



NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF OF MEXICO COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 23 MARCH 2012

GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

Matthew Howard to serve on the BOA of the IOOS Quality Assurance of Real-Time Ocean Data Effort

Dr. Matthew Howard, lead of the GCOOS-RA DMAC activity, was selected to be a member of the Board of Advisors for the IOOS Quality Assurance of Real-Time Ocean Data (QARTOD) effort. The Board of Advisors is composed of technical experts in ocean observing and data management who will assist the Project Manager, Dr. Richard Crout (National Data Buoy Center), and the Project Coordinator, Mr. Ray Toll (SAIC), to determine how we will implement quality control within the IOOS. The Board of Advisors will set the priorities for the annual work effort, guide the overall progress, provide recommendations for approval of QA/QC manuals, and identify appropriate subject matter experts for working groups and committees. Also selected from the Regional Associations were Ms. Janet Fredericks (WHOI) and Ms. Julie Thomas (SIO).

Annual Meeting of the Parties and Board of Directors Meeting held 14-15 March 2012

The Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Gulfport, MS, was the site of the 7th Annual Meeting of the Parties to the GCOOS Regional Association Memorandum of Agreement. The Parties Meeting was held in conjunction with the 14th Meeting of the GCOOS-RA Board of Directors. Highlights of the meeting included active engagement of the Board with regional federal partners from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to identify and pursue common activities. Re-structuring of the GCOOS-RA organization was another major consideration. Activities include GCOOS incorporation into a non-profit organization, for which the certification of incorporation was filed in Texas on 24 February 2012. The Board approved the bylaws at the meeting. There are a number of additional steps necessary before the corporation will be fully operational, and these will be pursued over the coming months and year. Changes to the councils, committees, and task teams also were considered with the goal of streamlining the structure to tailor it to the challenges being faced by GCOOS today. Next steps for development of the GCOOS build-out were discussed. The meeting report is in preparation and will be posted to the GCOOS web site sometime in April.

The GCOOS-RA Board of Directors and Staff extend our thanks to Dr. Solangi and the staff of the IMMS for hosting our meeting at the exciting, educational and uplifting venue that the IMMS provides. GCOOS Board member, Dr. Sharon Walker, who is the Director of Education and Outreach Programs at the Institute, and Ms. Samia Ahmad, who is the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the Institute, gave the attendees a warm welcome. Dr. Moby Solangi, President and Executive Director of the Institute, hosted a delicious evening meal at the educational museum of the IMMS Center for Marine Education and Research. The museum houses extensive information on the work of the IMMS, both in education and in marine mammal and sea turtle care provided through the strandings and rescue programs of the Institute (<http://www.imms.org/index.php>). Thank you, IMMS, for having us.

Preparations Underway for the 3rd GCOOS-GOMA HABIOS Workshop

The 3rd GCOOS-GOMA HABIOS Workshop—HABIOS Workshop: Now, Next, and the Future—is being held 26-28 March 2012 in Pensacola, FL. The goal is to develop the implementation plan for a user-needs-based plan for a Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Integrated Observing System for the Gulf of Mexico that has three phases (and related product suites to service the user needs):

- HABIOS-NOW, based on extant knowledge, tools, methodologies, and models;

- HABIOS-NEXT, based on current, on-going, soon-to-be-completed research and technology development; and
- HABIOS-FUTURE, based on knowledge and technology still to be defined and performed.

The Steering Team has designed a working meeting to focus on enhancing HABIOS-NOW, detailing the steps toward a HABIOS-NEXT, and outlining a way forward for HABIOS-FUTURE. Thanks are extended to the hard working Steering Team: Co-chairs Barb Kirkpatrick (GCOOS) and Steve Wolfe (GOMA), members Carol Dorsey, Ann Jochens, and Steve Lohrenz, and facilitator Mel Briscoe. The team looks forward to the ideas and work of the 30+ attendees from state and federal regulatory agencies and the research community. In addition, anyone with an interest in the Harmful Algal Bloom Integrated Observing System and its implementation plan is welcome to provide comments on the present and/or next draft document that will result (contact Ann Jochens to be added to the list, ajochens@tamu.edu).

Webinar Presentation on State of Sea Level Rise Science by Virginia Burkett on 11 April 2012

In preparation for the third annual meeting of the Gulf of Mexico Climate Community of Practice, a webinar featuring Dr. Virginia Burkett, Chief Scientist for Climate and Land Use Change at the U.S. Geological Survey, will be held 11 April 2012. Dr. Burkett has published extensively on the topics of global change and low lying coastal zones and served as a lead author of the United Nation's Intergovernmental panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Third and Fourth Assessment Reports (2001 and 2007). Interested parties can register at the following url: <https://masgc.webex.com/masgc/j.php?ED=13174373&UID=39210648&PW=NY2M1MDFmNzQz&RT=MiM3>. There is no fee to register for this event.

Louisiana's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast: Final Master Plan Released

On 21 March 2012, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) of Louisiana unanimously approved the 2012 Coastal Master Plan for submission to the Louisiana Legislature. A PDF copy of the plan and access to a list and map of projects selected for inclusion in the 2012 plan are available through <http://www.coastalmasterplan.louisiana.gov/2012-master-plan/final-master-plan/>.

National Academy of Science Reviews EPA's Economic Analysis of Florida Water Quality Standards

The National Academies Press released the prepublication, "Review of the EPA's Economic Analysis of Final Water Quality Standards for Lakes and Flowing Waters in Florida." It includes coastal waters. Quoting the Description: "The Environmental Protection Agency's estimate of the costs associated with implementing numeric nutrient criteria in Florida's waterways was significantly lower than many stakeholders expected. This discrepancy was due, in part, to the fact that the Environmental Protection Agency's analysis considered only the incremental cost of reducing nutrients in waters it considered "newly impaired" as a result of the new criteria-not the total cost of improving water quality in Florida. The incremental approach is appropriate for this type of assessment, but the Environmental Protection Agency's cost analysis would have been more accurate if it better described the differences between the new numeric criteria rule and the narrative rule it would replace, and how the differences affect the costs of implementing nutrient reductions over time, instead of at a fixed time point. Such an analysis would have more accurately described which pollutant sources, for example municipal wastewater treatment plants or agricultural operations, would bear the costs over time under the different rules and would have better illuminated the uncertainties in making such cost estimates." The Report in Brief is available at <http://dels.nas.edu/Materials/Report-In-Brief/4305-EPA-Florida-Water> and information and a pdf download of the full report are available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13376.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Senate Letter to Support IOOS: March 23rd Deadline

You may wish to urge your senators to sign on to the Dear Colleague Letter being sponsored by U.S. Senator Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine) and U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-Rhode Island) to express support for the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). Deadline: **March 23rd 10am**. The letter requests sustained funding in the NOAA budget line for the IOOS regional observing systems in FY 2013. Because this national network of regional systems provides core data and information to enhance coastal economies and maritime safety throughout the country, supporters will urge the subcommittee to ensure that at least \$17.5 million be allocated to the base support for regional IOOS in FY 2013 to achieve level funding from the previous fiscal year. For more information, your senators should contact Meredith Mendelson, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Subcommittee on Oceans,

Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard, Meredith_Mendelson@commerce.senate.gov, (202)224-6965 (office), (202)664-0401 (mobile).

House Letter Supports IOOS (From NFRA March 2012 Newsletter)

Rep Capps (D-CA) and Rep Pingree (D-ME) recently co-sponsored a Dear Colleague Letter in the House for IOOS. Over 30 House members signed, up from 22 last year. This is a success and NFRA appreciates the support of members who reached out to their delegations! Special thanks to Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), Brad Miller (D-NC), and Mike McIntyre (D-NC) from the SECOORA region for signing on to this letter.

Senate Approves Transportation Bill Including RESTORE Act-NEO-LWCF

On 14 March, the Senate voted 74-22 to approve the "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act" (MAP-21, S. 1813), which reauthorizes Federal-aid highway and highway safety construction programs. The bill also includes the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States (RESTORE) Act, which would dedicate a portion of the Clean Water Act fines paid in connection with the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill to establish a Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (and other purposes). The interest from those fines are to be used to create a [National Endowment for the Ocean](#), which would provide long-term, mandatory grant funding for ocean and coastal research and conservation projects. The bill also reauthorizes and provides \$1.4 billion over the next two years to fund the [Land and Water Conservation Fund](#), which provides funding for conservation through land acquisition and conservation easements. The House of Representatives have yet to pass their version of a transportation bill.

<http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/marine-spatial-planning/national-endowmentfor-the.html>

<http://lwcfccoalition.org/>

ICOOS Reauthorization Working Group

A Working Group for reauthorization of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System (ICOOS) Act has been established. This group will work with Jenifer Rhoades of the IOOS Office and others to examine the existing ICOOS Act, discuss possible changes, and present those changes to the RAs and others for discussion. Ann Jochens, GCOOS Executive Director, will serve on this working group.

Regional Associations Visit Congressional Members (From NFRA March 2012 Newsletter)

NFRA Board members and regional representations conducted a series of meetings on the Hill on March 1st, visiting many members of Congress to discuss the importance of coastal and ocean observing to constituents and to highlight the impacts of funding cuts.

Want to be Informed About Legislative News as it Happens?

The GCOOS-RA Office occasionally receives requests for people to contact their legislators. These are usually short fused for action. If you would like to be informed about these requests when they are made, please let Ann Jochens (ajochens@tamu.edu) know and she will add you to her forwarding list.

IOOS/NATIONAL NEWS

Consortium for Ocean Public Policy Forum

This year's public policy forum focused on the Science of Ocean, Coastal and Great Lakes Restoration. Representative Castor (FL-11) discussed the importance of GCOOS and ocean observing in restoring the Gulf of Mexico after the oil spill. Nancy Rabalais, Director of LUMCON and GCOOS Board member, chaired a session on the role of science in restoration planning. Bill Boicourt, MARACOOS, gave a presentation in that session on the need for sustained monitoring and observations for science, documentation of change, and monitoring of restoration. More information including access to the presentations are at <http://www.oceanleadership.org/ocean-policy-legislation/ocean-leadership-events-on-the-hill/2012-public-policy-forum/>

New Map Tracks Underwater Robotic Vehicles and Delivers Historical Marine Data

You can take a virtual ride in our oceans with an underwater robot, known as a glider? There is a new map for that. This week, the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) launched a new asset map that displays where partner gliders are currently patrolling and where they've been. That means users can get one-stop access to a current snapshot of where gliders are at sea. Once returned from a mission, users can scroll over visualizations of collected data. Additionally, users can retrieve an historical collection of data from previous missions, reaching back to 2005.

http://www.ioos.gov/observing/observing_assets/glider_asset_map.html

The President's Budget for FY13 (From NFRA March 2012 Newsletter)

The overall regional line for IOOS increased from \$23m in FY12 to \$29.52m. However, the competitive regional grant program that sustains the regional network was cut by \$2.5 million. A cut of this magnitude would mean assets would need to be removed and critical information products would not be supported. The increase is from the addition of a \$10 million technology innovation program that is part of a larger NOAA R&D initiative.

Governors Share Concerns About NOP/CMSP with President Obama

On 13 March, the Governors of Texas, Louisiana, Alaska, South Carolina, Alabama, Virginia and Mississippi sent a letter to President Barack Obama addressing multiple offshore energy issues and expressing concern about the National Ocean Policy (NOP) and coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP). The Governors urged President Obama to consider the "bureaucratic hurdles" and "unintended consequences" that the NOP and CMSP could have on offshore energy development. For more information, visit:

<http://naturalresources.house.gov/Blog/?postid=284891>.

COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

April

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

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

Meeting: "[2012 Defense Security + Sensing](#)" 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](#)" 30 April-3 May 2012, Ronald Regan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, DC.

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

Summit: "[Coastal Cities Summit](#)", 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](#)" 30 April – 4 May 2012, Portland, OR.

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

Meeting: "[SECOORA Annual Meeting](#)", 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](#)", 3-6 June 2012, Hyatt Regency, Miami, FL.

<http://thecoastalsociety.org/conference/tcs23/index.html>

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

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

Conference: "[National Marine Educators Conference](#)" 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](#)" University of North Carolina, Wilmington, North Carolina.
<http://www.mbari.org/earth/>

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

Conference: "[5th Annual International Ecosystem Services Partnership \(ESP\) Conference](#)" 31 July - 4 August 2012, Portland, OR.
http://www.esconference.org/ESP_Conference/78852/5/0/60

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](#)" 20-24 October 2012, Tampa, FL.
<http://www.estuaries.org/conference/>

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

EMPLOYMENT

OCEANA Campaign Analyst

OCEANA is seeking a Washington, DC-based Campaign Analyst to work with us to promote a shift from offshore oil and gas to clean energy. This position will be an issue expert on offshore oil and gas and clean energy. You will possess expertise on issues related to energy procurement and development, and be familiar with information sources and policy level research techniques. Good communication skills are necessary as well, including writing, public speaking and interpersonal skills. Media relations experience is a plus. The position is based in Washington, D.C. Some travel is required.

<http://oceana.org/en/about-us/employment-opportunities/climate-campaign-energy-analyst>

Research Interns, HBOI

Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University is now accepting applications for two voluntary research positions in the Population Biology and Behavioral Ecology (PBBE) Program. Successful

applicants will participate in marine mammal photo-identification including data entry, database management, image analysis, field work, and potentially GIS mapping work.

<http://www.conservationjobboard.com/Job/13494386/Marine-Mammal-Photo-ID-Research-Internship>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Reminder: NOAA's FY12 ROP Funding Competition Closes April 2nd

NOAA continues to solicit proposals for the Regional Ocean Partnership (ROP) Funding Program, which will support two categories of activities: (1) activities that contribute to achieving the priorities identified by ROPs while advancing NOP priorities including the national CMSP Framework; and (2) ROP Development and Governance Support for operations and administration of existing ROPs, and for start-up costs of those regions beginning ROPs. Full proposals must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. ET, April 2nd.

<http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&oppld=145673>

FY 2012 Coastal Resilience Networks announce funding opportunity

The Coastal Resilience Networks announced funding opportunities for FY 2012. The federal funding opportunity announcement can be found on [Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). To find the announcement search for Coastal Services Center's CFDA number, 11.473 or funding opportunity number NOAA-NOS-CSC-2012-2003316. Letters of intent are due on 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).