

EPT Meeting Summary, May 1-2, 2014

Opening

The Governors' South Atlantic Alliance (GSAA) Executive Planning Team (EPT) meeting opened with a warm welcome from the Director of South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Catherine Templeton. Director Templeton told the team to keep up their good work and congratulated them on their recent successes with the Coast and Ocean Portal and Hazard Vulnerability Assessment tool. She stressed that collaboration is key to finding solutions to challenges and encouraged the team keep moving forward with their initiatives.

The EPT Chair, Kelly Samek began the meeting with some opening remarks. She reported that the EPT was gathered to answer two questions:

- *The why of resiliency?*
- *The how of funding?*

She stated that the questions are not mutually exclusive and that each drives the other. The team's task for the meeting would be to answer these questions fully and come to a consensus as to best paths forward. She also thanked the EPT members for all of their hard work and kindly acknowledged the Issue Area Technical Teams (IATTs) in aiding the GSAA with all of its endeavors.

Pam Kylstra, Program Development Specialist with NOAA's Coastal Services Center introduced the attendees to the meeting guidelines and gave an overview of the process agenda. Pam reiterated Kelly Samek's why and the how focus for the meeting and discussed that Day 1 focuses on information sharing while Day 2 would focus on the decision making aspects of the topics.

Kristine Cherry, Regional Coordinator for the GSAA presented her work on exploring options for GSAA funding. Kristine began with a background of the previous funding sources used by the GSAA. She spoke of the NOAA Regional Ocean Partnership grant that currently funds the GSAA and the discontinuation of the program that has led to the funding discussion at hand. She emphasized that the grant could be extended for six months and up to a year but that her position would not be funded come January. Objectives for funding options included looking for programmatic partners with similar priority for joint projects as well as seeking funds from foundations, the states, federal government entities, and nonprofit groups. Kristine acknowledged that the annual operational needs for the GSAA ranged between \$200,000- \$250,000. This money is allocated toward:

- Meetings
- Travel
- IATT seed funds
- Communications
- Supplies
- Coordinator salary
- DHEC staff salary/fringe
- DHEC indirect cost rate 15-17%

Kristine also highlighted some potential areas, with pros and cons attached, to examine for funding:

Competitive

- NOAA supported
- Single source funds
- Dedicated to ROP priorities
- Not a stable model
- Limited funds

Multi-grant

- Federal and private
- Diversify funds
- Limited by number of successful grant proposals
- Priorities are expected to be responsive to opportunities
- Time consuming
- Hard to find operational support

Non competitive

- States support
- Streamlined support
- Dedicated to state ROP priorities
- Not stable for long run
- Limited funding/ no commitment/ slow growth

Membership model

- Dues
- All partners have stake
- Diversify funding
- Limited by numbers of participants
- Funds in govern priorities
- Time consuming
- Government agencies have limitations of funding memberships

Different project models with a relation to resilience were also presented to the group as examples of potential joint GSAA/Partner priority programs:

Short term objectives, 1-2 years

- Disaster recovery
- Water quality outreach
- Working waterfronts inventory
- Ecological and social resilience

Midterm objectives, 2-4 years

- Sediment management
- Living Shorelines and other restoration projects

Long term objectives, 5+ years

- Build relationships with multiple partners - new and old
- Stable source of funds
- Long term vision

Kristine closed with the keys to success of finding funding for direct operations costs:

- Building relationships with industry, academia, and other private sector partners
- A stable source of core operational funding
- A long-term vision for the GSAA and its financial stability
- Executive Planning Team actively invested in the success of the GSAA
- Good communication

Regional Resilience Roundtable Discussion

Federal Relationship to Resilience:

Federal representatives were supportive of resiliency as a regional initiative for the GSAA. Eric Strom from USGS, Ginny Fay from NOAA, Jennifer Derby from EPA, Paul Lehmann from USCG, Paul Friday from USMCIE, and Camille Destafney from US Navy all referred to President Obama's Executive Order 13653 which charged Federal agencies with the task to:

Build on recent progress and pursue new strategies to improve the Nation's preparedness and resilience. In doing so, agencies should promote: (1) engaged and strong partnerships and information sharing at all levels of government; (2) risk-informed decision-making and the tools to facilitate it; (3) adaptive learning, in which experiences serve as opportunities to inform and adjust future actions; and (4) preparedness planning.

Executive Order 13653 includes all applicable federal agencies and focuses government actions on resilience to Climate Change specifically, but does not restrict federal agency efforts from exploring multiple approaches in doing so. The goals for the Executive Order are ambitious, and while funding is limited projects and programs are already in place. Living shoreline projects, improving port and marina resiliency, water availability assessments, military installation resiliency assessments, and offshore and coastal protection area projects were all cited as federal investments of national resiliency efforts.

ROP Experiences with Resilience

GOMA:

Laura Bowie, Executive Director of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, provided an overview of GOMA's resiliency activities in that region. GOMA projects address issues of understanding vulnerabilities and increasing resiliency. Examples include insurance workshops and public education handbooks in partnership with Home Depot. Two major environmental disasters in recent years have prompted such action and subsequent funding for these projects; Hurricane Katrina (2005) & the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill (2009). GOMA works by engaging multiple Federal and State agencies, as well as exploring creative options for public involvement. Most projects begin with Federal and State agencies leading these efforts with project oversight being transferred to local organizations at a later date. Being involved with 5013c funding options allows for GOMA to free up their operational costs which in turn provides greater opportunity to explore beneficial resiliency programs.

MARCO:

Kris Ohleth, Executive Director for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean presented information on MARCO's involvement with Resiliency. Hurricane Sandy (2012) led to duplicative and divided efforts that polarized some of the region's recovery efforts. Subsequently MARCO developed an approach to resiliency that identifies the role for regional organization involvement. Currently MARCO is working with the World Ocean Council to construct a business network to help with job creation and objectively understand who is contributing to employment in the region, which in turn contributes to

the economic resiliency of the Mid-Atlantic. MARCO is also working on a vulnerability assessment of coastal infrastructure as part of a strategic plan for regional resilience. According to Ms. Ohleth, regional planning with an eye toward future resilience instead of immediate post disaster recovery can aid a region with its preparedness and ensuing redevelopment efforts.

Perspectives on Resilience in the South Atlantic:

Dr. Jeff Payne, Director of NOAA's Coastal Services Center, provided perspective on resilience in current social context as well as recommended paths forward. Dr. Payne suggested that resilience has become a trendy topic. Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, and Irene, as well as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill have directed a lot of media attention to resiliency and have begun developing a cultural change toward disaster preparedness. This awareness creates multiple opportunities for ROP's to support resilience by encouraging partnerships and working with multiple stakeholders. ROP's can play a critical role in coastal resilience efforts. There is opportunity for ROPs to work with industry and the private sector, especially with insurance & re-insurance agencies, because disaster resilience is intrinsic to their financial stability. Payne also remarked that recovery is a shortcoming of resilience; that fixing the problem after it occurs is an antiquated procedure. There needs to be a regional recovery support framework initiated to aid in community planning and capacity building if we as a nation are to move toward a more resilient future.

Charles Chestnutt from the Army Corps of Engineer's Institute for Water Resources concurred that communication with multiple stakeholders is necessary for accomplishing regional objectives in resilience. There is a strong need to look at financing for governance of resiliency because there isn't a large amount of funding available. Allocation of funds is ad hoc and is not prescribed uniformly. He suggested that defining resilience for particular objectives and describing the deliverables that specific projects can have for resiliency efforts would be beneficial for receiving uniform funding. He suggested a good channel for this would be engaging the governors of the states and discussing the connection to economic benefits for their constituents.

Katie Peek, Coastal Research Scientist at Western Carolina University's Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines, discussed the risks of coastal development in the face of sea level rise. She suggested there is a de facto decision process among all levels of government to protect the shorelines in place indefinitely regardless of cost and problems associated. Beach nourishment is a primary solution for government agencies, but is only a short term solution to a much larger ongoing problem. Ironically, beach nourishment encourages more development which then places more people at risk to property damage, financial instability, and degraded human health conditions. Peek suggested more information regarding the long term spatial and temporal effects of beach nourishment need to be investigated. Furthermore, a need to assess the long term effects on the environment as well as economic priorities for society is warranted.

Dr. Norm Levine Director of College of Charleston's Lowcountry Hazards Center, presented information on the resilience challenges to South Carolina's coast and the City of Charleston, in particular. Levine discussed that there are more potential hazards present than those stemming from weather alone. Earthquakes and other geological events are possible. South Carolina's reliance on tourism, maritime industry and agriculture can all be jeopardized if a large natural event were to occur. In addition, 28% of

the South Carolina population lives in coastal counties with 62,000 homes at risk of severe damage from possible coastal storms. Hazardous materials such as chemical waste and other pollutants must also be taken into consideration when preparing for natural disasters. Inundation or other damage to facilities carrying these toxins can have severe environmental, economic, social, and health impacts. Levine prescribed a course of action that would require a thorough examination of infrastructure to understand specific impacts from major natural hazard events and as well as the mechanisms to incorporate this data into policy decisions. Gathering pertinent information presently can be very beneficial to preparation actions and the overall community resilience of an area.

Lance Gunderson, Professor, Department of Environmental Sciences at Emory University delved into resilience theory and the stability of natural systems. Coastal Communities rely heavily on biological systems, and these systems can be altered by both man-made and natural events. Disruptions in the system can lead to an alternative stable state. However, this alternative state may not be conducive to human needs. Transformations of systems are windows of opportunity with low resilience equaling high conservation of the system, while high resilience equates to low exploitation. However, high resilience leads to a rigidity trap with little to no flexibility. Gunderson stated that there are three ways to govern resilience: maintain, adapt, or restore; yet not all are possible in certain circumstances either singly or in combination. A focus toward resilience should stem from *resilience to what, not of what*.

Mary Conley, The Nature Conservancy's Southeast Region Marine Conservation Director posed some thought provoking questions in her comments on resilience. Conley asked, *What do we mean when we talk about resilience?; we came in to it from 5 different places just in this meeting alone. What ability does a system have to migrate due to human influence? What are the tipping points to making a system irreversibly change? And, how do we enable a positive change through resilience?* She suggested that we need to look at resilience with a coastal focus but not to eliminate particular factors in doing so. Resilience is multifaceted and comes from a combination of how an ecosystem and its inhabitants can adapt. TNC has defined the role of our natural systems as a piece to overall resilience for human populations. Maintaining a system for multiple reasons, the intrinsic, economic, social, cultural, and others is important for human resilience and there is a need to ensure coastal ecosystems have a level of recovery. Understanding the tipping points to ecosystem change in the South Atlantic requires effective communication among partners, with relevant data coordination, and a regional approach with an eye toward economies of scale.

GSAA Funding Discussion

State CZM Learning Session:

Florida, Kelly Samek

Kelly Samek, Coastal Program Administrator for the Florida Coastal Office of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection spoke about Florida's State Coastal Zone Management program and opportunities for GSAA funding there. Florida's CZM program's lead agency is the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. While the entire state is considered a coastal zone under an effects based test, for some purposes only the 35 coastal counties are recognized as coastal zone. There is a structured local grant program for 5 counties; municipalities are responsible for their comprehensive plans. FLDEP Administers cooperative award and 309 funding. The Florida Coastal Office currently

administers the Florida Coastal Management Plan. The FCM was previously funded out of state trust funds with 15- 17 projects annually but is now down to 4. The annual budget for Florida's CZM is \$1.99 million with section 309 receiving \$520,000 and community resilience receiving \$160,000.

Georgia, Brad Gane

Brad Gane, Section Chief, Ecological Services Georgia Department of Natural Resources, commented on Georgia's CZM program and the connection to GSAA activities. Brad highlighted that many Coastal Management Programs (CMPs) are in different stages of activity depending on the time they were instituted. Georgia's CMP has a 306 grant which is the core of its funding. 306 is a 50/50 federal to state match. The Georgia CMP also has a 309 grant which includes disaster resilience projects. 309s are 100% federally funded but these have a lesser amount of funds available. Georgia's coastal incentive grant program has had a reduction of federal funds for redistribution to academics, regional councils, and local programs from 60% to 40%. In order for the CMP to retain the previous 60% Georgia would need to cut staff. Therefore it is difficult for Georgia's CZM program to support operational costs for ROPs.

North Carolina, Braxton Davis

Braxton Davis, Director of North Carolina's Division of Coastal Management spoke about North Carolina's CZM program and the potential for funding opportunities there. North Carolina's CZM is heavily influenced by the Coastal Area Management Act implemented in 1974. CAMA has a focus toward state and local partnerships to accomplish its goals. CAMA is helpful in planning initiatives and is the only comprehensive land plan in the state. Unfortunately funding has been low throughout NCDENR and DCM. The program receives approximately \$500 - \$550,000 a year from permit fees and \$4 million from federal grants. State appropriations are down 30% over past few years and as a result there has been a loss of FTEs. Removal of 5 positions to balance budgets, including the Assistant Director has led the CZM to become very frugal with its finances and is therefore in a very tight position for allocating funds away from its primary programs and projects. However there is potential to support travel and staff with CZM funds, but there is a need to find projects that align with core elements of NCCZM. NC's CZM would not be able to support GSAA operation costs at this time.

South Carolina, Barbara Neal

Barbara Neal, Senior Program Analyst for South Carolina's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management discussed South Carolina's Coastal program and its potential for GSAA funding. SCDHECs budget is similar to the other state program budgets. 306 grants retain the largest amount of available funds, while 309 is substantially less but entirely federally funded. The program currently receives \$280,000 annually from direct permit fees and has 35 FTEs. There is potential for support of the GSAA through some funds in the program. This possibility will need to be explored further. However, beach management plans may be a good avenue for the GSAA to explore. Programmatic initiatives of this kind may have potential to support GSAA related activities.

Progress towards Identifying Funding Support:

Federal Report:

Camille Destafney, of the US Navy discussed the possible funding mechanisms the Navy could provide. Notification on the DOD Legacy Grant applied for in April will come by June. The Navy's Assistant Secretary on the National Ocean Council board is currently looking for funding possibilities for ROPs including the American Foundation, although there are particular legal stipulations that must be addressed. The Navy has a strong interest for continued involvement in the GSAA and GOMA due to sharing mutual goals. The Marine Corps Installations East will try and assist with the Legacy Grant in some capacity.

Eric Strom, USGS South Carolina Water Science Center Director, spoke on behalf of DOI's funding opportunities. GSAA submitted a \$2million study idea in funding for a hard-bottom mapping project through BOEM's Environmental Studies Plan. Indirect costs from the project could provide some operational support for the GSAA. The grant duration is approximately 2 years. BOEMs bird, mammal, and turtle surveying project has been extended and could be a 2016 funding opportunity. The DOI's science climate center has funding available for a regional catalogue of Climate Change effects the GSAA may wish to consider. However, this is programmatic and would not cover operational costs directly.

Jennifer Derby, Section Chief of EPA's Coastal and Ocean Protection Section discussed EPA based opportunities for GSAA operations funding. Currently the GSAA has applied for a Wetland Program Development Grant and a response to funding for this grant will be given by EPA sometime in June. This grant is project based and therefore direct operations costs would only be incorporated into the grant for project purposes. EPA has in kind support available, but no direct funds for operations are currently available.

Ginny Fay, NOAA Assistant Regional Administrator, for NOAA's Habitat Conservation Division discussed NOAA's support of the GSAA. Previous support from NOAA has included travel, in-kind, and various grants. Future ROP grant funding from NOAA is discontinued. The GSAA's best option would be to seek the Regional Coastal Resilience Grant. Operational support is unavailable and is difficult to find.

Paul Friday, Marine Corps Installations East discussed two possible options for GSAA support. Both would come in FY 2016 and both are targeted at water availability and resiliency aspects. However, there are no currently available funds for operational costs and MCIEAST wouldn't be able to directly allocate such funds.

Partner Report

Debra Hernandez, Director of SECOORA reported to the Executive Planning Team the possible funding avenues for the GSAA that SECOORA could provide. SECOORA is supported by NOAA and is active with grant writing. Being the primary entity supporting the GSAA Portal SECOORA would act to keep the Portal up and running but is unable to contribute further data to it. With a \$2.5 million dollar budget there are possible in-kind funds available to support GSAA activity but there is little flexibility. SECOORA's 17 member board would need to vote on distribution of funds toward GSAA initiatives.

Mary Conley has worked closely with Alliance since its inception. TNC would be able to provide in-kind services for the GSAA and has in years past pulled together grants and funding opportunities for the Alliance. TNC is always looking for joint opportunities on larger regional initiatives and there are small amounts of funds available for particular projects. TNC's southeast regional coordination budget is approximately \$200,000 annually and is not able to support GSAA operations directly.

Roger Pugliese of the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council described his agency's potential for funding GSAA operations. The SAFMC gets its authority directly from the Magnuson Stevens Act and funding appropriations receive thorough review. SAFMC has been building support tools and capabilities to enhance understanding species and fishery operations, and is currently looking to refine existing support tools to help their regional mission. However, they have a very limited budget and support for direct operations would need further investigation by SAFMC and NOAA. SAFMC does have capabilities for programmatic funds and will also need more investigation to see what is available.

Rick Devoe, South Carolina Sea Grant Director spoke on behalf of SC Sea Grant's ability to aid the GSAA in operations funding. SC Sea Grant was one of the original support agencies that previously gave the GSAA administrative support. SC Sea Grant also acted as Grant Administrator for the GSAA and provided website development and communications support in years past. Because the Sea Grant budget is limited, suggestions to alternative funding for GSAA operations included a call for state CMPs to play a larger role in the ROP through more research, outreach, and education initiatives. The other suggestion was to look toward raising support through programmatic grants which would then provide funding for operations support.

Approaches to Private Funding:

The GSAA has been exploring funding options for the near-term, but a call was issued to look toward longer term options. The group agreed that the Steering Group would need to provide approval. Long term funding options will provide financial stability for the GSAA and allows relationships to be built with partners over a larger time frame. The group also discussed the need for the GSAA to diversify its funding options by looking at multiple options and partners over differing time periods. Several participants agreed to help identify potential contacts within private foundations to find support for the GSAA. Exploring the Moore, Walton and NFWF foundations, as well as universities and the Reynolds Smith foundation were suggested with possible connections between group members and some of the suggested organizations. Discussion of the GSAA becoming a 501c3 to aid in funding opportunities was put aside in order to be discussed further with the Steering Group members. The group established that reviewing the budget to look for figures and amounts needed for funding to determine gaps and find items that aren't vital to everyday operations is needed before hosting any discussion with the Steering Group. The general consensus was that the Regional Coordinator position should be supported to maintain operations. It was also proposed that the newly established regional driver would help in focusing efforts toward finding sponsors for the annual meeting therefore offsetting costs. Discussion with the Steering Group was planned for May 28th.

Focusing a GSAA Regional Driver in Resilience

The EPT took part in a brainstorming exercise to establish the top priorities for South Atlantic Resilience. Flooding threats, coastal storms, and habitat function loss came to the top of the list through a general vote. Following this, the group brainstormed what a resilient South Atlantic looked like. The top suggestion was *“A region whose economy, infrastructure, fisheries, tourism, etc. quickly bounce back from adverse events without long-term damage”*. The group discussed directions forward with resiliency and highlighted the need to incorporate the economic aspects of resiliency. A general agreement was made that in order for a regional driver to be viable, it will need support from multiple agencies across and all the states. To close the group reiterated their conclusions and next actions to begin implementing the regional driver and finding funding options for GSAA operations.