



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

### GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 22 MARCH 2013

#### GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

##### **GCOOS Welcomes Elected Board Members**

The Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) Regional Association announced the 2013 Board member election results at the GCOOS-RA Board Meeting on March 13, 2013 in New Orleans.

The elected Board Members are:

- Jan Van Smirren (Private Sector)
- Stephan Howden (Academic Sector)
- Sharon Walker (Education/Outreach Sector)
- Patrick Hogan (Government Sector)

Terms are for three years and begin with the September 2013 Board meeting. More information regarding the activities of the Board, including the minutes of past meetings, can be found at the GCOOS web site (<http://www.gcoos.org>). The Board consists of a balance between representatives of the government, academic, private, and education/outreach sectors. Congratulations to the elected and thank you to all the GCOOS members who participated in the election process. Special thanks to the GCOOS Membership Committee, chaired by Jerry Boatman, on the nominations and election.

##### **GCOOS Products and Services Advisory Council**

In an effort to satisfy the growing ocean data and informational needs of various stakeholder groups in the Gulf of Mexico, the GCOOS-RA recently restructured to establish the Products and Services Advisory Council. The Council replaces the Stakeholder Council and Products and Services Advisory Committee to streamline and gain efficiencies. Guided by the leadership of interim Chair Stephen Sempier, Deputy Directory Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, the Council's Terms of Reference and proposed membership were presented to the GCOOS Board of Directors (BoD) and approved. Sempier then proceeded to stand-up the Council and presided over its first meeting. The Terms state that members will ensure that products and services developed and shared by GCOOS are driven by the needs of end-users. Members have been and will continue to be appointed by the GCOOS BoD to reflect the broad spectrum of users and stakeholders interested in the products of ocean observing systems, including emergency management, education and outreach, living marine resources, numerical modeling, oil and gas, ports, harbors, shipping, recreation and tourism. Among the Council's responsibilities are identifying potential new audiences for data, products and services; assessing user needs and feedback processes; guiding the development of GCOOS-supported products; making recommendations to the Board on research or pilot projects needed to sustain and enhance the products and services; advising on how to develop and implement metrics for GCOOS products and services; and developing cohesion with other regional organizations for mutual benefit. The GCOOS-RA welcomes the new PSAC Chair Ken Barbor, Rear Admiral USN Ret., Director Hydrographic Science Research Center at the University of Southern Mississippi, and Vice-Chair Dr. Jim Gibeau, Texas A&M University Corpus Christi. Barbor graciously accepted the PSAC leadership role, stating "With the prospect of increased investment in science and development in the Gulf, GCOOS products and services will be both an important benefactor and enabler. The newly structured PSAC will be poised to effectively serve the diverse community of stakeholders by more effectively influencing the development and the "look and feel" of products and services available from GCOOS." The GCOOS-RA also extends many thanks to Steve Sempier for his exemplary work and commitment to positioning the Council to best serve the needs of the Gulf of Mexico community. According

to Sempier, “the strong, positive response from a diverse set of organizations to participate on the PSAC is a testament to GCOOS’s reputation and the need for a user-driven regional observing system in the Gulf of Mexico.”

### **Building an Integrated Water Quality Monitoring Network in the Gulf of Mexico**

Representatives from local, state, federal and non-governmental organizations and academia came together on 12 March 2013 at the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas in New Orleans, LA, to address the need to develop capabilities for routine and rapid detection of water quality changes and for their prediction over a broad spectrum of temporal and spatial scales. Sponsored by the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) Regional Association (RA) and hosted by the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, the meeting objectives were two-fold: (1) to educate participants about the benefits of data sharing with a focus on integration of distributed observational and forecast systems into a System of Systems, and (2) to entrain new data providers in a pilot project in the Gulf of Mexico. The workshop expanded on a previous workshop held in June 2012 at the Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation, FL, to develop an integrated water quality monitoring network from rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. There is currently a tremendous amount of water quality data being collected in the Gulf region in a conscientious way. However, there is no mechanism in place to share the information. The GCOOS-RA seeks to facilitate information use by aggregating, integrating and serving the data through the GCOOS Data Portal. This would enable the water quality monitoring and management community to create data layers and compare information from multiple sources. The GCOOS-RA seeks to minimize the barriers to data sharing. Hence, the minimum provider requirements requested are: shared data will be publically available, providers will use FTP to move files to GCOOS, file names include the date and time, and the data providers conduct minimal levels of QA/QC and provide minimum metadata (e.g., parameters given, units of measurement).

Participants representing Gulf programs, including the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, AL, The Water Institute of the Gulf, LA, Mote Marine Laboratory, FL, EPA Gulf of Mexico, Alabama Department of Environmental Management, and the University of South Florida Institute for Marine Remote Sensing (USF IMaRS), discussed various water quality projects and the need to include legacy data in GCOOS aggregation and integration efforts. The value of these data sets was emphasized by Dr. Chuanmin Hu (USF IMaRS), who shared novel products recently launched as part of the Virtual Buoy project (see <http://optics.marine.usf.edu>). The GCOOS-RA thanks the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, particularly Education Director Tricia Le Blanc, for graciously hosting the workshop and for continued support of GCOOS community engagement efforts. For additional information, contact Dr. Chris Simoniello, [simo@marine.usf.edu](mailto:simo@marine.usf.edu), 727.322.1318; or Dr. Ann Jochens, [ajochens@tamu.edu](mailto:ajochens@tamu.edu), 979.845.6714; or visit <http://gcoos.org>.

### **GCOOS Build-Out Plan for Regional Monitoring Needs Under Review**

The GCOOS Build-Out Plan, Version 1, is under review. Suggested revisions will be provided to the Board of Directors. Version 1 is available for download at [http://gcoos.tamu.edu/BuildOut/GCOOS\\_BuildoutPlan\\_V1.pdf](http://gcoos.tamu.edu/BuildOut/GCOOS_BuildoutPlan_V1.pdf). In 2011, the 11 U.S. IOOS Regional Associations developed build-out plans based on the needs of stakeholders in their regions. Regional experts from federal, state, and local government, academia, NGOs, industry, education and outreach, and the private sector contributed. The U.S. IOOS Program Office synthesized the 11 regional plans to present a vision for full implementation of the IOOS regional observing systems for the oceans, coasts and Great Lakes over the next 10 years, and an accompanying independent cost estimate. The GCOOS Build-Out Plan provides the stakeholder-drive vision for monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico. Comments and suggestions to the plan are welcome. Please send at your earliest convenience to GCOOS Executive Director, Ann Jochens ([ajochens@tamu.edu](mailto:ajochens@tamu.edu)). Your help in making this plan meet the needs of the Gulf stakeholders is appreciated.

### **MS Governor Bryant Designates RESTORE Center of Excellence**

Following the Deepwater Horizon disaster, Congress established the RESTORE Act to direct Clean Water Act penalties collected from responsible parties to the states impacted by the oil spill. The RESTORE Act includes a 2.5 percent funding designation to establish Research Centers of Excellence. On 7 March 2013, Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant designated the Center for Gulf Studies (CGS), led by the University of Southern Mississippi, as the RESTORE Center of Excellence for Mississippi. The University’s renowned expertise in the field of marine science played an integral role in determining the environmental and economic ramifications on the northern Gulf Coast following the spill. Continued monitoring and research related to the spill subsequently led to the formation of the CGS earlier this year. A partnership between USM and the state’s other research universities, Mississippi State University, the University of Mississippi, and Jackson State University, CGS seeks to bring more attention and research to the northern Gulf Coast, an area traditionally

under-represented and under-served compared to the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. For more information, please see visit the Center for Gulf Studies' website at <http://www.usm.edu/gulf-studies> .

### **NOAA Proposes Plan to Address Environmental Injuries from 2005 Gulf Oil Spill**

NOAA released a draft damage assessment and restoration plan addressing environmental injuries from the 2005 Tank Barge *DBL 152* oil spill in federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico. The draft plan describes the steps NOAA has taken to see if natural resources, such as marine habitats, were injured by the nearly two million gallon spill, as well as the extent of those injuries. The spill began on 11 November 2005 when the Tank Barge *DBL 152* struck submerged remains of a pipeline service platform that collapsed during Hurricane Rita approximately 50 miles southeast of Sabine Pass, Texas. Public comments on the draft plan may be submitted by mail or electronically through 15 April. Written comments may be sent to: NOAA, Office of General Counsel, Natural Resources Section, Attn: Chris Plaisted, 501 W. Ocean Blvd., Suite 4470, Long Beach, CA 90802; or electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov> (Docket I.D.: NOAA-NMFS-2013-0034). The Restoration Plan is available at: <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/southeast/dbl152/admin.html>.

### **EPA Gulf of Mexico Program Postpones Funding Opportunity**

The Gulf of Mexico Program has postponed issuing its 2013 Federal Funding Opportunity, originally scheduled for March 2013, due to delays in the FY2013 federal budgeting process and implementation of across-the-board spending cuts (also known as "sequestration") required by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012. The Program will inform its stakeholders when updated information is available. Please contact John Bowie (228-238-9667) or Rachel Houge (228-688-2052) of the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program if you have questions.

## **IOOS/NATIONAL/LEGISLATIVE NEWS**

### **IOOS Website's URL has changed**

The US Government has changed the IOOS website address from [www.ioos.gov](http://www.ioos.gov) to [www.ioos.noaa.gov](http://www.ioos.noaa.gov) as part of its effort to remove all non-nested federal URLs from the web. Although now nested within the NOAA-domain URL, IOOS retains its nature as a broad, multi-agency (and partner) activity.

### **U.S. IOOS Summit - Heads Up!**

The draft Summit Report will be available in late March for a one week public comment and review period. There is still time to show your support for U.S. IOOS by signing the Summit Declaration. Participation in the Summit is not a prerequisite to signing the Declaration. Go to the IOOC's website to view and endorse the Summit Declaration at <http://www.iooc.us/summit/the-us-summit-declaration/>.

### **NOAA Report Finds Commercial and Recreational Saltwater Fishing Generated \$199 Billion in 2011**

U.S. commercial and recreational saltwater fishing generated more than \$199 billion in sales and supported 1.7 million jobs in the nation's economy in 2011, according to a new economic report released by NOAA's Fisheries Service. The report, *Fisheries Economics of the United States 2011*, is published annually on a two-year lag to allow data collection, analysis, and peer review. It provides economic statistics on U.S. commercial and recreational fisheries and marine-related businesses for each coastal state and the nation. Key to the report are the economic effects--jobs, sales, income, and value added to Gross National Product--of the commercial and recreational fishing industries. "Economic impact" measures how sales in each sector ripple throughout the state and national economy as each dollar spent generates additional sales by other firms and consumers. The annual report breaks down the sales impacts, income impacts and job figures for each coastal state. The five states that generated the most jobs from fishing in 2011 were California, Massachusetts, Florida, Washington, and Alaska. The states with the most growth in the number of commercial fishing jobs compared to 2010 were Alabama (76 percent, net increase of 4,743 jobs), Mississippi (45 percent, net increase of 1,722 jobs), Oregon (32 percent, net increase of 4,483 jobs), Louisiana (29 percent, net increase of 7,272 jobs), and Alaska (17 percent, net increase of 9,288 jobs). *Fisheries Economics of the United States 2011* is available online at: [http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/economics/publications/feus/fisheries\\_economics\\_2011](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/economics/publications/feus/fisheries_economics_2011).

### **Western Gulf of Mexico Sale 229 Nets \$133 Million in High Bids**

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) completed its required evaluation to ensure that the public receives fair market value for tracts leased as part of Western Gulf of Mexico Oil and Gas Lease Sale 229. After extensive economic analysis, BOEM awarded leases on all 116 tracts that received bids to the successful high bidders. Sale statistics for Western Sale 229 are available at: <http://www.boem.gov/Oil-and-Gas-Energy-Program/Leasing/Regional-Leasing/Gulf-of-Mexico-Region/Lease-Sales/229/index.aspx>.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Water Director, Nicholas Institute at Duke University**

<http://nicholasinstitute.duke.edu/pages/director-water-policy-program>

**The Department of State Lands, Full-time position within the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve (SSNERR) located in Charleston, Coos County**

<http://tinyurl.com/ac7pbh9>

**Project Coordinator, West Coast Governors Alliance on Ocean Health**

<https://www.bidsync.com/SupplierRegister?ac=register&posting=true&plan=0&regtype=default&cmd=next&&>

## COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

### March

“[Coastal GeoTools Conference](#)”, 25-28 March 2013, Myrtle Beach, SC.

<http://geotools.csc.noaa.gov/default.aspx>

“2013 National Hurricane Conference”, 25-28 March 2013, New Orleans, LA

<http://hurricanemeeting.com/>

### April

“Inaugural National Adaptation Forum”, 2-4 April 2013, Denver Marriott City Center, Denver, CO.

<http://www.nationaladaptationforum.org>

“Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS)”, 22-24 April 2013, Washington, DC

<http://www.oceancouncil.org>

### May

“[Optimising Enhanced Oil Recovery](#)”, 7-8 May 2013, Doha, Qatar.

<http://www.wplgroup.com/aci/conferences/eu-eor3.asp>

“[AGU Meeting of the Americas](#)”, 14-17 May 2013, Cancun, Mexico

Abstract due date: 6 February 2013

<http://moa.agu.org/2013/>

“[5th Carbon Capture and Storage](#)”, 15-16 May 2013, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Interactive Platform for International Debate on CCS Developments & Innovations

<http://www.wplgroup.com/aci/conferences/eu-ecc5.asp>

### June

“Capitol Hill Oceans Week”, 4-6 June 2013 Knight Conference Center, Washington, D.C.

“[World Conference on Disaster Management \(WCDM\)](#)”, 23-26 June 2013, Toronto, Canada.

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

“Gulf of Mexico Alliance All-Hands Meeting”, 25-27 June 2013, Tampa Bay, FL  
<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e6w82a9z0205fc34&llr=thgzaleab>

### July

“National Marine Educators Association”, 22-26 July 2013, Mobile, AL.  
<http://nmea.disl.org/>



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](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)).