



Janet Coit Named NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator

June 21, 2021

Coit will also serve as Acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Deputy Administrator.



Janet Coit at a Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association youth fishing camp. Credit: Janet Coit

Today, Janet Coit was appointed to lead NOAA Fisheries, which is responsible for managing our nation's marine fisheries and conserving protected marine species, as the assistant administrator under the Biden-Harris Administration. Coit will also serve as acting assistant

secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and deputy NOAA administrator, for which she will support and manage NOAA's coastal and marine programs.

Her appointment is effective today, and she succeeds Paul Doremus, Ph.D., who has been acting NOAA Fisheries assistant administrator since January 2021.

Coit has worked on environmental issues, natural resource management, and stewardship for more than 30 years. She brings extensive managerial and leadership experience to NOAA Fisheries, having worked at the intersection of policy and science throughout her career.

“Janet understands the direct link between natural resources management and economic vitality for our nation,” said Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. “She is a tremendous addition to our NOAA team, who brings a wealth of experience in supporting fisheries, promoting the seafood sector, protecting the marine environment, and tackling climate change.”

NOAA Fisheries employs 4,800 people in five regional offices, six science centers, and more than 20 laboratories in 15 states and U.S. territories. As NOAA Fisheries’ assistant administrator, Coit will oversee:

- Recreational and commercial fisheries management within federal waters of the U.S. exclusive economic zone
- Marine mammal protection and marine protected species conservation
- Coastal fisheries habitat conservation

“I am excited to join NOAA Fisheries to work with the agency’s incredibly skilled and dedicated employees to rebuild fisheries where necessary, and protect and conserve endangered and threatened marine resources and their habitats,” said Coit. “It’s clear that NOAA Fisheries is already pivoting to capture and incorporate climate impacts into its world-class science capabilities. That will serve us well as we focus on the management of some of the most iconic and sustainable fisheries in the world.”

Coit directed the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) for more than 10 years. She focused on improving natural resource conservation, promoting locally grown food, including seafood, and addressing the climate crisis. She worked to improve new infrastructure for commercial and recreational fisheries and promote sustainable management of fisheries, including a new shellfish initiative. Coit also chaired Rhode Island’s Seafood Marketing Collaborative and worked with stakeholders to promote supplying seafood locally and abroad.

She streamlined the permitting process to support environmental and economic interests in the state. Additionally, she provided more opportunities for families and tourists to connect with nature—building new boat ramps and fishing piers—while enhancing the Department’s customer service for all clients, including businesses and the public. Among her top

achievements were improving morale at the agency and championing the need for more funding in support of parks and open space, clean water, brownfields remediation, and addressing climate change.

“Over the past ten years, some of my most rewarding work has been aimed at supporting a resilient marine fishing industry to supply fresh seafood to Rhode Island and abroad by focusing on fishing port infrastructure and services, and sustainability through the application of fisheries science and management,” said Coit. “I look forward to continuing this work at NOAA.”

Before joining Rhode Island DEM in 2011, Coit was the state director for The Nature Conservancy in Rhode Island for 10 years. Prior to that, she was counsel and environmental coordinator in the Providence office of the late Senator John Chafee and, subsequently,

then-Senator Lincoln Chafee. Coit also served as counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works, where she advised on national environmental policy.

A native of Syracuse, New York, she is a magna cum laude graduate of Dartmouth College. She holds a law degree from Stanford Law School, where she was president of the Environmental Law Society and a member of the Environmental Law Journal.

An avid kayaker in her free time, she loves exploring Rhode Island's waterways, historic sites, and wild places. She is married with two grown children and currently lives in Barrington, Rhode Island.



Janet Coit is the new Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries.

Credit: Janet Coit

Notable Awards for Janet Coit

- She was recently awarded the New England Women in Energy and the Environment's Achievement Award and the Gary S. Sasse Distinguished Public Service Award from the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council
- She was inducted into the American College of Environmental Lawyers and received the Environmental Business Council Paul G. Keough Environmental-Energy Award for Government Service
- She received the "Mary Brennan Tourism Award" from the Rhode Island Hospitality Association for her role in attracting and executing the Volvo Ocean Race Newport Stopover event in 2015, drawing more than 130,000 fans and contributing some \$47 million to the local economy
- In 2015, she was honored with Sail Newport's President's Award and the Leadership Award from Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association
- In 2014, she was recognized as one of Rhode Island's most powerful women by *Rhode Island Monthly*
- In 2014, she received the prestigious "John H. Chafee Conservation Leadership Award" from the Environment Council of Rhode Island.
- In 2013, she was named "Boater of the Year" by the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association

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