



OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

United States Global Change Research Program

Availability for Public Comment on the Proposed Amendment to the Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5)

AGENCY: United States Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)

ACTION: Notice of availability for public comment.

SUMMARY: OSTP, on behalf of the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), announces the availability of a proposed amendment and clarification to the Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5) for public comment. The proposed amendment addresses the interpretation and Federal use of NCA5 results that depend materially on RCP8.5, SSP5-8.5, SRES A2, or analogous high-emissions pathways.

DATES: Comments must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time [INSERT DATE 15 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Interested individuals and organizations should submit comments electronically to federalregister@ostp.eop.gov and include “RFI Response: Proposed Amendment to NCA5” in the subject line of the email. Mailed paper submissions will not be accepted, and electronic submissions received after the deadline may not be taken into consideration.

Instructions: Response to this RFI is voluntary. Each individual or institution is requested to submit only one response. Electronic responses must be provided as attachments to an email rather than a link. Comments of seven pages or fewer (3,500 words) are requested; longer responses will not be considered. Responses should include the name of the person(s) or organization(s) filing the response. Responses containing references, studies, research, and other empirical data that are not widely published

should include copies of or electronic links to the referenced materials. Responses containing profanity, vulgarity, threats, or other inappropriate language or content will not be considered.

USGCRP will not respond to individual submissions. A response to this RFI will not be viewed as a binding commitment to develop or pursue the project or ideas discussed. This RFI is not accepting applications for financial assistance or financial incentives.

Comments submitted in response to this notice are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). No business proprietary information, copyrighted information, or personally identifiable information should be submitted in response to this RFI. Please be aware that comments submitted in response to this RFI, including the submitter's identification (as noted above), may be posted, without change, on OSTP's or another Federal website or otherwise released publicly.

After the public comment period closes, relevant Federal officials and participating agencies will consider the comments as appropriate. The proposed amendment may be revised before any final action.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Dr. Matthew Wielicki, Director, U.S. Global Change Research Program, Office of Science and Technology Policy; email: federalregister@ostp.eop.gov; tel: 202-456-4444.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The proposed amendment will be available at <https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2026-08/NCA5-Proposed-Amendment-August-2026.pdf>. The USGCRP is mandated under the Global Change Research Act of 1990 to conduct a quadrennial National Climate Assessment to evaluate scientific findings and uncertainties related to global change, analyze the effects of global change, and analyze current and projected trends in global change, both human-induced and natural.

NCA5 was released in November 2023. The proposed amendment would clarify the interpretation and Federal use of NCA5 statements, figures, tables, traceable accounts, regional summaries, public summaries, and derivative Federal communications that rely materially on RCP8.5, SSP5-8.5, SRES A2, or analogous high-emissions pathways. The proposed amendment would not withdraw NCA5 in its entirety or disturb its compilation of observations, regional information, adaptation considerations, or appropriately described scenario-based analyses.

The proposed amendment would clarify that results dependent on these pathways should not be presented as expected, baseline, business-as-usual, likely, central, or ordinary Federal planning futures unless the same result is independently reproduced under a presently plausible scenario and evaluated against observations. Such results may remain useful as sensitivity analyses, bounding exercises, or stress tests when the applicable scenario, material assumptions, and limitations are clearly disclosed where the projected impact is communicated.

USGCRP invites public comment on the scientific basis for the proposed amendment; NCA5 material that may require clarification; methods for labeling and communicating scenario-dependent results; the use of observational evidence and plausible comparator scenarios; and implications for Federal planning, analysis, and public communications. Commenters are encouraged to provide citations, data, or other supporting material.

Authority: 15 U.S.C. Chapter 56A

Dated: August 20, 2026.

Stacy Murphy,

Deputy Chief Operations Officer/Security Officer

