Division of Ocean Sciences, which was held June 24 – 26, 2014.

I sincerely appreciate the time and energy expended by you and the members of the COV. NSF and the oceanography community will benefit from your thorough and valuable analysis of these programs.

I was pleased to hear you were impressed by the program operations and management in Oceanographic Centers, Facilities and Equipment and with the leadership in the Integrative Programs Section. As you noted, access to oceanographic measurement, data and samples from sea going vessels and submersibles is an essential need now and for the future in addressing fundamental NSF-funded research. Your insights and recommendations are critical to achieving the goal of maintaining that access.

Bob Houtman, Section Head for Integrative Programs, has provided a set of specific responses to your findings and recommendations in the enclosed document.

Thanks again for your contribution to maintaining the tradition and challenge of close cooperation with the oceanographic community through this process of periodic outside review by a COV.

Sincerely,