

Analysis of OSRI spending between 1997 and 2007

This analysis is meant to provide a quick look at OSRI spending trends during the past ten years. The data used is primarily from the contracts listed on the OSRI website. There can be differences between what we contracted and what was actually spent. I used the OSRI annual reports to provide additional data.

I have recategorized the projects based on how they fit into the present Understand, Respond, and Inform goals. Some projects may belong in more than one category, but were placed in what I felt was the most appropriate category. Workshops, interns, and graduate fellows were all placed into the Inform goal. By recategorizing the projects there is consistency throughout the analysis, but my totals for each goal don't necessarily match the totals presented in the annual reports.

Overall funding

Funding is based on the interest earned by the Treasury Department on \$22,500,000 of the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund. The first year deposit (\$2.4 million) was much greater than following years because it represents more than one year of interest (Figure 1). The deposits have slowly declined during the past six years. The fiscal year 2008 deposit is larger, but the expected deposit for the next four years is approximately \$715,000, a significant decrease from the 2007 level of \$840,000. If changes to OPA 90 are passed then OSRI can expect approximately \$1.1 million based on an increase in principal to 35 million dollars. Expenditures increase steadily from the inception in 1997 and peaked in 2002. They have held steady at about \$1,000,000 the past three years.

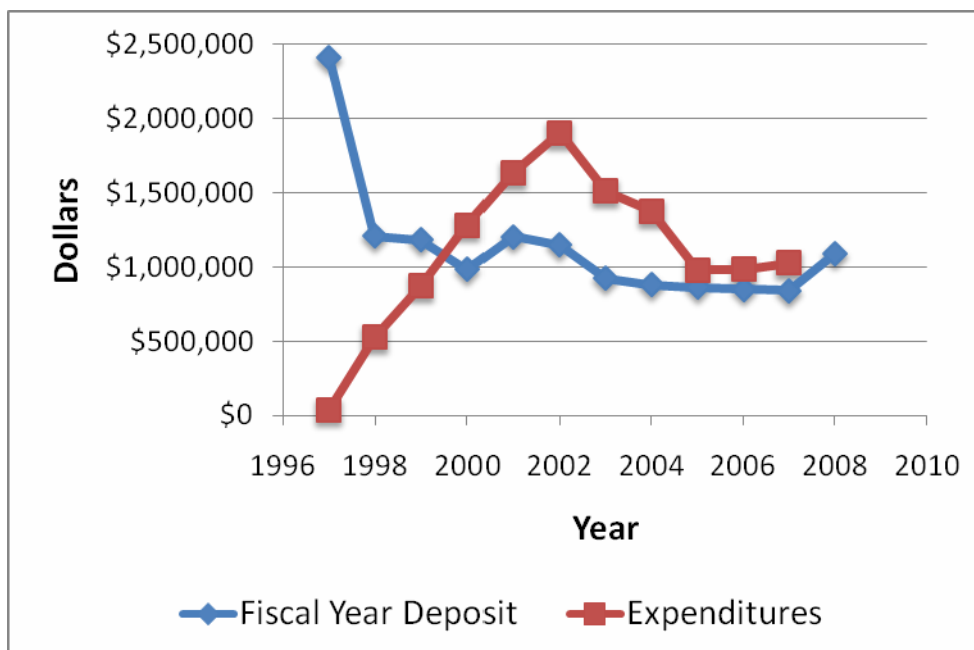


Figure 1. Deposits and Expenditures based on the audited numbers provided in the annual reports. At the end of fiscal year 2007 the cumulative deposits and expenditures are nearly equal.

The PWSSC takes 20% of the deposit for overhead costs. This leaves 80% available for programming. The funds available for programming and the contractual commitments are presented in Figure 2. Because many OSRI funded projects cross fiscal years, the committed values lead the expenditure values with the peak in commitments occurring in fiscal year 2001. The commitments ramp up during the first few years of the program with commitments exceeding deposits by the fourth year. This is possible because those commitments are spending down the original deposits.

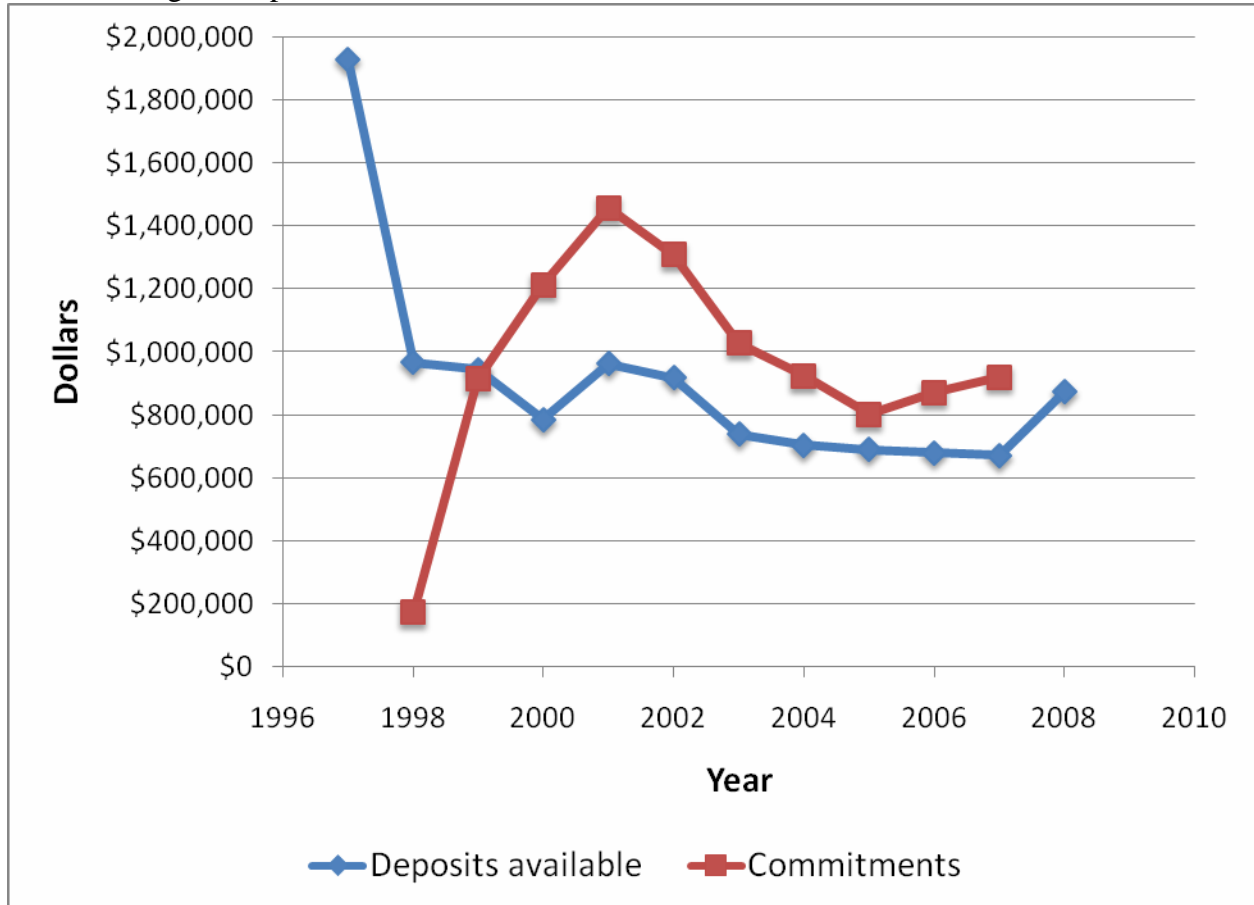


Figure 2, Shown are the deposit after PWSSC overhead is removed and the total program commitments in each year.

The breakdown of the commitments into the Understand, Respond, and Inform goals is provided in Figure 3. The commitment to Other (Research Program Manager, Scientific and Technical Committee, etc.) programs is also provided there. Funding committed to the Understand goal peaked in 2002 and then declined over a couple of years to the present level around \$500,000. The funding for the Respond goal peaked in 2001 at a little over \$400,000. The peak in spending came about because of two large projects, the inventory software \$180,000 and PWS ice radar \$100,000. After the peak funding declined to minimal levels for three years. During the past two years there has been a slight increase in funding for the Respond goal. Funding for the Inform goal and Other programs has remained fairly steady during the duration of funding. The Inform goal did have a minimum in 2004 when no fellowships were funded and has been slowly rising since then.

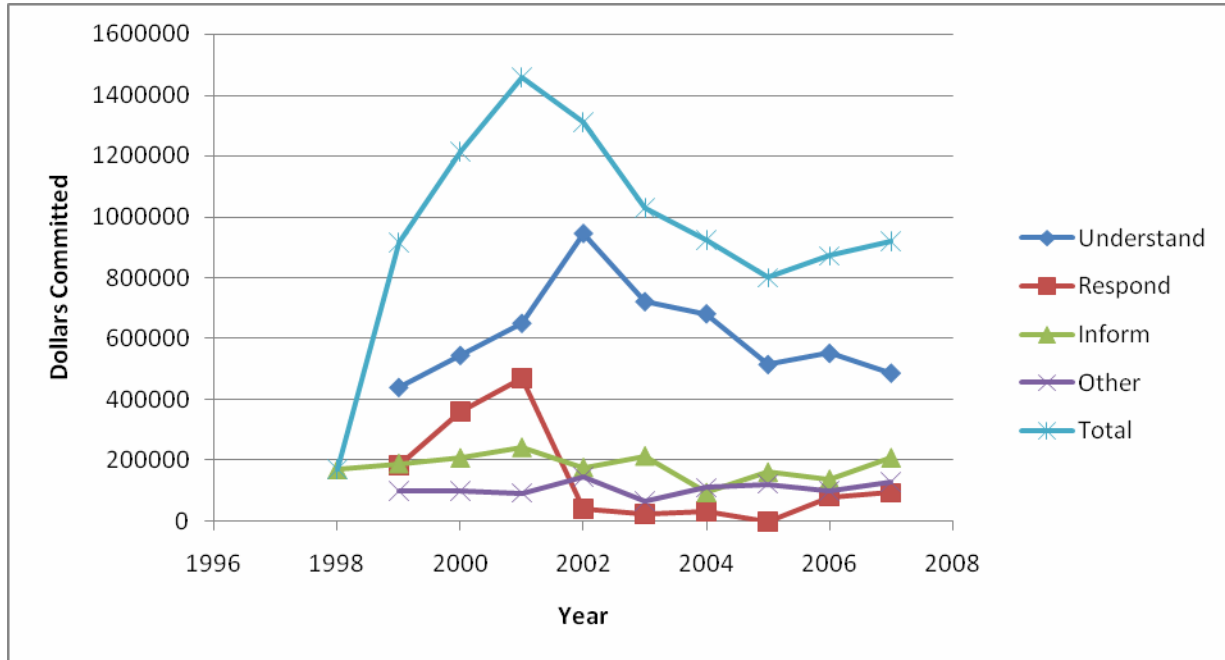


Figure 3. The dollars committed to each goal area.

Understand

The commitments to the Understand goal have been broken down into the physical sciences, biological sciences, and others, including data management and socio-economics. Funding for biological research peaked in 2001 and has since declined to about half of its peak value. Funding for physical science increased rapidly in 2001 with the deployment of meteorological stations and the addition of meteorological modeling to the Nowcast/Forecast program. Funding has declined to the present level of funding near \$300,000.

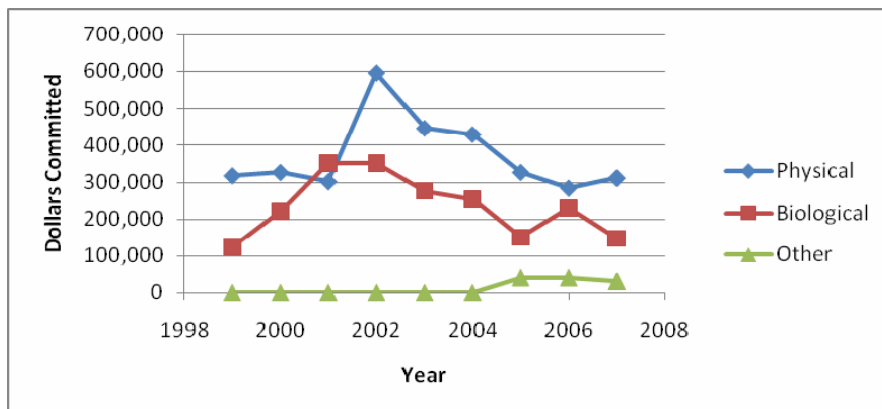


Figure 3. Funding commitments in the Understand goal by physical, biological, and other sciences.

Respond

The aren't any natural divisions of the Respond goal. Figure 4 provides the funding levels committed to the Respond goal by year. Funding decreased markedly in 2002 and only in the past two years has begun to increase again. Large projects in 2000 and 2001 include oil spill modeling by SINTEF, the ice radar system in Prince William Sound, and the purchase of inventory software for response organizations.

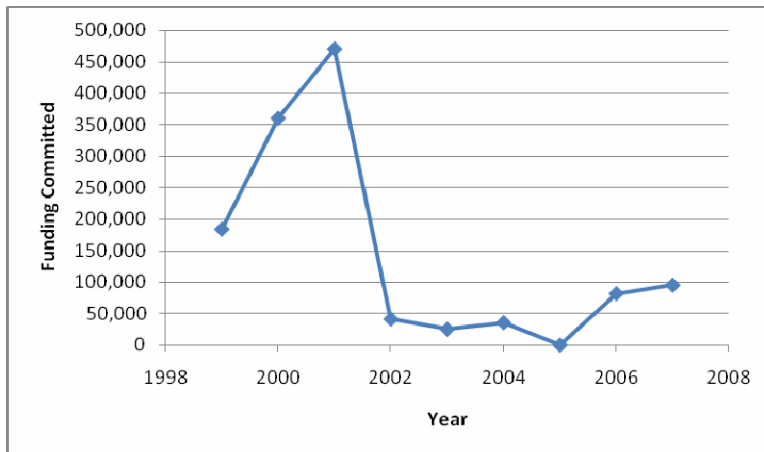


Figure 4. Funding for the Respond goal by year.

Inform

There are many components to the Inform goal funding, but the top three are fellowships, workshops and funding to the PWSSC education programs for school and community education (Figure 5). Overall funding has been fairly steady. There has been a large decrease in the funding of workshops. During the early years there were many specific topic workshops being funded (e.g. oil in ice), whereas more recently the funding has been contributions to broader topic workshops (e.g. the Forum on the Environment). A minimum in funding occurred in 2004 because no funding was provided for fellowships.

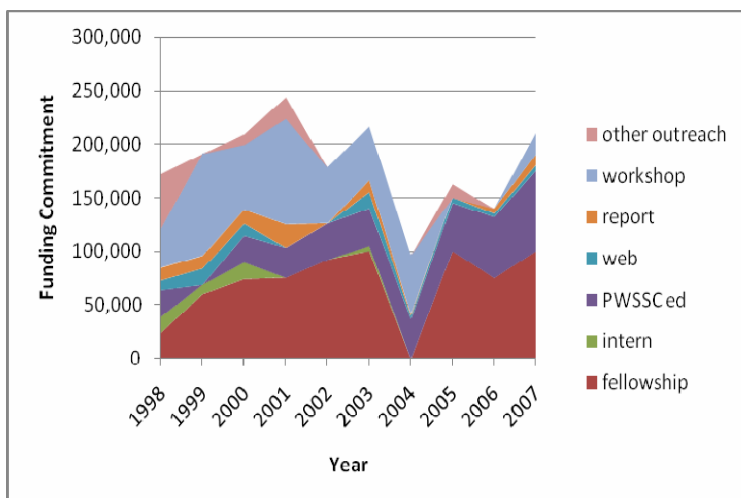


Figure 5. Funding committed to various components of the Inform goal are shown.

Other Programs

Other programs include the Research Program Manager (RPM) position, travel costs for the Scientific and Technical Committee, and the NRC review of OSRI programs. There have been five RPMs over the ten years so the amount committed to that program has fluctuated during gaps and overlaps between RPMs (Figure 6). The peak in funding for the program is associated with the cost of the NRC review. The website and annual reports do not contain the information needed to separate out the components of the Other programs funding. The STC travel is small in comparison to the Research Program Manager. The NRC review and Director and RPM searches are the only significant amounts of spending outside of the RPM position funding.

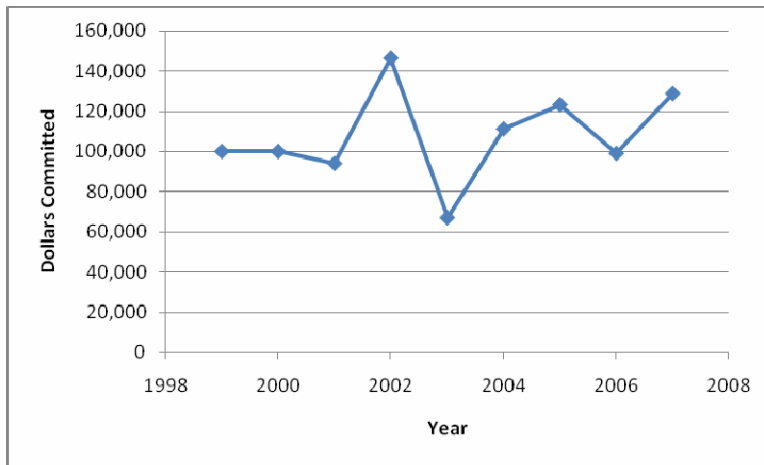


Figure 6. Dollars committed to other programs are shown.