



Top NOAA scientist is fired after he asked new Trump-appointed staff to adhere to the agency's integrity policy that bans changing research data to fit political agenda

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October 28, 2020

The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's top scientist has been fired after he asked new Trump-appointed staff to acknowledge the agency's scientific integrity policy, according to a new report.

Craig McLean, the agency's acting chief scientist, was dismissed from his role last month shortly after sending an email to the new political appointees, including former White House adviser Erik Noble, the [New York Times](#) reported.

McLean had reportedly asked them to respect the NOAA's scientific integrity policy which prohibits fabrication, falsification and manipulation of research data driven to fit a political agenda.

The message however did not sit well with Noble, a former Trump campaign data analyst who was recently appointed NOAA chief of staff.

'Respectfully, by what authority are you sending this to me?' Noble replied, according to the report.

McLean responded that he was ensuring the agency's rules were being followed - which was his responsibility as the acting chief scientist for NOAA.

The next morning McLean received an email from Noble informing him: 'You no longer serve as the acting chief scientist for NOAA', the NYT said.

He told McLean the agency had already found his replacement while adding: 'Thank you for your service.'

The NOAA would later appoint research meteorologist Dr Ryan Maue, a climate change critic and former researcher for the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank.

A spokesperson for the NOAA told DailyMail.com McLean remains as director of the Oceanic and Atmospheric Research branch, which he ran while serving as acting chief.

Maue is a well-known climate change skeptic who in 2018 wrote an op-ed casting doubt on global warming predictions from NASA scientists 30 years prior.

He has also challenged connections between climate change and extreme weather events and most recently criticized Democrats for blaming the devastating California wildfires 'solely on climate change.'

Maue joined fellow Trump-pick David Legates, who assumed the new role of NOAA deputy assistant secretary last month.

Legates, a former geography professor at the University of Delaware, is also known to be a climate change contrarian, having questioned the notion that human activity is behind global warming.

The new political appointees has fueled speculation the Trump administration could change the direction of the NOAA, which has mostly remained independent, and could undermine scientific research.

Trump has clashed with climate experts over the last four years and has even imposed stricter controls on communications at the NOAA - which is within the Department of Commerce run by Wilbur Ross.

In 2019, the president was widely criticized by weather agencies after he tweeted false predictions about the path of a Hurricane Dorian.

Trump claimed Alabama would be among US states that would 'most likely be hit (much) harder than anticipated' by the hurricane, then one of the most powerful Atlantic storms on record.

Within minutes, the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Birmingham, Alabama, responded by saying that Alabama would not see any impacts from Dorian.

The controversy became known as 'Sharpiegate,' after Trump displayed a modified NOAA map, which had been drawn on to depict the storm threatening Alabama.

The New York Times reported last year that Ross threatened to fire top employees after the Birmingham office contradicted Trump and that then acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney had directed Ross to order the NOAA to disavow the NWS tweet.