



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

### GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 16 JANUARY 2014

#### GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

##### GCOOS Data Portal Upgraded

The Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) Data Portal (<http://data.gcoos.org>) was upgraded at the end of 2013. Upgrades included: migration of the system to better servers and a faster network, software changes yielding faster database transactions, and the addition of many new capabilities to the user interface. The upgrades incorporated new technological developments in Google APIs for mapping, accommodated changes in some data provider's data systems and introduced new more efficient data harvesting modules. The servers are located in the Geosciences Data Center at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX. Enhancements were made by Felimon Gayanilo, a Systems Architect with the Harte Research Institute and Robert Reyes, a student assistant, both working on the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in Corpus Christi, TX.

##### New Features

The GCOOS asset map has a new interactive user interface which allows users to display stations filtered by provider or parameter. Platform status is no longer based on the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Observation Registry maintained by the data providers, but on frequent automated checks of data availability. The map interface now includes a tool to plot the last three days of observations from a sensor (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. New user-interactive map showing the GCOOS assets in the region. The list of current observations made for a platform are also displayed and users have the option to graph 3 days of data.

The GCOOS monitoring page was upgraded to present statistics for providers and parameters and the number of active and inactive sensors in the region by parameter. To date, GCOOS is harvesting data from 1,555 sensors from 223 stations of which 131 stations are from non-federal sources. Detailed information under the individual data provider tabs shows the status of sensors by platform including the date of the last data received.

#### *Upcoming Features*

- 1) In mid-January 2014, the GCOOS Data Portal will replace the National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) Sensor Observation Service (SOS) with the new 52°N SOS implementation which is compliant with OGC SOS ver. 2.0 specifications.
- 2) The migration of historical data to the new server is continuing and is expected to be complete by February 2014.

<http://gcoos.tamu.edu/?p=5901>

### **GCOOS Board Members and Office Staff Interviewed for “ECO” Magazine**

Jan Van Smirren (GCOOS Board Chairman), Worth Nowlin (GCOOS Board Treasurer), Ann Jochens (GCOOS Executive Director), and Landry Bernard (GCOOS Associate Executive Director) were interviewed in December for a feature article in “ECO” Magazine (<http://www.eco-tsc.com/>). ECO magazine’s audience of 16,500 people includes professionals in the environmental services field, as well as conference attendees from industry, government, and academics. The interviewees discussed the purpose of GCOOS, the diverse and committed membership, GCOOS’ staff and members’ roles in the *Deepwater Horizon* (DWH) response, the stakeholder-based GCOOS Buildout plan and its current revisions based on the DWH lessons and additional stakeholder input, the GCOOS data portal and education and outreach activities, and the interesting and rewarding aspects of being part of GCOOS. Stay tuned for publication of the interview article!

### **GCOOS Board Members and Staff to Present at 2014 Gulf Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference**

GCOOS Board Members and Staff have had presentations and posters accepted at the 2014 Gulf Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference in Mobile, Alabama, 26-29 January 2014. This conference is the premier oil spill conference in the Gulf of Mexico, attracting a great diversity of stakeholders and decision-makers.

Register for the conference and check out the following presentations and posters:

#### Sunday, 26 January

- Simoniello. Oil in the Gulf: This is not Alaska! (presentation)
- Howard, Gayanilo, Cueda, Chavez and Gibeaut. What’s in a Name? Vocabularies for Search, Browse and Interoperability. (presentation)
- Gayanilo and Gibeaut. Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative Information and Data Cooperative (GRIIDC) Dataset Lifecycle: Early Lessons. (presentation)

#### Tuesday, 28 January

- Watson, Simoniello, Jochens, Howard, Mullins-Perry, and Bernard. GCOOS Contributions to the Deepwater Horizon Response and Collaborative Planning Toward a Gulf Observing and Monitoring System. (presentation)
- Graham, Bernard, Bowie, Jochens, McKinney, Nowlin, Shepard, and Wolfe. Developing a Decision-making and Governance Framework for a Coordinated Gulf-Wide Observational Program (presentation)
- Howden, Gundersen, Redalje, and Martin. An Ecosystem Monitoring System in the Mississippi Bight (poster)
- Caffey, Kazmierczak, Fannin, and Savolainen. Measuring the private and societal benefits of the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) (presentation)

For more information, please see the conference website at: <http://gulfofmexicoconference.org>

### **2014 Update from the National Academies of Sciences Gulf Program**

“Dear Colleagues: We here at the Gulf Research Program are excited about 2014. For us, 2014 will be a transition year, moving from “learning the landscape” toward articulating and then implementing our program vision. We greatly appreciate the input we’ve received from many of you over our first six months, and we anticipate creating other opportunities to interact. What do we have planned so far in 2014? We will have two meetings of the Advisory Group (11-12 February in Houston and 11-12 June in Tampa) that are critical in the creation of our strategic plan. This document, which will be a high level vision describing program mission, goals, themes, guiding principles, and more, will develop over the spring and be released in the summer. We anticipate announcing some first activities and funding opportunities during the summer. In September, we

will see a significant rotation in our advisors, moving from the one-year Advisory Group to a standing Advisory Board with evolving responsibilities (and 3-year terms of office). We envision continued participation of program staff and members in various workshops, conferences, and other communications activities. One of these opportunities is the 2014 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill & Ecosystem Science Conference at the end of the month in Mobile, AL. We will be there to learn more about ongoing science in region and talk about our program. You can find us as part of a Town Hall on Tuesday, 28 January, plus we will have a table in the resource area. We're a co-organizer of the environmental monitoring session, and an overall co-sponsor of this important community event. Starting on 21 January, the Program will welcome our first "Christine Mirzayan Science & Technology Policy Graduate Fellow," Jocelyn Oshrin. The Mirzayan Fellowship is a long-standing opportunity here at the National Academy of Sciences, a chance for upper level students to experience the science policy world, and we have carved out a special place for a student with Gulf-related interests. Jocelyn is a Mississippi native who holds a B.S. in geological science from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; a M.S. in geology from the University of Notre Dame; and a M.P.A. and M.S. in environmental science from Indiana University's School of Public and Environmental Affairs. She will join us here in Washington, DC, for 12 weeks. We wish you the best in 2014 and look forward to future opportunities to engage you." For more information about the Gulf Research Program, visit [www.nas.edu/gulf](http://www.nas.edu/gulf)."

### **BP and RESTORE Act Headline Many Recent Press Articles**

As the New Orleans trials to assess BP's civil penalties for the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill continue, news articles are popping up throughout the Gulf press on the RESTORE Act (which would be funded through these penalties) and other post-*Deepwater Horizon* programs. Here are just a few examples:

#### **From Alabama:**

19 December 2013: *Alabama's Coast Needs Wise RESTORE Act Investments*

[http://www.al.com/opinion/index.ssf/2013/12/alabamas\\_coast\\_needs\\_wise\\_rest.html](http://www.al.com/opinion/index.ssf/2013/12/alabamas_coast_needs_wise_rest.html)

#### **From Florida:**

6 January 2014: *Restore Escambia Proposes Criteria for Spill Projects*

<http://www.pnj.com/article/20140107/NEWS10/301070011/Restore-Escambia-offers-criteria-for-local-BP-oil-spill-RESTORE-Act-projects>

#### **From Louisiana:**

9 January 2014: *State Proposes Spending \$688 Million on coastal restoration, levees in 2015*

[http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2014/01/state\\_proposes\\_spending\\_668\\_mi.html](http://www.nola.com/environment/index.ssf/2014/01/state_proposes_spending_668_mi.html)

#### **From Mississippi:**

6 January 2014: *DEQ Gearing Up for Coastal Restoration*

<http://www.sunherald.com/2014/01/06/5238235/deq-gearing-up-for-coastal-restoration.html>

#### **From Texas:**

4 January 2014: *BP Windfall Will Test Texas Conservatives*

<http://www.woai.com/articles/woai-local-news-119078/bp-spill-windfall-will-test-texas-11938532/>

### **2014 State of the Gulf of Mexico Coming to Houston in March**

Following the success of the 2011 State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit, the Harte Research Institute for the Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will host the 2014 Summit in Houston, Texas from 24-27 March. The objectives of Summit 2014 include:

- Connecting science and restoration efforts to inform decision-making and identify gaps
- Advancing restoration that contributes to the broader Gulf of Mexico ecosystem
- Linking state, federal and NGO restoration strategies
- Assuring Gulf restoration and national ocean policy compliment rather than conflict
- Defining a clear, positive role for business and industry in the restoration process.

The two major outcomes the 2014 Summit Steering Committee hopes to achieve are a Gulf of Mexico stakeholder roadmap to identify the necessary steps to achieve a healthy Gulf and a strategy to build a process for the Report Card on the state of the Gulf of Mexico. For additional information about 2014 Summit outcomes and registration information, please visit <http://www.sgmsummit.org>.

### **Tracie Sempier Takes on New Role at GOMA**

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance has hired Tracie Sempier to serve as its Regional Program Manager. The position is a shared position between the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium's (MASGC) Coastal Storms Program. Sempier has been working as the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Storms Program Outreach Coordinator at MASGC since 2008. She has worked extensively with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance as part of its Coastal Community Resilience Priority Issue Team. Sempier continues to serve part-time as the

Coastal Storms Program Outreach Coordinator for Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant.

## IOOS/NATIONAL/LEGISLATIVE NEWS

### **New USGS Portal Provides Access to More Than a Century of Sediment Data**

The US Geological Survey (USGS) has developed an online, interactive, sediment data portal to provide USGS suspended-sediment data to watershed managers, policy-makers, researchers, and the public. This database represents the best available compendium of suspended-sediment data for streams in the Nation. Ancillary information on streamflow condition, sediment grain size, sampling method, and landscape condition are also available within the portal. Visit the data portal at <http://cida.usgs.gov/sediment>.

### **Vice Admiral Michael Devany Named NOAA Deputy Under Secretary**

NOAA Vice Adm. Michael S. Devany has assumed the role of NOAA's Deputy Under Secretary for Operations following President Obama's approval of his appointment by Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker. Devany served most recently as director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations. As Deputy Under Secretary, Devany is NOAA's Chief Operating Officer, responsible for the day-to-day management of NOAA's national and international operations for oceanic and atmospheric services, research and coastal and marine stewardship. Devany succeeds David M. Kennedy, who retired in December after more than 20 years of service to NOAA and the nation. For more please see:

[http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2014/20140102\\_devany.html](http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2014/20140102_devany.html)

### **Rear Admiral David A. Score to Lead NOAA Corps and Office of Marine and Aviation Operations**

NOAA Rear Admiral David A. Score has assumed his new role as Director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and the NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO). Last month, President Obama approved U.S. Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker's appointment of Score. As director, Score will be responsible for the agency's fleet of research and survey ships and aircraft, as well as guiding the 321 uniformed officers of the NOAA Corps and approximately 1,000 civilian personnel assigned to OMAO. Score relieves NOAA Corps officer Michael S. Devany, who was recently appointed NOAA's Deputy Under Secretary for operations and promoted to the rank of Vice Admiral. Score served most recently as OMAO's Deputy Director for Operations and Deputy Director of the NOAA Corps. From December 2010 to June 2012, he was Commanding Officer of NOAA's Marine Operations Center-Atlantic based in Norfolk, Va., which oversees the day-to-day operations of the agency's Atlantic fleet. For more on this please visit:

[http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2014/20140102\\_score.html](http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2014/20140102_score.html)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### **BSEE Oil Spill Response Research – DUE 20 JANUARY 2014**

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) announced a \$7 million investment in oil spill response research and solicits proposals. White papers are due on 20 January 2014 on the following topics related to oil spill response operations on the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf:

- Cataloging BSEE's oil spill response research programs funded research recommendations and key findings that may have an impact on BSEE regulations;
- Scientifically based planning standards for dispersant effectiveness and usage rates;
- Scientifically based planning standards for burn boom effectiveness and usage rates;
- Oil spill detection and analysis using remote sensing technologies;
- Subsea oil spill detection sensors;
- Mechanical recovery capability of chemically treated oil;
- Solidifying the scientific capabilities of Ohmsett - quantifying mixing energy;
- Solidifying the scientific capabilities of Ohmsett - effect of ambient chemical levels;
- Development of "smart" skimming technologies; and
- Establishment of technology readiness level definitions for oil spill response equipment.

The BSEE press release announcing the funding opportunity is available here:

[http://www.bsee.gov/BSEE-Newsroom/Press-Releases/2013/BSEE-to-Invest-\\$7-Million-in-2014-for-Oil-Spill-Response-Research/](http://www.bsee.gov/BSEE-Newsroom/Press-Releases/2013/BSEE-to-Invest-$7-Million-in-2014-for-Oil-Spill-Response-Research/)

## COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

### January

“Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference”, 27-29 January 2014, Mobile, AL  
<http://gulfofmexicoconference.org/>

### February

“94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Meteorology Society”, 2-6 February 2014, Atlanta, GA  
<http://annual.ametsoc.org/2014/>

“Marine Planning Meeting”, 11 February 2014, Four Points Sheraton, Biloxi, MS  
<http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/2013/10/460/>

“2014 Ocean Science Meeting (with AGU, ASLO and TOS)”, 22-28 February 2014, Honolulu, HI.  
<http://www.sgmeet.com/osm2014/default.asp>

“World Ocean Summit”, 24-26 February 2014, San Francisco, CA.  
<http://www.economistconferences.asia/event/world-ocean-summit-2014>

### March

“Rigs to Reefs Meeting”, 18 March 2014, Royal Sonesta Hotel, New Orleans, LA  
<http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/2013/09/rigs-to-reefs-meeting/>

“Summit 2014 –State of the Gulf of Mexico” 24-27 March 2014, Omni Hotel Galleria, Houston, TX.  
<http://www.sgmsummit.org>

“GCOOS Board of Directors and Members Meeting”, 17 March 2014, Tallahassee, FL. Details TBD.

### May

“2014 Coastal Bend Hurricane Conference”, 7-8 May 2014, Richard M. Borchard Regional Fairgrounds, Robstown, TX.

### July

“Conference on Ecological and Ecosystem Restoration”, 28 July – 1 August 2014, Hilton Riverside, New Orleans, LA.  
<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/CEER2014/links.html>

### November

“7<sup>th</sup> National Summit on Coastal and Estuarine Restoration and 24<sup>th</sup> Biennial Meeting of the Coastal Society”, 1-5 November 2014, Gaylord National Convention Center, Washington, D.C.  
<http://www.estuaries.org/summit>



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)).