Priorities for GCOOS Education and Outreach Activities

1) **Organize initial meeting of GCOOS Education and Outreach Council (EOC).** This would establish organizational internal structure, discuss operational and programmatic issues and processes, initiate education and outreach planning and actions.

2) **Identify groups (SG, NERRs, NEPs, COSEE, etc.) that can extend GCOOS Education and Outreach activities.** ("Inreach" – to build capacity among ourselves). Inreach should precede outreach. We could develop a "train the trainer" educational program on IOOS that could be used in various states as part of the training of education and outreach organizations such as SG, NERs, NEPs, and COSEEs. As an example, the Southeast Atlantic Regional Association brought together Sea Grant Extension agents from the four states to be briefed on IOOS, SEACOOS, and what resources might be available. That meeting also included scientists working on the observing system.

3) **Inventory existing IOOS materials (fact sheets, curricula, PowerPoints, videos, websites, etc.) available for use in education and outreach activities.** These could be evaluated for their use and applicability for the GCOOS. It also would provide some gap analysis of what is missing. IOOS funds could possibly be leveraged with other funds to put these materials into formats useable for the GCOOS. Identify existing products and services that could be used in initial GCOOS public awareness campaign.

4) **Conduct more intensive needs assessments among specific user and super-user groups on what education/outreach products and services are needed in IOOS related activities.** The GCOOS Stakeholder Council can provide assistance here. This could involve formal, informal, and workforce education networks, as well as specific user groups. Since funds are limited, we must consider carefully which audiences should be addressed first, then develop both education and outreach activities and products that meet their needs. We should also develop evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of these activities and materials in meeting their needs. This would help for future funding and other spin-off activities.

5) **Identify, support, and hire a GCOOS Regional Education/Outreach Coordinator (full or part-time).** This was a general recommendation at the GCOOS Education and Outreach Formation Meeting. (If not a coordinator, perhaps a graduate student could be found to carry out the initial footwork.)

6) **Create a Listserve for discussion and dissemination of information among the interested Education and Outreach community in the Gulf of Mexico.** This would establish communication network within region for educators and outreach specialists interested in IOOS activities.

7) **Use the NOAA-supported studies as a starting point for more in-depth study of the potential economic impacts of GCOOS and how to best package products for users.**