

# EXHIBIT 1

**From:** [Pei, Yi EOP/OMB](#)  
**To:** [Levenbach, Stuart EOP/OMB](#)  
**Cc:** [Flocken, Nicholas I. EOP/OMB](#); [Pasquantino, John C. EOP/OMB](#); [Shawcross, Paul J. EOP/OMB](#)  
**Subject:** [PAD review] Draft Director"s memo on NCAR RFI  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 19, 2025 11:46:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [Director Review Follow-Up Memo 2025 NCAR SSB coordinated version.docx](#)

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Stu,

Per your request, attached is a draft memo to the Director on the NCAR RFI. Please let us know if you need any additional information or have any edits.

Thanks,  
Yi

DRAFT//DELIBERATIVE//PRE-DECISIONAL

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OMB DIRECTOR

FROM: Stuart Levenbach, PAD for Natural Resources, Energy,  
and Science  
Yi Pei, Program Examiner, Science and Space Branch

**FY27 DIRECTOR'S REVIEW FOLLOW-UP – Accelerating Breakup of NCAR**

**FFRDC:** This memo outlines next steps for breaking up the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), an FFRDC funded primarily by the National Science Foundation and located in Boulder, Colorado.

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**Coordination**

Commerce Branch, Energy Branch

**Action Requested**

The purpose of this memo is to request your approval to direct NSF to accelerate restructuring of NCAR through an RFI process, consistent with your interest expressed following the Science and Space Branch Director's Review.

**Analysis and Policy Considerations**

At the Science and Space Branch Director's Review, you approved the RMO's recommendation to direct NSF to begin the process of breaking up NCAR. To implement this recommendation, NSF would simultaneously solicit input from the public and impacted federal agencies that utilize NCAR resources by issuing an RFI. Key components of the reform would:

- (1) spin off components of the FFRDC, including the Wyoming supercomputer and two aircraft, into independent entities and compete the management of those components separately or incorporate them into another existing entity.
- (2) rescope the research and modeling component of NCAR to focus on weather and not on climate modeling.

Breaking up NCAR will make it easier to re-compete the organization's management, introduces competition for managing NCAR's high-cost assets, and will make it easier to align NCAR's mission more closely with Administration priorities. The RMO's

recommendation was to include this direction in Passback to be implemented in FY 2027.

The Colorado delegation will object to the proposed restructuring. The Wyoming delegation may be supportive if a Wyoming university becomes a strong candidate for taking over management of the supercomputing facility.

**Recommendation**

The RMO recommends expediting this process by directing NSF to develop a plan to issue the RFI as quickly as possible, but no later than the end of FY 2026. NSF would be directed to brief the RMO on a detailed plan for execution within 60 days of receiving Passback. Science and Space Branch will coordinate with other OMB Branches to ensure that NOAA, DOE, and NASA equities are taken into consideration.

\_\_\_\_\_ Approve

\_\_\_\_\_ Disapprove

\_\_\_\_\_ Please provide additional information addressing the following issues:

**Attachments**

- NCAR FFRDC Exhibit 5 from NSF’s Director’s Review Book

Account/Program	2025 Enacted		2026			2027		2027 RMO Rec. Less:		
	Enacted	OBBBA	Budget	House Full	Senate Full	Agency Request	RMO Rec.	2025 Enacted	2026 Budget	2027 Agy. Req.
10. NCAR FFRDC	128	-	77	*	*	77	77	-51	0	0

\*The House and Senate bills did not specify a funding level for NCAR.

**The RMO recommendation directs NSF to take steps to break up the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) by issuing a Request for Information (RFI) that would propose rescoping to focus on weather and spinning off other elements.** NCAR is an NSF-sponsored Federally Funded Research and Development Center located in Colorado. NCAR operates several observational facilities, including two aircraft, produces weather and climate models for the broader research community to use, and manages an NSF-owned supercomputer in Wyoming. In prior Administrations, NCAR funded a significant amount of climate research. The nonprofit consortium that operates NCAR has done so since NCAR’s inception in 1960. NSF leadership have privately stated concerns that NCAR in its current form may be too large and complex to be nimble in responding to changing Agency and Administration priorities, and also that the complexity may make it difficult to find potential alternative management entities.