M2 STRATEGY | Smartsheet Aligned

NOAA Fisheries Leverages Automation to Boost Government Efficiency

Optimizing Results for the Digital Era

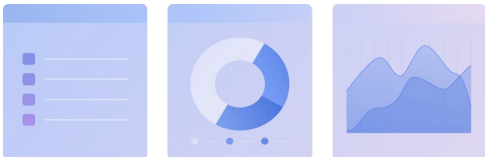
Faced with increasing operational demands and a rapidly evolving technological landscape, NOAA Fisheries, a federal agency under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, is transforming how it operates. The agency has embraced a forward-thinking approach to modernizing its operational and technological processes, focusing on solutions that drive efficiency, transparency, and collaboration. "With a workforce spread across five regional offices, six science centers, and more than 20 laboratories nationwide, our success depends on a well-coordinated and innovative approach to managing resources," explains Nancy Majower, Chief Information Officer (CIO) at NOAA Fisheries. "About five years ago, we realized we needed to pivot to keep up with emerging technologies and address technical debt if we wanted to continue fulfilling our mission."

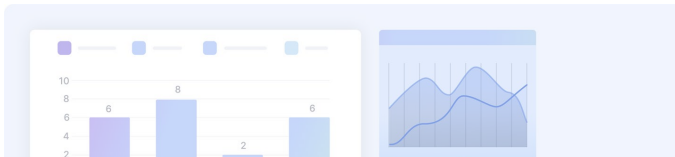
25%
reduction in decision-making time

This realization led the NOAA Fisheries Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) to launch a comprehensive digital modernization and automation initiative. The agency identified Smartsheet Gov, a FedRAMP-authorized platform, as the ideal tool to enable agile workflows, automate processes, digitize project management, and foster seamless collaboration.

"The Smartsheet interface is intuitive and designed for how people actually work, enabling rapid and widespread adoption across an organization," says Majower. "Projects and programs are easy to set up without requiring IT support, allowing solutions to be operational within hours." Smartsheet's flexibility also allows teams to develop and approve complex, mission-critical projects with ease.

To ensure smooth implementation, NOAA Fisheries partnered with M2 Strategy, a trusted technology and management consulting firm. M2 Strategy, a three-time Federal Smartsheet Government Partner of the Year, has developed, tested, and implemented more than 90 tools and apps powered by Smartsheet across seven federal agencies, including NOAA.





Innovative Tools Delivering Tangible Results

NOAA introduced Smartsheet through a pilot program, engaging 75 licensed users and testing a handful of use cases. Demand grew rapidly as employees recognized the platform's potential to streamline workflows, create dashboards, and automate processes. The OCIO supported this growth through training sessions and monthly meetings to share the best practices. Smartsheet solutions that were developed included dashboards providing leadership with real-time visibility into acquisitions, contracts, and budgets, offering a clear snapshot of spending and project progress to support seamless planning and collaboration. "You can't fix what you can't see, and this real-time access to data helps us quickly identify areas needing attention, making Smartsheet a true work management tool," says Douglas Perry, NOAA's Deputy CIO. This transparency enabled faster and informed decision-making. "We've cut decision-making time by 25% in our cloud programs, thanks to having all relevant information in one place, an essential improvement for managing our growing workload," adds Majower.

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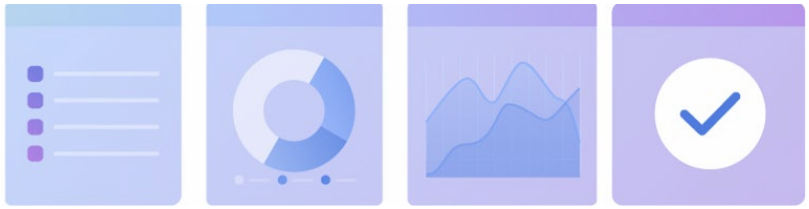
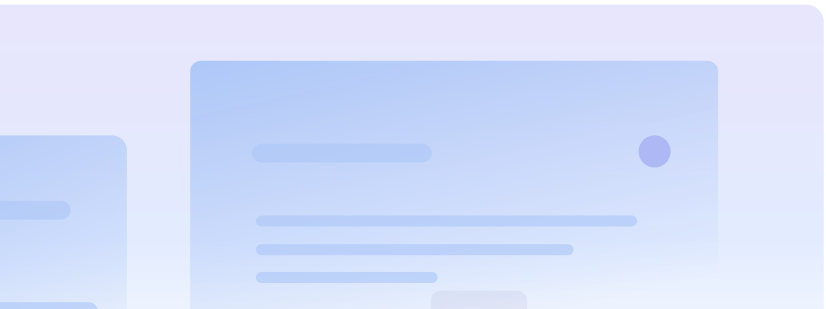
Nancy Majower
Chief Information Officer (CIO) at NOAA Fisheries

Today, there are over 1,300 licensed Smartsheet users at NOAA, leveraging the platform for a diverse array of use cases. These include automated workflows, interactive dashboards, and tools that drive process automation. In collaboration with M2 Strategy, the Fisheries OCIO developed and implemented a PMO platform powered by Smartsheet, streamlining collaboration, improving visibility, and enabling data-driven decision-making. This solution reduced IT and project management resource demands by 30%, allowing Fisheries to manage more work with the same resources. As a result, the organization increased project onboarding by 40%.

NOAA's Smartsheet capabilities now extend across nearly every functional area, including vessel management, recruiting, safety audits, compliance, and more—demonstrating its impact as a powerful work management solution.





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Driving Government Efficiency and Delivering Cost Savings

NOAA's implementation of Smartsheet and its partnership with M2 Strategy showcase how federal agencies can implement technology to enhance operational efficiency while reducing resource demands. By replacing manual processes with automated workflows, NOAA has not only improved transparency but also significantly reduced decision-making time. Beyond the numbers, NOAA's modernization efforts align with broader government efficiency goals: reducing redundancies, streamlining operations, and maximizing taxpayer value. By implementing scalable and user-friendly solutions like Smartsheet and partnering with a proven vendor like M2 Strategy, NOAA has established a model for cost-effective operations that minimize reliance on workforce expansion while meeting increasing demands.

"At its core, this transformation is about empowering our teams with the tools they need to succeed," says Majower. "By streamlining administrative tasks and reducing time and resource demands, we're creating increased capacity to tackle complex challenges and effectively advance our mission."

"Ultimately, the success of our digital transformation will be measured by how effectively our customers—the public and decision-makers—can access and utilize the information we provide, and the impact that information has on their lives, the economy, and the health of our planet," explains Perry.

With the substantial progress made to date and a clear vision for the future, NOAA is well-positioned to drive efficiencies and innovation in the digital era.

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