



NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF OF MEXICO COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 5 APRIL 2013

GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

Article on the GCOOS Build-out Plan Published in the *Marine Technology Society Journal*

The January/February issue of the *Marine Technology Society Journal* (Vo. 47, No. 1) includes an article on the GCOOS Build-out Plan, titled, "The Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System: An Integrated Approach to Building an Operational Regional Observing System." The article describes the stakeholder-based, multi-phase GCOOS build-out plan, including maintaining the existing system, a base case system over the next one to five years, and a full-case system over the next five to ten years. The article also makes a case that GCOOS' partners are doing critically-important work, as evidenced by the many GCOOS contributions to the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill response, but that GCOOS could do much better with additional observing assets in the Gulf of Mexico. The article gives specific examples of how a built-out GCOOS could be more proactive and could further contribute to responses to serious events in the Gulf of Mexico and along the Gulf Coast, such as oil spills, hurricanes, harmful algal blooms, and hypoxia. The build out plan, written with input and leadership from Gulf-wide subject matter experts spanning federal, state and local government, academia, NGOs, industry, private business, and formal and informal educators, is available on the GCOOS website at gcoos.tamu.edu/BuildOut/GCOOS_BuildoutPlan_V1.pdf. The article, submitted by Ann Jochens, GCOOS Executive Director and Stephanie Watson is available through the Marine Technology Society's website at https://www.mtsociety.org/MTS_Journal_public/. Please contact Ann Jochens at ajochens@tamu.edu for more information on the article or to provide comments on the build-out plan.

GCOOS Classroom Spotlight

Ever wonder what 18 first graders think about Climate Change? You'd be surprised! As part of GCOOS's ongoing effort to enhance Ocean Literacy and Climate Literacy in the Gulf of Mexico, Education and Outreach Coordinator Dr. Chris Simoniello teaches science weekly at Bay Point Elementary (BPE), a Science, Technology, Math and Foreign Language magnet school of Pinellas County, Florida. With approximately half of the diverse student population on free or reduced lunch, the school plays an important role in educating underserved and underrepresented communities. For the second year, Simoniello is bringing hands-on, inquiry-based lessons and resources to BPE students and teachers, challenging them to think about their roles in society and their responsibility to the environment. Recently, the students conducted science fair experiments to investigate ocean acidification and impacts to shellfish and coral reef communities. They were excited to follow the joint University of Southern Mississippi/Liquid Robotics ocean acidification wave glider mission on the GCOOS Data Portal (see <http://gcoos.org/products/maps/waveglider/usm/>), that led to engaging discussions that ranged from 'how do we keep pH paper dry while the glider is traveling through the ocean' to 'why do we keep putting that bad gas (CO₂) in the ocean if we know it's bad!' Resources from NOAA's Ocean Acidification Program (see <http://www.oceanacidification.noaa.gov/>) have been incorporated into the BPE lessons. Mrs. Catherine Wall, BPE first grade teacher, stated 'I'm so grateful to GCOOS for giving my students this opportunity. They are so excited to see Ms. Chris and dive into the fun lessons. Our science performance would soar if we could provide this to all students and educators.'

Coastal Community Resilience Team Enhances Clean Marinas Program

The Clean Marinas program is an ongoing endeavor by a marina industry alliance to provide environmentally clean facilities and protect coastal and inland waters from pollution through best management practices.

Through voluntary action, private and government marina operators and yacht clubs agree to adhere to standards that exceed local and state regulations. Recently, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance's Coastal Community Resilience (CCR) Team expanded on the Clean Marina concept to include a 'resilient marina' component. The goal is for the Clean and Resilient Marina Initiative to enhance the program by providing marina operators with environmentally responsible operations best management practices to incorporate resilience standards. The Clean and Resilient Marina Guidebook (see <http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/issues/resilience.php>) is a three-document set that provides marina owners and operators with information on tools and recommended practices. This project was identified as a CCR action item (Action Item #9) under Action Plan II of the Alliance. A map with links to Certified Clean Marina programs throughout the Gulf of Mexico can be found on the GCOOS Data Products page (see <http://gcoos.org/products/index.php/eo/clean-marina/>). For more information on the Clean and Resilient Marina Initiative, please contact Rhonda Price, CCR Team Coordinator, at Rhonda.Price@dmr.ms.gov.

Homeowner's Handbook Available on the Storm Smart Website

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance's Coastal Community Resilience (CCR) Team recently developed the *Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards*. Available on the Gulf of Mexico Climate Community of Practice's Storm Smart website (see <http://la.stormsmart.org/handbook/>), the handbook was identified as a CCR action item (Action Item #7) under Action Plan II of the Alliance. The handbook was designed to help the public understand and prepare for natural hazards to reduce risks to family and property. Included are actions and cost-effective steps aimed at lowering vulnerability to the impacts of storms and other natural disasters. For more information on the *Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards*, please contact Rhonda Price, CCR Team Coordinator, at Rhonda.Price@dmr.ms.gov.

Save the Date: RFP for 2015-2017 Research Consortia

The [Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative](#) (GoMRI) is pleased to announce the development of the GoMRI Request for Proposals for 2015-2017 GoMRI Research Consortia. The purpose of the 2015-2017 GoMRI Research Consortia RFP, to be released in mid-November 2013, is to select the research activities for GoMRI Years 5-7 (1 January 2015-31 December 2017) involving Research Consortia, defined as a contractual arrangement between a PI and co-PIs at four or more institutions. The total funds available for distribution to Research Consortia through the 2015-2017 GoMRI Research Consortia RFP will be approximately \$35 million per year. A RFP for individual and small research group investigations will be forthcoming in late 2014. Unlike previous RFPs, the 2015-2017 GoMRI Research Consortia RFP will include a pre-proposal step. Pre-proposals will be required to qualify for submission of a full proposal in response to the 2015-2017 GoMRI Research Consortia RFP.

New Gulf Alliance Tool Helps Promote Healthy Beaches and Safe Seafood

Residents along the Gulf of Mexico have been concerned about the quality of their swimming and fishing waters for years. The Gulf of Mexico Alliance has taken a step toward improving the methods used in water quality testing. A new Molecular Marker Registry has been developed that is based on genetic information from microbes. This modern, ground-breaking tool is just one of the many water quality tools designed by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance to help ensure healthy beaches, wetland habitat, and safe seafood in Gulf coastal areas. The registry can be found at http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/issues/water_quality.php. The Molecular Marker Registry will be updated as additional information is received and reviewed for accuracy. For additional information contact Steven H. Wolfe, Gulf of Mexico Alliance Water Quality Team Coordinator, at SHWolfe@fio.usf.edu or visit www.GulfofMexicoAlliance.org.

Celebrate the Gulf on 6 April 2013

For a free, fun and educational event for the whole family, visit the annual Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival on Saturday, 6 April 2013, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Celebrate the Gulf will be held in conjunction with Art in the Pass at War Memorial Park in Pass Christian, MS. Enjoy lively, hands-on exhibits addressing marine and estuarine environmental issues and recreational and commercial activities associated with the Gulf. More details can be found at <http://grandbaynerr.org/archives/1966>.

Adventure Quencher Anyone?

Ms. Heather Sullivan from the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science and a member of the Mississippi Native Plant Society will be guiding a walking tour on Saturday, 13 April 2013, from 9:30-11:30 AM to various locations within the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge/Reserve to observe a variety of carnivorous and

savanna plants and to learn why it is important to monitor these types of habitats to detect changes in biodiversity. Check out www.grandbaynerr.org for directions and a map. For more information, contact Jennifer Buchanan at 228.475.7047.

IOOS/NATIONAL/LEGISLATIVE NEWS

NOAA and the U.S. Census Bureau Projects Increases in Coastal Population Growth by 2020 *(from NOAA News)*

If current population trends continue, the already crowded U.S. coast will see population grow from 123 million people to nearly 134 million people by 2020, putting more of the population at increased risk from extreme coastal storms like Sandy and Isaac, which severely damaged infrastructure and property last year. The projection comes from a new report released from NOAA with input from the U.S. Census Bureau. The report is available on NOAA's [State of the Coast website](#), which provides quick facts, statistics, interactive maps, case studies, and management success stories that highlight what is known about coastal communities, coastal ecosystems, and the coastal economy and about how climate change might impact the coast.

Updated Software to Better Protect Responders to Chemical Hazards, Spills *(from NOAA News)*

Newly updated software from NOAA and experts at Dow Chemical could provide emergency workers responding to hazardous chemical spills more and better information about the chemical reactions they may encounter. The free software, known as the Chemical Reactivity Worksheet, predicts potential hazards from mixing chemicals. This significant update is the result of a two-year-long collaboration between NOAA chemical response specialists and technical experts at Dow Chemical. The Chemical Reactivity Worksheet, currently for Windows, is available for [download](#). Versions for Mac and iOS will be available soon.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Marine Chemistry, Tenure Track Assistant Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi Dept. of Marine Science

<https://jobs.usm.edu>, alan.shiller@usm.edu

Hydrographic Sciences, Tenure-Track Faculty at the University of Southern Mississippi Dept. of Marine Science

<https://jobs.usm.edu>, Stephan.Howden@usm.edu

Sea Grant Extension Agent I, II, or III

http://personnel.ifas.ufl.edu/jobs_countyvacancies_status.shtml

COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

April

Webinar "Starting Early: Financial Preparations for Disasters and Emergencies", 9 April 2013 at 3:00 PM EST
Please register if this is your first time joining the Community Preparedness Webinar Series.

<https://connect.hsin.gov/financiallita/event/registration.html>

"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>

"Wetland Rapid Assessment Procedure: A Two Day Workshop", 14-15 May 2013, Weeks Bay Reserve, Alabama
for information contact Michael Shelton at 251.928.9792 or <mailto:michael.shelton@denr.alabama.gov>

“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

“AGU Science Policy Conference”, 24-26 June 2013, Washington, DC.
<http://spc.agu.org/2013/>

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

December

“AGU 2013 Fall Meeting”, 9-13 December 2013, San Francisco, CA.
<http://fallmeeting.agu.org/2013/>



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).