



NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF OF MEXICO COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 9 MARCH 2012

GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

Gulf of Mexico Alliance Mid-Year Meeting

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance held its Mid-Year Meeting on 15-16 February 2012 at the beautiful, Biloxi Visitor's Center on the waterfront in Biloxi, MS. Matthew K. Howard, GCOOS-RA Data Management and Communications (DMAC) Coordinator, represented the GCOOS-RA and participated in the deliberations of the Water Quality and Nutrient Priority Issue Teams (PITs). Dr. Alyssa Dausman (USGS-Stennis and member of the GCOOS Membership Committee) gave an update on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force. The final restoration strategy report is available [here](#). In the joint Water Quality-Nutrient PIT session, recent developments on a "Gulf-wide Monitoring Network" were presented by members of the Water Quality PIT. Particularly interesting were the results of round-robin laboratory trials for nutrients which demonstrated the importance of sample collection technique and preservation on variability of laboratory results. Ann Jochens, Executive Director, serves on the Monitoring Working Group of the PIT and is involved in the development of the network plans. In related news, the Water Quality PIT contracted University of Miami programmers last year to develop an online "Catalog of Water Quality Monitoring Programs". This catalog will serve as the basis for much of the planning associated with the monitoring network. Once developed, this catalog will be hosted and maintained by GCOOS-RA. Howard also participated in the GOMA Data Management Committee meeting. The Committee is comprised of representatives from each of the GOMA Priority Issue Teams. Howard represents the Water Quality PIT along with Dr. Steve Wolfe. Ms. Melanie Morris and Jim Gibeaut, who served as Co-Chairs for three years, were tentatively succeeded by Carol Richards (LA) and Dave Reed (FL).

Long-term Observing Assets Removed from Florida Keys

The SEAKEYS network along the 220 mile Florida Keys has been operational for over 20 years and has provided a long time series of oceanographic and meteorological observations. These observations provided the framework for long-term monitoring, research, management, and recreational use along the 220 mile Florida coral reef tract and in Florida Bay. Over the last several years, dwindling availability of funding to operate and maintain the network has become a significant challenge. Compounding the problem of limited funding, the instruments are primarily on a series of stationary platforms (lighthouses, towers), the structural integrity of which has now becoming questionable due to age. To address the future of SEAKEYS and its infrastructure and funding, the Florida Institute of Oceanography (FIO) held a meeting at the Keys Marine Lab in November 2011. The user community was invited to the November meeting and included representatives from many areas of NOAA (Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary; National Weather Service; Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory; Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory), the National Park Service, the Ocean Reef and Gun Club, and FIO. The NOAA/National Data Buoy Center, Coast Guard, FL Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, and representatives from Audubon, the dive and fishing communities, and staff from a local legislative office were unable to attend, but some sent letters of support. Following the meeting other funding sources were sought but were not successfully identified. At the end of 2011, due to a lack of financial support, FIO made the difficult decision to terminate the SEAKEYS program. FIO is in the process of withdrawing all FIO assets from the water. NOAA/AOML, with assistance from NOAA/FKNMS, has agreed to take over maintenance of one station (FIO is loaning an instrument to NOAA/AOML for this purpose) and a limited subset of meteorological sensors will be visited every two years by NOAA/NDBC, with no SEAKEYS

maintenance support between visits.

GCOOS-RA Active on the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative's Data Management Team

Matt Howard attended a half-day meeting with the data management group of the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GoMRI) on 16 February. Participants discussed the preparation of the GoMRI Data Management Plan for the April meeting of the data managers and PIs of the 8 recently awarded Research Consortium grants. GCOOS-RA has a sub-contract to provide cooperative data services to GoMRI and Howard has an additional sub-contract for a portion of his time.

GCOOS-RA well represented at the TOS/AGU/ASLO Ocean Sciences 2012 in Salt Lake City, Utah

Dr. Matthew K. Howard (GCOOS-RA) and Dr. Cyndy Chandler (WHOI) co-chaired the best poster session held at Ocean Sciences 2012 titled "Data Systems that Support the US National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Coasts, and Great Lakes". Howard presented "The Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS): A Data Stewardship cooperative supporting a healthy Gulf" by M.K. Howard, A.E. Jochens, S. Kobara, F.C. Gayanilo, S.K. Baum, and C. Simoniello. The poster was a showcase of the multitude of data, products, and services hosted by the GCOOS-RA websites. One of the session presenters was Mr. Shawn Smith, Director of the R/V Data and FSU Winds Center who maintains oceanographic and atmospheric observations at an Air Force tower off of the Florida panhandle. They are one of the newest data providers to GCOOS-RA. AOS also presented in this session.

Dr. Chris Simoniello, GCOOS-RA Education and Outreach Coordinator, gave a presentation on "AUTONOMOUS UNDERWATER VEHICLES IN THE GCOOS-RA FOOTPRINT: A HOOK FOR TEACHING HOW DATA ARE USED IN THE REAL WORLD". She showcased the work of the GCOOS-RA and our data partners to address the deficiency of students in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) disciplines. She demonstrated lessons using data that are being developed to improve the STEM skills that students will need to understand and appreciate the science and technology applications that are relevant to their everyday lives. The presentation was co-authored by C. Simoniello, C. Lembke, G.J. Kirkpatrick, R.H. Weisberg, B.A. Kirkpatrick, A.E. Jochens, M.K. Howard, S. Walker, C. Szczechowski, J. Cannizzaro, and D. English.

Dr. Ann Jochens, GCOOS-RA Executive Director, presented a talk at Session: 010: Ocean Observing Systems -- Regional and Global on "PARTNERING TO BUILD THE GULF OF MEXICO COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM." She described how the GCOOS is being built through a partnership of many entities—federal, state, and local governments, academics, NGOs, and private industry. Jochens also presented an overview on the "Status and future of Ocean Observing in the Gulf: GCOOS" at the 2012 Ocean Sciences Meeting Town Hall: Developing Strategies for Long-Term Research in the Gulf of Mexico.

GCOOS participates in Ocean Policy & Management meeting

Dr. Howard attended the 2012 Ocean Sciences workshop on "Ocean Policy & Management: Governing Across Scales Innovative Stewardship of Earth Systems Creating a Global Large Marine Ecosystems Knowledge Network". (see <http://www.lmenet.net>) on 19 February. This meeting was about defining new partnerships and creating new opportunities with a focus on emerging regional ocean governance partnerships. Howard shared his experience with the personal networking that took place and subsequent success of the NOAA-sponsored work involving the principal Gulf of Mexico sub-regional data providers. A particularly fascinating aspect of the workshop was the application of informatics and relationship mapping presented by Dr. Peter Fox of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. An interesting side-bar conversation was had with Suzanne Lawrence the "Network" organizer. GCOOS-RA is looking forward to further interactions with this interesting group.

GOMURC's message to Congress: Support the RESTORE bill

The Gulf of Mexico University Research Collaborative (GOMURC) expresses support for passage of the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourism Opportunities and Revived Economy (RESTORE) of the Gulf Coast Act of 2011 (S1400, HR3096). They believe the Act needs to pass, as approved by Senate and House Committees, as soon as possible. This directs Clean Water Act penalties to the people and ecosystems impacted by the spill. GOMURC represents the majority of university marine science programs in the Gulf region, including sixty-two institutions and over a hundred programs that dedicated resources in the BP spill response effort. These capabilities were critical in the response effort and are now actively

engaged in restoration science and preparing for future events. As approved by both the House and Senate committees, 80% of the Clean Water Act penalty funds will be dedicated to restoring Gulf businesses, jobs, and environmental resources, and establish required monitoring and research programs that enable commerce, conservation, and preparation for future natural or human-induced events. These activities must engage universities in the Gulf states, including students, and offer opportunities for building university collaborations and leveraging of assets.

Harte Research Institute hosts Gulf-wide Ecosystem Services Workshop

HRI's Socio-Economics Group, in collaboration with NOAA and the Northern Gulf Institute, hosted a workshop this winter to identify appropriate mechanisms for incorporating ecosystem services into restoration decisions. Participants in the workshop, held 24-26 January 24-26 at HRI, included 26 scientists specializing in ecology, geology, biology, oceanography and economics, as well as representatives from federal and state agencies, NGOs, the private sector and academic institutions. This workshop was a follow-up to the first Gulf-wide Ecosystem Services (ES) Workshop held in Mississippi in 2010, during which attendees came to a consensus on approaches, definition and identification of ES in the Gulf of Mexico. For more information on the workshop please see:

<http://harteresearchinstitute.org/newsletter/winter2012/article3.html>

8th Annual Texas Bays and Estuaries Meeting to be held in Port Aransas, TX

The 8th Annual Texas Bays and Estuaries Meeting will be held at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas, TX, from 11-12 April 2012. The meeting will focus on work being done in the bays, estuaries and near-shore Gulf of Mexico. Both natural and social science research is welcome. Submissions are welcome on any topic concerning the coastal zone. Abstracts must be received by 26 March 2012. For more information, contact tbem@utlists.utexas.edu.

<https://webspaces.utexas.edu/kmm3495/tbem/>

EMB Tools Webinar: Water Quality, Coastal Hazards, Climate Change (3/14)

The [Ecosystem-Based Management \(EBM\) Tools Network](#) will host a presentation by Amy Anderson of Placeways and Steven Mikulencak of the Texas Coastal Watershed Program on the Water Quality, Coastal Hazards, Climate Change, and Critical Land Analysis for the Houston/Galveston Region. The presentation, which will be held on 14 March at 2:00pm EST/11:00am PST, will highlight the project and coastal resilience workshop. Learn more and register online at:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/86495804>

IOOS/NATIONAL NEWS

Annual Regional IOOS Spring Meeting

The Annual Regional IOOS Spring meeting was held 28 February -1 March 2012 in the Washington, DC area. The meeting included Regional Association (RA) reviews, a report from the IOOS Office on major accomplishments and issues, build out plan updates, and discussion of the goals for the coming year. The NFRA Spring Board Meeting was held 29 February, and on 1 March NFRA gave a presentation on the Regional Build-Out Synthesis Plan at the meeting of the Interagency Ocean Observing Committee. Ann Jochens attended these meetings for the GCOOS-RA.

Extension of public comment period of draft NOP Implementation Plan

The National Ocean Council is extending the public comment period on the draft [National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan](#) through March 28, 2012. This extension will provide stakeholders, users, and the public additional time to review the draft Implementation Plan and provide their input to inform development of the final Implementation Plan.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans/implementationplan>

Workshop Identifies Improvements for National Tagging Capacity in the Context of Ocean Observations

On 15-16 March, the [U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System \(IOOS\)](#) program will convene a workshop in Washington, D.C., with about two dozen leading [marine animal tagging scientists](#) to plan the next steps of

a national strategy for improving access to and use of data from animal tags. This follows the first ever gathering of this kind in 2011, where participants identified priorities for next steps and IOOS announced that it would begin serving biological data. Participants will evaluate progress on work launched at the first meeting and plan new efforts based on 2011 recommendations. Tagging of marine animals – such as tuna, sharks, sea turtles, seals and salmon – opens a door to a new world of understanding coastal and marine animals and the ecosystems where they live. Tags tell scientists where animals travel and about their environment, such as water temperature, providing clues about their behavior. These series of unprecedented discussions are identifying and implementing advances for sharing and accessing data, as well as integrating these data with other ocean observations.

http://www.ioos.gov/observing/animal_telemetry/welcome.html

Risk and Response: Sea Level Rise Summit, Future of FL and the Coast

The Sea Level Rise Summit - coordinated by the Florida Center for Environmental Studies at Florida Atlantic University - will be held 21-22 June 2012, at the Marriott Boca Town Center in Boca Raton, Florida. The purpose of this summit is to: highlight the interrelationships between sea level rise, limestone geology, and water management in Florida; share the ongoing responses and adaptation planning of agencies, institutions, and civic society to sea level rise; and compare the Florida situation and response with other vulnerable localities in the U.S. and worldwide. For more information, including a summit agenda and registration information, visit: <http://www.ces.fau.edu/SLR2012>.

COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

March

Meeting: "GCOOS Annual Parties Meeting and Board of Directors Meeting" 14-15 March 2012. Institute for Marine Mammal Studies, Gulfport, MS. More details will be posted soon.

Conference: "[Oceanology International](http://www.oceanologyinternational.com/)" 13-15 March 2012, London, England. Oceanology International is the global forum where industry, academia and government share knowledge and connect with the marine technology and ocean science community, improving their strategies for measuring, exploiting, protecting and operating in the world's oceans.

<http://www.oceanologyinternational.com/>

April

Meeting: "8th Annual Texas Bays and Estuaries Meeting", 11-12 April 2012, Port Aransas, TX.

<https://webspace.utexas.edu/kmm3495/tbem/>

Meeting: "[2012 Defense Security + Sensing](http://spie.org/x6765.xml)" 23-27 April 2012, Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD. This meeting is sponsored by SPIE, the International Society for Optics and Photonics.

<http://spie.org/x6765.xml>

Conference: "[Inaugural AGU Science Policy Conference](http://sites.agu.org/spconference/)" 30 April-3 May 2012, Ronald Regan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, DC.

<http://sites.agu.org/spconference/>

Summit: "[Coastal Cities Summit](http://www.coastalcities-ioi.org/)", 30 April – 3 May, St. Petersburg, FL.

<http://www.coastalcities-ioi.org/>

May

Meeting "[National Water Quality Monitoring Council's 8th National Monitoring Conference – Water: One Resource – Shared Effort – Common Future](http://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2012/index.html)" 30 April – 4 May 2012, Portland, OR.

<http://acwi.gov/monitoring/conference/2012/index.html>

Meeting: "[SECOORA Annual Meeting](http://secoora.org/news/2012annualmeeting)", 7-9 May 2012, Miami, FL.

<http://secoora.org/news/2012annualmeeting>

Meeting: "[From Stem to Stern](#)", 15-17 May 2012, Clearwater Beach Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater, FL.

<http://www.flseagrant.org/boating/StemtoStern/>

June

Meeting: "[The Coastal Society's 23rd International Conference](http://thecoastalsociety.org/conference/tcs23/index.html)", 3-6 June 2012, Hyatt Regency, Miami, FL.
<http://thecoastalsociety.org/conference/tcs23/index.html>

Meeting: "[Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2012](http://www.nmsfocean.org)" 5-8 June, Washington, DC
<http://www.nmsfocean.org>

Meeting: "[Risk and Response: Sea Level Rise Summit, the Future of Florida and the Coast](http://www.ces.fau.edu/SLR2012)" 21-22 June 2012, Marriott Boca Town Center, Boca Raton, FL.
<http://www.ces.fau.edu/SLR2012>

Conference: "[National Marine Educators Conference](http://www.coseealaska.net/nmeaconference2012/)" Co-Hosted by AOOS, 24-28 June 2012, University of Alaska Anchorage Campus, Anchorage, AK.
<http://www.coseealaska.net/nmeaconference2012/>

July

Meeting: "2012 ASLO Summer Meeting" 8-13 July 2012, Lake Biwa, Otsu, Japan.

Workshop: "[EARTH Workshop](http://www.mbari.org/earth/)" University of North Carolina, Wilmington, North Carolina.
<http://www.mbari.org/earth/>

Symposium: "[12th International Coral Reef Symposium](http://www.icrs2012.com)", 9-12 July 2012, Cairns, Australia.
<http://www.icrs2012.com>

September

Meeting: "GCOOS-RA Board of Directors Meeting" 26-27 September 2012, Corpus Christi, TX.

October

Meeting: "[Restore America's Estuaries 6th National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration](http://www.estuaries.org/conference/)" 20-24 October 2012, Tampa, FL.
<http://www.estuaries.org/conference/>

Meeting: "[OCEANS '12 MTS/IEEE](http://www.oceans12mtsieeehamptonroads.org/)" 15-19 October 2012, Hampton Roads, VA.
<http://www.oceans12mtsieeehamptonroads.org/>

EMPLOYMENT

TNC Integrated Ocean Management Strategy Lead

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) seeks an experienced marine conservation practitioner and strategic thinker to lead and manage its Global Integrated Ocean Management Strategy, a major element of TNC's Global Marine Program. The Strategy Leader is part of the Global Marine Team and is responsible for advancing Integrated Ocean Management to achieve major global ocean conservation goals. S/he provides value-added leadership of Global Activities and support to TNC priority geographies including the US, Caribbean, Coral Triangle, Micronesia, and the Gulf of California. The Strategy Lead is accountable for raising public and private funds to support the strategy and its activities, and serves as a principal spokesperson for Integrated Ocean Management spokesperson to government agencies, foundations, academia and partner conservation organizations. The full job description is available [online](#). The deadline to apply is 30 March 2012.



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 Executive Director, Ann Jochens (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).