



## NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF OF MEXICO COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 8 JULY 2011

### GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

#### **Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative Awards \$1.5 Million in Grants**

The Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GRI) Research Board announced that it had awarded 17 grants totaling \$1.5 million to support observations and the sampling of physical distribution, dispersion, chemical evolution, biological degradation, and environmental effects associated with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill on the Gulf of Mexico. The funding will support work from July 1 to September 30, 2011. The GRI is also continuing to accept proposals under the RFP-I program until July 11th. The RFP-I program will allocate a minimum of \$37.5 million a year among four to eight Research Consortia. Additionally, \$7.5 million will be available under RFP-II, which will make smaller awards to individual or small teams of researchers. The application requirements for RFP-II will be announced at a later date. For more information about the GRI and the recent grant recipients, visit: [www.griresearchboard.org](http://www.griresearchboard.org).

#### **Gulf Alliance Create Primer on GOM Hypoxia**

Recent record flooding on the Mississippi River has devastated dozens of communities by destroying homes, businesses, and farmland. Scientists are now concerned that this additional water from acres of flooded, fertilized farm land will have negative impacts on the Gulf of Mexico. Water that runs off of farmlands contains excess nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) from a number of sources which contribute to the creation of the "Dead Zone." Dead Zone occurs in the Gulf when the oxygen in the water gets so low that fish and other marine life either swim away or die. Low oxygen, or hypoxia, happens as nutrient-rich freshwater from the Mississippi and the Atchafalaya rivers flow into the Gulf at the same time as the surface waters of the Gulf become very warm. The Gulf Dead Zone is the largest hypoxic area in the United States.

Healthy and productive Gulf fisheries support strong communities and a regional economy. That's why the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and its partners created [THE PRIMER ON GULF OF MEXICO HYPOXIA](#). The Alliance is committed to developing and implementing strategies that reduce nutrient inputs and hypoxia. The Primer was published in conjunction with Alliance partners including the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System, Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, and the Mississippi River Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force. The publication includes common questions and answers about hypoxia, such as what it is, what causes it, and what can be done about it. The Gulf of Mexico Alliance recognizes the economy and quality of life for citizens of the Gulf are linked to its ecological health. As the result of a shared vision for a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico region, the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas formalized the Alliance in 2004. A not-for-profit organization, the Alliance's mission is to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf region by encouraging collaboration among government agencies, businesses, educators and non-governmental organizations. Priority issues addressed by the Alliance include water quality, habitat conservation, ecosystem assessment, nutrient impacts, community resilience and environmental education. To learn more about the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, visit <http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/>. [http://gulfofmexicoalliance.org/pdfs/Primer\\_on\\_Hypoxia\\_in\\_the\\_Gulf\\_of\\_Mexico.pdf](http://gulfofmexicoalliance.org/pdfs/Primer_on_Hypoxia_in_the_Gulf_of_Mexico.pdf)

### **Installation of Sentinels along the Texas Coast**

In February 2011, the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science (CBI), Division of Nearshore Research (DNR), at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, through a partnership with the NOAA's Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services (CO-OPS) completed the installation of two (2) Sentinels of the Coast water level stations in Texas that will become part of the Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network (TCOON). The Sentinels, installed at Texas Point and the Galveston Entrance Channel North Jetty, were funded by the US Army Corps of Engineers due to the destruction of existing monitoring stations by Hurricane Ike in 2008. After the passage of Ike, the US Army Corps of Engineers initiated a requirement for the installation of stations that would withstand the forces of storm surge along the Texas coast, and the CO-OPS designed Sentinel was the answer. Through an active partnership between DNR, the US Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District, and CO-OPS, the Sentinel design was provided and approved for installation. CO-OPS provided site-specific Sentinel designs to DNR along with onsite technical representation during the construction and installation of the Texas Sentinels so that each structure met the CO-OPS standards. The DNR is in the process of upgrading all TCOON stations with instrumentation that meets CO-OPS National Water Level Observation Network (NWLON) operational standards. For this reason, CO-OPS provided instrumentation for the two new locations with the goal of identifying them as NWLON stations in the future. Both stations will be operational before the 2011 hurricane season. DNR currently provides operational support for all TCOON stations, and for all 10 NOAA Ocean Service, Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management NWLON stations in Texas (under contract with CO-OPS). For further information on the TCOON and CO-OPS water level observation networks, see the following links:

<http://lighthouse.tamucc.edu/TCOON/HomePage>

<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/index.shtml>

### **Update on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson, joined by U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and Council on Environmental Quality Chair Nancy Sutley, convened an official meeting of the [Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force](#) on Monday, 27 June 2011, in Galveston, TX. This was the [fifth public meeting](#) of the task force, which was created by President Obama by executive order to develop a comprehensive restoration strategy for the Gulf of Mexico. The meeting was followed by public listening sessions. Jackson, Salazar and Sutley spoke to attendees about the ongoing Administration-wide effort to address critical recovery issues in the Gulf. During the public meeting, the task force discussed the strategy under development to support the conservation and restoration of resilient and healthy ecosystems in the Gulf. They also discussed how to gauge the progress of restoration efforts, and addressed ongoing public engagement efforts and international coordination. Recent events such as hurricanes and the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill have added to the ecological decline of the area, making communities, infrastructure, ports and other resources vulnerable. Gulf-wide ecosystem restoration is imperative to address longstanding concerns and move toward a more resilient Gulf Coast ecosystem.

<http://www.epa.gov/gulfcasttaskforce>

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/0/cd5009c3e6e501a7852578bc0075eb43?OpenDocument>

### **Natural Resource Damage Assessment**

Efforts to assess impacts to and determine appropriate restoration for natural resources impacted by the Deepwater Horizon blowout in the Gulf of Mexico have been submitted by members of the public and are currently being evaluated by NOAA and other federal and state agencies. The projects can be viewed [here](#). These project ideas are being evaluated as part of early restoration planning and also will be considered when a final BP oil spill restoration plan is developed. The inclusion of a project on this list does not indicate that it has been fully reviewed for meeting [project selection criteria](#), nor is it guaranteed to be selected and approved. All projects approved by the trustees will be subject to public review and comment.

<http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration/give-us-your-ideas/view-submitted-projects/>

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2010-title15-vol3/xml/CFR-2010-title15-vol3-sec990-54.xml>

## **IOOS NEWS**

### **Alliance for Coastal Technologies and Ocean Networks Canada sign MOU**

The Alliance for Coastal Technologies (ACT) and Ocean Networks Canada (ONC) have entered into a memorandum of understanding to partner in environmental sensor evaluations, focused on supporting

technology transition into operations and providing independent performance information on diverse ocean observing instrumentation. ACT is a U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) supported effort dedicated to fostering the development and adoption of effective and reliable sensors and platforms for studying and monitoring coastal, ocean and freshwater environments. The three primary ACT services are: (1) a third-party testbed for evaluating existing and developing sensors and sensor platforms, (2) a forum for capacity and consensus building through technology specific workshops and training exercises, and (3) a comprehensive data and information clearinghouse on environmental technologies. ONC is a not-for-profit agency responsible for the management of the ONC Observatory on behalf of the University of Victoria.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### **AGU Action Alert: Earth and Space Sciences at Risk**

The American Geophysical Union needs your support. With looming budget cuts in the future (at least \$1.1 trillion over the next ten years) the AGU asks that you support their efforts to communicate to Congress and the Administration on the importance of science funding and the potential impact of these cuts to research programs. To find out what you can do as a scientist to assist the AGU in their efforts, please refer to [Action Alert: Earth and Space Sciences at Risk](http://www.agu.org/sci_pol/asla/alerts/2011-15.shtml). Your efforts can truly make a difference.  
[http://www.agu.org/sci\\_pol/asla/alerts/2011-15.shtml](http://www.agu.org/sci_pol/asla/alerts/2011-15.shtml)

### **NOAA Releases "State of the Climate Report"**

On June 28th, NOAA released its annual "[State of the Climate Report](http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/bams-state-of-the-climate/2010.php)," describing trends in more than 40 climate variables. In addition to concluding that the 2010 global average surface temperature was among the two warmest on record, the peer-reviewed report also found that: Arctic sea ice shrank to its 3rd smallest area on record (for the first time in modern history, both the Northwest Passage and the Northern Sea Route were open for navigation in the month of September); the average sea surface temperature for 2010 was the 3rd warmest on record; the ocean heat content in 2010 was among the highest values in the record; sea level continued to rise across the world's oceans on average; and the oceans were saltier than average in areas of high evaporation and fresher than average in areas of high precipitation, suggesting an intensification of the water cycle. The full report and a highlights document are available online:  
<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/bams-state-of-the-climate/2010.php>.

### **EPA/USACE Extend Comment Period for Draft CWA Guidance**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have extended the public comment period by 30 days for the draft guidance on [Identifying Waters Protected by the Clean Water Act \(CWA\)](http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/CWAwaters.cfm). In response to requests from state and local officials, as well as other stakeholders, EPA and the Corps will take additional comment until July 31st. For more information, visit:  
<http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/CWAwaters.cfm>.

### **NROC Launches Northeast Ocean Data Portal**

The Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) recently launched the Northeast Ocean Data Portal - [www.northeastoceandata.org](http://www.northeastoceandata.org). The online portal contains regional spatial data on human activities, natural resources, and jurisdictional information for New England's coasts and ocean waters, including interactive and static maps, atlases, and models for coastal and marine spatial planning. It also features the Northeast Ocean Data Viewer, a user-friendly interactive map that can be used to visualize data on human uses and environmental features, as well as political and administrative boundaries. The data is available to the public and can be viewed online and downloaded for use in GIS platforms. For more information about NROC and the new Northeast Ocean Data Portal, visit:  
<http://collaborate.csc.noaa.gov/nroc/default.aspx>.

### **NRDC Releases Annual Beach Water Quality Report**

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) [released](http://www.nrdc.org) its annual survey of water quality and public notification at U.S. beaches. The survey found that the number of beach closings and advisories in 2010 reached 24,091 - the second-highest level since NRDC began tracking these events 21 years ago and up 29 percent from 2009. "Testing the Waters" analyzes government data on beach water quality testing at more than 3,000 beaches nationwide, focusing primarily on bacteria-related beach water quality concerns. This report also highlights closures, advisories, and notices issued at beaches impacted by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. From the beginning of the spill until June 15, 2011 there have been a total of 9,474 days

of oil-related beach notices, advisories and closures at Gulf Coast beaches due to the spill. For more information about the survey, including links to individual state summaries, visit: <http://www.nrdc.org/water/oceans/ttw/titinx.asp>.

### **Western Governors, NOAA Announce Joint MOU to Improve Climate Services**

On June 30th, the Western Governors' Association (WGA) and NOAA [announced](#) a joint agreement for improving the development and delivery of climate science and services to Western states. Through a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU), WGA and NOAA have committed to improving the development, coordination and dissemination of climate information to support the long-range hazard planning priorities and resource management decisions of WGA members. The MOU identifies two priority areas: disaster risk reduction focusing on the impact of extreme events, such as droughts, floods, fires and tropical cyclones; and, improved science and climate information to support the management of coastal, estuarine, and marine resources critical to resilient coastal communities and ecosystems. For more information on WGA programs related to climate adaptation, water and drought, visit: [www.westgov.org](http://www.westgov.org).

### **Spray Glider Deployed in Gulf of Mexico**

A spray glider was deployed on 7 May in the Gulf of Mexico in collaboration with the Centro de Investigación Científica y de Educación Superior de Ensenada, Baja California ([CICESE](#)), a SCCOOS partner. Measured variables include pressure, temperature, salinity, velocity, colored dissolved organic matter (CDOM). The CDOM sensor is a fluorometer that has been shown to be sensitive to hydrocarbons in water, most recently during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. This is one of a planned fleet of three gliders anticipated to be deployed later this year.

### **FLCOOS Announces New Chair**

Mitchell A. Roffer (President, Roffer's Ocean Fishing Forecasting Service, Inc.), SECOORA member and current Secretary of our Executive Committee, has been named the Chair of the Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System (FLCOOS). This development will allow for increased coordination among SECOORA, FLCOOS, and GCOOS who have been working closely in recent months to ensure consistent messaging to stakeholders.

### **Senior NOAA Official To Engage Ocean Business Community On Marine Spatial Planning**

NOAA Policy Director, Sally Yozell, will participate in the first-ever [National Business Forum on Marine Spatial Planning](#) (MSP), on behalf of Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Undersecretary of Commerce and NOAA Administrator. The National Business Forum on MSP (13-14 July, Washington, D.C.) is for businesses that care about their future use of marine space and resources. The Forum is the only event that brings the ocean business community together to develop a strategy to address common concerns about MSP.

<http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/national-business-forum-on-marine-spatial-planning-in-u-s>

### **Save the Date: National Estuaries Day – September 24th**

National Estuaries Day, observed on the last Saturday of September each year, celebrates the vibrant and essential coastal areas where rivers meet the sea. Events will occur across the country. For more information on planned events in your local estuary, visit: <http://www.estuaries.org/national-estuaries-day.html>.

### **Save the Date: NRDA for the Gulf Symposium**

On 2-4 November 2011, the National Aquarium Conservation Center, Johns Hopkins University, and Mote Marine Laboratory will host a symposium on "NRDA for the Gulf: Improving Our Ability to Quantify Chronic Damages." Join scientists, researchers, NGOs, policy makers, and government leaders at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, where professionals will gather to hear the latest research outcomes and discuss approaches that will redefine standards for future NRDA practice and implementation. For details click [here](#).

[http://app.bronto.com/public/?q=preview\\_message&fn=Link&t=1&ssid=2525&id=i54q5mei775lgk60s4aojgxzkvtrd&id2=16kbzuc8wgwmavs801ea1owop5hk0&subscriber\\_id=awmxryazphmbxsdbgydpndhqdjlpbjm&messageversion\\_id=baqwlfgzufatmelqlaxwqmcjnxgobhm&delivery\\_id=amdxnkwqrqt](http://app.bronto.com/public/?q=preview_message&fn=Link&t=1&ssid=2525&id=i54q5mei775lgk60s4aojgxzkvtrd&id2=16kbzuc8wgwmavs801ea1owop5hk0&subscriber_id=awmxryazphmbxsdbgydpndhqdjlpbjm&messageversion_id=baqwlfgzufatmelqlaxwqmcjnxgobhm&delivery_id=amdxnkwqrqt)

## **COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS**

Meeting: "[National Business Forum of Marine Spatial Planning](#)" 13-14 July 2011, Monaco Hotel, Washington, DC.

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e3jb934c643c0a3d>

Meeting: “[First Community Environmental Summit](#)”, 18 July 2011, Good Deeds Center, Gulfport, MS. For more information contact LaKeshia Robertson at [robertson.lakeshia@epa.gov](mailto:robertson.lakeshia@epa.gov) or call 228-688-3726. <http://www.epa.gov/gmpo/pdf/savethedate-summit.pdf>

Meeting: “[Coastal Zone 2011](#)” 17-21 July 2011, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, IL.

US IOOS related sessions include:

19 July: 1:15-2:45 -Panel: US IOOS - New and Improved Tools for Coastal Managers' (\*Z. Willis, D. Dugan, J. Thomas, K. O'Brien, H. Kerkering )

20 July: 1:15-2:45 -'US IOOS: Tracking Water Quality' (\*Quintrell, Morrison, Newton, Porter, Read)

20 July: 2:45-5:00 pm: (Café) 'CMSP, IOOS, and Data: They Don't Have to be Four Letter Words' (\*Easter, Sheldon, Quintrell)

<http://www.doi.gov/initiatives/CZ11/index.htm>

Meeting: “[Joint Gulf of Mexico Alliance-Hypoxia Task Force Meeting](#)” 2-4 August 2011. The Westin Canal Place, New Orleans, LA.

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e3krs9k5bb6993f7&llr=thgzaleab>

Meeting: “[Oceans in Action](#)”, Imperial Palace Casino, Biloxi, MS, 22-23 August 2011. Learn how government agencies and universities are supporting both current and emerging oceanographic operations worldwide.

<http://www.mtsociety.org/conferences/techsurge/oceansinaction.aspx>

Meeting: “[OCEANS '11 MTS/IEEE](#)”, 19-22 September 2011, Hilton Waikoloa Village, Kona, HI.

<http://www.oceans11mtsieeeekona.org/>

Meeting: “[American Shore & Beach Preservation Association's Expanding Coastal Horizons](#)” 19-21 October 2011, New Orleans, LA.

[http://www.asbpa.org/conferences/conf\\_fall\\_11.htm](http://www.asbpa.org/conferences/conf_fall_11.htm)

Meeting: “[Using Modeling to Solve Engineering and Environmental Assessment Problems](#)”, 7-9 November, 2011, The Renaissance Resort, St. Augustine, FL

<http://www.oce.uri.edu/ecm12/>

Meeting “[State of the Gulf Summit](#)”, hosted by Harte Research Institute, 4-8 December 2011, Omni Galleria Hotel, Houston, TX.

<http://www.hareresearchinstitute.org/state-of-the-gulf-summit/>

Meeting: “[American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting 2011](#)”, 5-9 December 2011, San Francisco, CA. Abstract due date is 4 August 2011.

<http://www.agu.org/fallmeeting>

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### **CMP Grant Cycle 17: Final applications are due October 12, 2011**

In the past, the Council has used the §306/§306A [coastal management grant funds](#) to fund small-scale projects. While the Council will continue to fund individual small-scale projects up to \$100,000, the Council will also consider funding individual large-scale §306A projects up to \$400,000 for on-the-ground habitat protection/restoration and land acquisition projects. While the Council prefers to fund on-the-ground projects, it recognizes the need for applied research and technology development to help fulfill the goals of the CMP and other coastal programs ((e.g., Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GBEP), Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program (CBBEP), Coastal Erosion Planning and Protection Act Program (CEPRA) and Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP.)) Therefore, the Council is interested in funding specific types of research and technical projects, with a proactive outreach component, that have a tangible benefit to local, state and federal entities.

<http://www.glo.texas.gov/what-we-do/caring-for-the-coast/grants-funding/cmp/grant-cycle.html>

## EMPLOYMENT

### **Teledyne RDI Positions**

Teledyne RDI has a variety of immediate employment opportunities for enthusiastic, forward-thinking professionals. Employees enjoy a challenging and rewarding work environment, with significant opportunities for career advancement, as well as time to enjoy the legendary Southern California sunshine and laid back San Diego vibe. They are currently seeking Systems Engineers, Manufacturing, Quality Engineers, Software Engineers, and Transducer Engineer. For nearly 30 years, Teledyne RD Instruments has been the industry's leading manufacturer of acoustic Doppler products for a wide array of underwater applications. Their products are used around the globe to obtain critical current, wave and precision navigation data for scientists, engineers and water resources professionals. Visit [www.rdinstruments.com/careers](http://www.rdinstruments.com/careers) to learn more about these openings.



GCOOS is the Gulf of Mexico regional component of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). Our mission is to provide timely, reliable, and accurate information on the open and coastal ocean waters of the Gulf of Mexico to ensure a healthy, clean, productive ocean and resilient coastal zone. Your input, guidance, support, and membership are important to the development of the data, products and services that you need. Contact GCOOS Coordinator, Ann Jochens ([ajochens@tamu.edu](mailto:ajochens@tamu.edu)), to become a GCOOS member and for more information.

We welcome your feedback. If you have an item that you would like to share with others, please email that item to Laura Caldwell ([lcaldwell@geos.tamu.edu](mailto:lcaldwell@geos.tamu.edu)).