



COASTAL AMERICA UPDATE

July - December Issue

2007

J.L. SCOTT MARINE EDUCATION CENTER DESIGNATION

On November 2, 2007 Coastal America designated the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center-Gulf Coast Research Laboratory of the University of Southern Mississippi (MEC) as the network's 21st Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center (CELC) and the fifth CELC in the Gulf of Mexico. First Lady, Laura Bush, presented the keynote address welcoming the MEC to the CELC network. The prestigious designation was presided over by James L. Connaughton, Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality, and Chair, Coastal America Partnership.

The MEC is a invaluable addition to the CELC network, offering excellent education programs and a strong dedication to its mission of promoting ocean literacy. Despite the complete destruction of the Marine Education Center and Aquarium in 2004 from *Hurricane Katrina*, the MEC remains as one of the Nations leaders in marine education and outreach.

Also in attendance at the event was Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, U.S. Department of the Interior; Governor Haley Barbour, Governor of Mississippi; Benjamin Grumbles, Assistant Administrator for Water, USEPA; Timothy R.E. Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, and other key officials. Mrs. Bush used the occasion to announce a new Administration initiative on marine debris, working in close collaboration on this critical marine issue with the CELC network,



First Lady, Laura Bush, delivers the keynote speech at the Designation Ceremony of the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center in Ocean Springs, MS on November 2, 2007.

the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (CWRP) and Coastal America's other key partners. The federal agencies partnered with Coastal America, the CWRP, which provided significant funding, and the CELC network to present key commitments to collaborate and provide assistance to the MEC. Coastal America and its partners will be contributing to such things as staff and teacher training and professional development, education initiatives, exhibitry and curriculum development, site visits and tours, seminar exchange programs, technical support, an Ocean Today Kiosk linked to the Smithsonian Ocean Hall and assistance in the rebuilding of the MEC's library resources. Coastal America is pleased to have an institution

so devoted to marine education join its vibrant CELC network and is looking forward to future collaborations with the MEC.

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National Marine Debris Initiative

The CELC network and the CWRP developed a coordinated marine debris initiative to reduce marine debris and increase awareness of other ocean and coastal habitat issues. Working with the 26 million people that visit a CELC network each year, and the countless students and families that take part in CELC sponsored activities, the CELC and CWRP have set out a year long series of coordinated events across the country on marine debris. This initiative will include actions such as beach and river cleanups to get citizens involved and help spread the word about what we can do to clean up marine debris. In addition, the CELCs, working with the CWRP, have committed to sponsor a



Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, U.S. Department of the Interior, speaks at the J.L. Scott MEC Designation Ceremony.

“The Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center network connects with more than 25 million people each year, educating them about the function and value of coastal resources.”

Secretary Kempthorne, US DOI

coordinated Gulf Region and Earth Day international series of marine debris events, as well as a coordinated series tied to the opening of the Smithsonian Ocean Hall in September 2008. The CWRP has also committed to fund a CELC Teach the Teachers Gulf program that will teach up to 75 teachers from throughout the Gulf region how to teach their students about marine debris. The CWRP will also focus on recruiting new companies to support the work of the CELCs on this critical marine health and literacy issue.



Marine debris panel members: Jerry Enzler, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium; Patrick Hester, Spectra Energy; Vicki Spruill, The Ocean Conservancy; and Steven Russell, American Chemistry Council.



First Lady, Laura Bush and Governor of Mississippi, Haley Barbour speak with school children about marine debris and the impacts it has on the environment. Mrs. Bush and Governor Barbour met with the children on the day of the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center Designation Ceremony.



Regional Implementation Team Updates

Northeast (NERIT)

The Northeast Regional Implementation Team (NERIT) collaborates on projects in each of the five New England coastal states. NERIT representatives meet monthly or quarterly in each state supporting the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnerships in New England. The NERIT focus has been on salt marsh restoration, dam removal to improve anadromous fisheries migration and support for state coastal program priorities. Each



Students plant Spartina at the dedication event of the Dun Fudgin Salt Marsh Restoration in Gloucester, MA.

state and tribe is represented on the team. NERIT has two designated CELCs; the New England Aquarium in Boston, MA and the Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration in Mystic, CT. NERIT's Military Liaison supports IRT projects, by identifying future opportunities to collaborate with the military and this year produced an Osprey Management Plan for the Cutler Naval Station in Maine. This year Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnerships in the Northeast granted over \$100 thousand dollars in CWRP funds in support of Coastal America projects. Massachusetts Energy and Environment Agency instituted a task force in August to address the restoration and protection of aquatic wetlands, which included the state, NGO and Coastal America NERIT agencies. In September the Town Pond Project, which includes involvement with the RI CWRP, opened its tidal

gates to restore tidal flow to this restored wetland. On July 5, 2007 the OSV Bold, EPA's 224 foot Research Vessel was docked in Newport, RI for a day long open house, staffed by Coastal America NERIT members and EPA scientists. Over 500 people toured the ship and learned about agency missions.

Southeast (SERIT)

After serving many years as the Southeast Regional Chair, Bo Crum will be stepping down from this position to prepare for his retirement from the EPA. Members of the SERIT are most appreciative of Bo's leadership and energy. Jennifer Derby, an environmental scientist with EPA Region four Coastal Section, will be joining the SERIT to serve as new Co-Chair. Jennifer has worked at EPA Region 4 for 16 years in wetlands, stream and estuarine restoration and protection work. Her work and interests include shellfish growing area restoration, living shorelines and shoreline management, and dam removal work.

Gulf of Mexico (GMRIT)

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance's state management teams met with representatives of the Integrated Committee on Science and Resource Management Integration (ICOSRMI) on August 24, 2007, in Biloxi, Mississippi. The meeting's objectives were to discuss the Alliance's accomplishments and to explore avenues for strengthening state and federal cooperation to achieve the Alliance's current and future goals. The meeting was also attended by members of the Alliance's federal workgroup and representatives of various stakeholder groups in the Gulf region.

Southwest (SWRIT)

The Southwest RIT continues to focus a great deal of effort on recruiting new corporate members to join the CA CWRP Chapter, and plans on developing a robust CWRP in 2008. The team has also been focused on

completing the final steps with the IRT program to remove the San Clemente Dam.

Northwest (NWRIT)

The Northwest region continues its efforts to establish a CWRP chapter in Oregon. The Team also worked with the Army this summer to identify derelict fishing nets in restricted areas adjacent to military bases. This is part of the IRT program and the annual effort to remove derelict fishing gear in the Puget Sound.

Alaska (AKRIT)

The Alaska Regional Implementation Team met in October to discuss regional issues as well as project proposals. Three proposals were reviewed (a creek restoration project, a suite of watershed projects, and a storm-water public education project), and each will be further developed before the team takes action to implement them. The AKRIT is proposing to use the IRT program for marine debris cleanup in remote areas of Alaska, and continues to actively search for support within its partners and the military. The Alaska Forum on the Environment will be held in Anchorage, Alaska the week of February 11-15, 2008. During the Forum, at the keynote luncheon on February 13, the Partnership Award Ceremony for Salmon in the City will take place with Mayor Mark Begich of the Municipality of Anchorage receiving the award for the project team. Tim Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary for NOAA, will be presenting the award. On February 14 the AKRIT will hold its annual Regional Principals meeting.

Great Lakes/Upper Mississippi (GLRIT)

An energized effort has begun in the Great Lakes region to establish a CWRP chapter to take the lead in the region

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CELC UPDATES

CELC Directors 2007 Annual Meeting

The CELC Directors met on September 19, 2007 during the Annual Meeting of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in Philadelphia, PA. The Directors met to discuss several CELC network wide initiatives including the Ocean Interpretive Stations Initiative. All CELC members agreed to participate in the Ocean Interpretive Stations initiative and endorsed other collaborative efforts including an Art Contest and coordinated events to be held in conjunction with the opening of the Smithsonian's Ocean Hall in September 2008.



CELC Directors gathered in Philadelphia, PA on September 19 for the annual Directors' Meeting to discuss CELC network activities and initiatives

Ocean Today Kiosk Pilot Project Update

On December 5 staff members from the National Aquarium in Baltimore and the Shedd Aquarium met in Washington, D.C. to discuss the installation of the Ocean Today Kiosk in the five Coastal America pilot sites with members of the NOAA and Smithsonian Institution

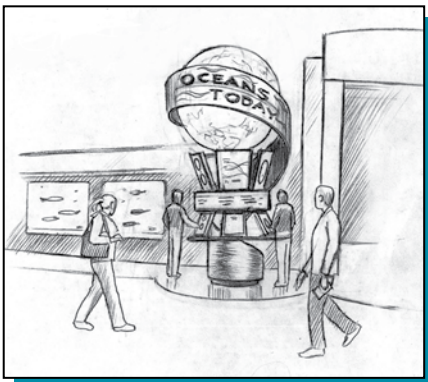


Photo: Shedd Aquarium

Ocean Today Kiosk Rendering.

Kiosk Team. Discussions were primarily technical in nature, with key topics such as hardware, software and content development being the center of discussion. The meeting was successful in keeping participants involved with both NOAA and Smithsonian staff as well as increasing coordination and

progressive planning within the CELCs for the installation the kiosks. The five pilot sites are the National Aquarium in Baltimore, the John G. Shedd Aquarium, National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, Aquarium of the Pacific, and the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center-Gulf Coast Research Laboratory. These CELCs will be working to develop regional content for the display which will yield geographic diversity within each kiosk.

CELC Executive Committee Principal Briefings

On October 23 CELC Executive Committee members: Ted Beattie, President of the Shedd Aquarium; Dave Pittenger, Director of the National Aquarium in Baltimore; and Jerry Enzler, Director of the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium along with Sharon Walker, J.L. Scott Marine Education Center convened in Washington, D.C. for a series of CELC briefings with several Principals. The briefings gave the committee an opportunity to speak at length about the Ocean Interpretive Stations Initiative, which would include the installation of an Ocean Today

Kiosk in all Coastal America CELCs as well as offer other media opportunities to the CELCs.

Veracruz Staff Training at the Shedd Aquarium

When the Acuario de Veracruz was designated as a CELC this past June, five CELCs committed to hosting the Veracruz staff at their facilities to train them in various areas of study. As a supplement to this commitment, the CWRP committed \$10 thousand dollars to alleviate the travel costs for the staff to receive this important training. These commitments enabled three Veracruz staff members to travel to the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago for a full week at the end of October. Two of the staff members trained in the education department and the third member studied marine mammals. The Veracruz staff has reported that the trip was extremely beneficial and will enable them to enhance their current education programs.

December 6 ORRAP Meeting

The Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Panel held a meeting on December 6 in Washington, DC to

discuss Ocean Education within federal agencies. Steven Kinberg gave a presentation on behalf of Coastal America. The presentation focused on how Coastal America is addressing the implementation tasks on Ocean Education that were assigned in 2006 by ICOSRMI. He discussed future plans, ocean education opportunities, and strategic plans for ocean education within Coastal America.

Alaska Sea Life Center

The Sea Train – An Experience Like No Other

“How fast does this classroom go?”

“How many calories does Woody the Steller sea lion eat every day?”

“Which is more efficient for transporting 1489 students and 446 adults to the Alaska SeaLife Center: one five-car train or five school buses?”

These could be questions on an Alaska version of “Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?” That’s because the 5th graders in the Anchorage School District (ASD) worked out the answers to these and other energy-related questions during the 2007 Sea Train.

The Sea Train, using Alaska Railroad cars as mobile classrooms, provides a science-based learning experience designed by a team of educators from ASD and the SeaLife Center. It goes far beyond a traditional field trip by combining energy-related activities with teacher training, assessment tools, and printed materials that reinforce



Students participate in the SeaLife Center’s Sea Train Program.

key concepts. So while students are transported beyond their schools and neighborhoods to the SeaLife Center, they can take advantage of the journey to explore and investigate science concepts.

By the way, the answers are: 25 mph, 67,860 calories; and the buses. If you didn’t know these answers, look at the camera and say: “I am not smarter than an Anchorage 5th grader who’s experienced the Sea Train!”

South Carolina Aquarium

South Carolina Diamondback Terrapin Conservation Program

Early in the summer of 2007, the South Carolina Aquarium, in partnership with the North Inlet- Winyah Bay NEER, NOAA and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, began an effort to promote the conservation of the diamondback terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin*).

Aquarium staff traveled to more than 30 outreach events along the coast of South Carolina raising awareness of the problems facing diamondback terrapins due to marine debris and distributing bycatch reduction devices (BRD) for crab traps and installation kits. Local fishing tackle and supply stores have also taken excluders and distributed them along with an information packet when a crab trap is purchased. To date the project has distributed over 1000 BRDs and has received feedback from local recreational crabbers that they are using the excluders.

Recently, the project has expanded to include 6 local schools. Following up on contacts made at outreach events, Aquarium staff presented ways that schools can become involved in helping diamondback terrapins. Each school has defined a grade appropriate project and are working with Aquarium staff to bring these about.

Aquarium of the Pacific

The proposed idea of ocean literacy podcasts originated in June during a discussion on new CELC network-wide initiatives. It was proposed that podcasts would be produced as short presentations consisting of (or any combination of) video, stills, audio, and music and would be available through the internet. The Aquarium of the Pacific has moved forward with this proposal and is producing three minute video podcasts from each of the guest lecturers that visits the Aquarium. For example, the Aquarium has produced a podcast from an interview with Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, who spoke about *Fishwatch* and *Global Climate Change* as well as a piece entitled *Solving Wicked Environmental Problems* with Dr. Herman Karl, Co-Director, MIT-USGS Science Impact Collaborative (MUSIC). A complete listing of guest speakers and the podcasts are available in the multimedia section of the Aquarium of the Pacific’s website at www.aquariumofpacific.org.

National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium

Jerry Enzler, Director of NMRMA and CELC Executive Committee Board member, continues to act as the project lead in Coastal America’s Ocean Interpretive Stations Initiative. Currently the NMRMA is working with the four other CELCs receiving Ocean Today Kiosks (Aquarium of the Pacific, Shedd Aquarium, National Aquarium in Baltimore and the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center) to plan for the kiosks to be operational in September 2008. The NMRMA and other pilot kiosk participants are also working with the entire CELC network to develop content and gain support for the installment of the kiosks in each of the CELCs.



National Overview

At the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center (MEC) designation ceremony held on November 2, in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, the National Board Members of the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (CWRP) announced a new effort to provide funding to allow the MEC to hold two-day marine debris teacher workshops for teachers from all over the Gulf Coast region, support for the MEC staff to train at other institutions within the CELC network, as well as funding for the purchase of new materials and resources for the MEC's library. Spectra Energy, Chair of the CWRP, matched all funds that were provided by the CWRP National Board in support of the MEC.

In mid-October, Shelley Fudge came on board as the new CWRP Coordinator. Shelley comes from the US EPA, where she worked for 17 years on a variety of public-private partnership programs, as well as regulatory development efforts. Prior to her work with the EPA, Shelley served in the USDA Forest Service and Interior's National Park Service. Shelley looks forward to working with state CWRP chapters on creative ways to re-invigorate their CWRP programs and to developing bridges between the CELC and CWRP partnerships.

New York CWRP

The NY CWRP recently launched a new chapter website. (See www.ny-cwrp.org.) The website features the chapter's operating principles, list of participating members, ways in which corporations can get involved in the chapter, and descriptions of the project proposals that were reviewed during the chapter's November 15 meeting and that are currently under consideration for funding.

CWRP UPDATES

The chapter successfully contributed to a number of projects during the past six months. As part of a large effort to increase the quality of freshwater habitat in the Peconic River, the NY CWRP funded part of the design and construction of signage for the Riverhead, NY fish passage, as well as another project upstream focused on eradicating an invasive species called water primrose. CWRP participation in the project provided an opportunity for the chapter to be introduced to Long Island.

The NY chapter also contributed toward the restoration of Canoga Marsh, a cattail expanse along the northwest shore of Cayuga Lake near the Montezuma Wildlife Refuge. Restoration of the marsh supports the



Canoga Marsh Project on Cayuga Lake.

Town of Fayette's new comprehensive plan that hails protection of open space and natural resources. Funding from the NY CWRP is being used to improve water quality and wildlife habitat between the road and a prairie pothole complex. Erosive rills that compromised the lakeside cattail marsh are being blocked and rerouted, a vernal pool is being excavated and planted, and trees are being eliminated from other work areas. A roadside pull off,



Grangebel Park, the site of NY CWRP's signage contribution to the fishway project on Long Island's Peconic River.

created outside of the boundary of the easement, will allow travelers along this section of the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byway to safely enjoy the stunning vista of the marsh and lake, and will provide a safe place for school buses to unload students that are studying the marsh. The NY CWRP is also contributing to the development of education kiosks for visitors at the roadside pull off. As more funds and volunteers become available, the seminal work of the Chapter is expected to be expanded to make the site a nice educational stop for area schools and families.

In addition, the chapter contributed to a New York City neighborhood river edge cleanup & bank restoration project.

Massachusetts CWRP

In a show of support for the public-private collaboration that has accomplished 26 restoration projects since 1999, over 75 corporate and governmental members of the MA-CWRP turned out for the CWRP Annual Event in early December. The Massachusetts' Energy and Environmental Affairs Office used the occasion to premier its new policy document, *Dam Removal in Massachusetts—A Basic Guide for Project Proponents* (see http://www.mass.gov/envir/docs/eea_dam_removal_guidance.pdf). Currently, 17 aquatic habitat restoration projects are under development with CWRP corporate contributors. State Senator Pamela Resor, Chairwoman of the legislature's



The Ballou Dam blocking fish passage.



Yokum Brook after the Ballou Dam was removed to restore fish passage.

Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee, praised the work of the CWRP and highlighted the growing interest of legislators in addressing global warming, especially its impacts upon coastal areas. The Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection also encouraged CWRP to assist with the expected growth in dam removal projects to improve river and stream habitats. Lt. Col. Nelson of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New England District joined CWRP Chairman George Olson (Procter & Gamble) in honoring ten companies that contributed services or funds during the past year.

New Jersey CWRP

During the second half of 2007, the NJ CWRP focused on planning for the future from both a project and membership perspective. As a result of these efforts, the chapter anticipates welcoming three new corporate members early in 2008. The group has also established a goal of increasing annual dues to the \$100,000 level. On a project level, the group is working on several long term projects, including

the Rahway River Restoration, which is being led by NJDEP with federal partners USEPA, USACOE, USFWS and NOAA; and the Weequahic Park Lake/ Habitat restoration being led by USEPA with potential involvement of USDOT, the Essex County Parks Department and NJDEP.

At the same time progress was made on the implementation of several previously approved projects. One is the Seed Storage Facility, which was overseen by USFWS personnel and completed in conjunction with the Friends of Forsythe, an NGO that works with the service to assist in management of the refuge. NJ CWRP's contribution covered the cost of the installation. Another project called the Rain Garden Demonstration Project, which received chapter approval in May of 2007, will support the construction of demonstration rain gardens at several locations around the state. The rain gardens will support actions being undertaken by both USEPA and NJDEP to promote an alternative landscaping method in order to reduce stormwater runoff and provide local ecological habitats. Three subgroups were identified to receive NJ CWRP support, the Raritan Highlands Compact, Monmouth University and the City of Linden Environmental Commission. Planning has been completed for the Monmouth and Linden rain garden projects, with construction scheduled for the spring of 2008; and the Raritan rain garden project has been completed.



NJ CWRP's contribution covered the cost of the installation of a new Seed Storage Facility.

NJ CWRP's contribution is expected to be in the range of between \$15,000 and \$18,000 in cash and in-kind services (including plant donations, Pinelands Nursery and engineering support, ENSR and Berger Associates). As an outgrowth of this project, several members, led by Verizon, are developing broader rain garden initiatives that may lead to further NJ CWRP projects in the future.

Another project, the Boom Anchor/ Osprey Platform, moved forward through the significant efforts of Al Modjeski of ENSR. During the year he worked with NJDEP to identify permitting requirements and then to finalize installation locations. Installation of the boom anchors is expected to take place in the first half of 2008.

NJ CWRP members met on September 19th at NJDEP in Trenton, NJ. The meeting was hosted by Asst. Commissioner Jay Watson and included a brief update from Commissioner Lisa Jackson, who praised the members for their efforts. At this meeting, in addition to the discussion of various projects, the members discussed efforts to increase the exposure of the organization via workshop presentations and other public activities. One area where this will be advanced is via the brochure that the Raritan Highlands Complex will produce on the construction and use of rain gardens. This brochure will acknowledge the NJ CWRP contribution toward the effort and include the CWRP logo.

Rhode Island CWRP

The Rhode Island CWRP chapter participated in two aquatic habitat restoration projects since last spring. The Town Pond Project, located next to Mount Hope Bay, restored 23 acres of salt pond and salt marsh habitat in a wildlife sanctuary located

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CWRP Updates Cont'd

in Portsmouth Rhode Island. The restoration of the salt marsh will provide habitat for coastal fish and wildlife, such as shellfish, flounder and other finfish, herons, egrets, and waterfowl, and restore the productivity and ecological value of the area.

The \$4.6 million restoration project is a joint effort between the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Corps, the Rhode Island Corporate Wetland Restoration Partnership and numerous state, local and non-governmental agencies. The RI CWRP, through the generosity of Arch Chemicals and Metals Recycling, LLC, contributed \$15,000 toward the project. National Grid also donated their services for the installation of Osprey nest platforms.

The RI CWRP also contributed funding toward the purchase of a rubber-tracked truck called an ASV Scout that will be used to transport materials out of sensitive habitat areas. The truck, somewhat larger than a golf cart, will complement two "Marsh Walker"-type vehicles already in use by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. The new low impact vehicle will greatly enhance efficiency since the job currently must be done by hand.

Connecticut CWRP

The number of CT CWRP member companies is growing. In 2007, the CT CWRP was successful in gaining the corporate support of NRG Energy and Fuss & O'Neill.

The CT CWRP was involved in seeing the Zemko Dam Removal Project come to reality on the Eight Mile River in Salem, CT. The chapter was an original partner in this project, contributing \$20,000. Another CT CWRP effort, called the Jordan Millpond Project, in Waterford, CT, was completed and a fish ladder was successfully

installed in the spring of 2007. The CT CWRP contributed over \$17,000 to this project.

Recently the CT CWRP pledged funds for two additional projects: a Phragmites removal project in Ledgard, CT, and a fish ladder installation project at the StanChem facility in Middletown, CT. The CT CWRP will be soliciting project applications for the spring 2008 funding round. Applications are available on the chapter's website at www.ctcwrp.org.

New Hampshire CWRP

The New Hampshire CWRP finished a successful year with the funding of an emergency restoration of Warren Brook and a recognition event at which David Manning, Executive Vice President and Chief Environmental Officer of Corporate Affairs of the KeySpan Corporation, and Thomas Burack, Commissioner of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, were both keynote speakers. With a number of projects in the pipeline, The NH CWRP looks forward toward a successful 2008.

Delaware CWRP

The Delaware CWRP worked with the national, regional, and state chapters of Ducks Unlimited to bring the Webfoot program to every fourth grader in the state of Delaware. Project Webfoot is a nonprofit wetlands education program that offers teachers learning materials that can be integrated into their existing school curriculums. The organization was recently recognized with a special award from the education team at National Ducks Unlimited.

Maine CWRP

In July, the Maine CWRP awarded funds to four new river and salt marsh restoration projects. In addition, two previously approved projects were awarded services. Over the past few months the Maine CWRP has been coordinating between CWRP member service companies and project

sponsors to match the appropriate services required for these projects. The Maine CWRP has also engaged in discussions about providing various services toward the Penobscot River Restoration Project.

2007 Coastal America Award Recipients

Partnership Awards

- Woodlands Trail and Park Restoration Team, *Belle Chasse, Louisiana*
- Bolsa Chica Wetlands Restoration Team, *Huntington Beach, California*
- Learning in Florida's Environment Program, *Florida*
- FKNMS Coral Protection and Restoration Program, *Key West, Florida*
- California "Thank you Ocean" Campaign, *California*
- Salmon in the City Stewardship Initiative, *Anchorage, Alaska*
- Yokum Brook Restoration Team, *Becket, Massachusetts*
- Duwamish Alive! Coalition, *Seattle, Washington*

Special Recognition Awards

- National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, *Dubuque, Iowa*
- John G. Shedd Aquarium, *Chicago, Illinois*
- America's WETLAND: Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana, *Louisiana*

Spirit Awards

- Woodbridge Creek and Joseph Medwick Marsh Project Team, *Woodbridge, New Jersey*
- Elders Point Jamaica Bay Salt Marsh Islands Restoration, *Jamaica Bay, New York*
- Los Machos Mangrove Restoration Project, *Puerto Rico*



2007 Coastal America Partnership Awards



Bolsa Chica Wetlands Restoration Team received a Partnership Award in October 2007.

Bolsa Chica Wetlands Restoration Team Receives Partnership Award

On October 26th 2007 the eight members of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands Restoration Team were recognized by White House representative Dr. Daniel Walker for their long time dedication and leadership efforts resulting in the restoration of over 1,200 acres of wetlands in Orange County California. The ceremony was held on a beautiful fall morning at the Bolsa Chica wetland site, a surviving remnant of a former tidal salt marsh ecosystem. After 25 years of public debate over the fate of the Bolsa Chica wetlands, the



An aerial view of the Bolsa Chica Lowlands Restoration site.

unique partnership of eight state and federal resources agencies was formed to acquire and restore the degraded wetland habitats. Beginning in 1996, combined efforts of these partners led to the acquisition of approximately 948 acres of the Bolsa Chica Lowlands in Orange County. The Bolsa Chica Wetlands Restoration Project effort that followed is the largest, most complex, coastal wetland restoration project in southern California. This project is a vital contribution to furthering the President's goal to improve, restore, and replace 3 million acres of wetlands during his presidency.

Woodlands Trail and Park Restoration Team Receives Partnership Award

On November 7, 2007 the Woodlands Trail and Park project was recognized with a Coastal America Partnership Award for their hard work to secure wetlands in a public trust & create (and then rebuild after the Hurricane Katrina) over six miles of pedestrian trails. Mr. Robert DeHann, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, U.S. Department of Transportation served as the awarding official and congratulated

team members on their steadfast efforts to plan for smart growth while also preserving, protecting and celebrating the natural beauty and cultural treasures within the 10,000-acre peninsula in the Metropolitan New Orleans area. The Woodlands group is a partnership of 15 local, regional and national groups working with organizations, private citizens, interest groups, corporations and governmental entities serving as a coalition to discover and celebrate the natural and cultural history of this area.



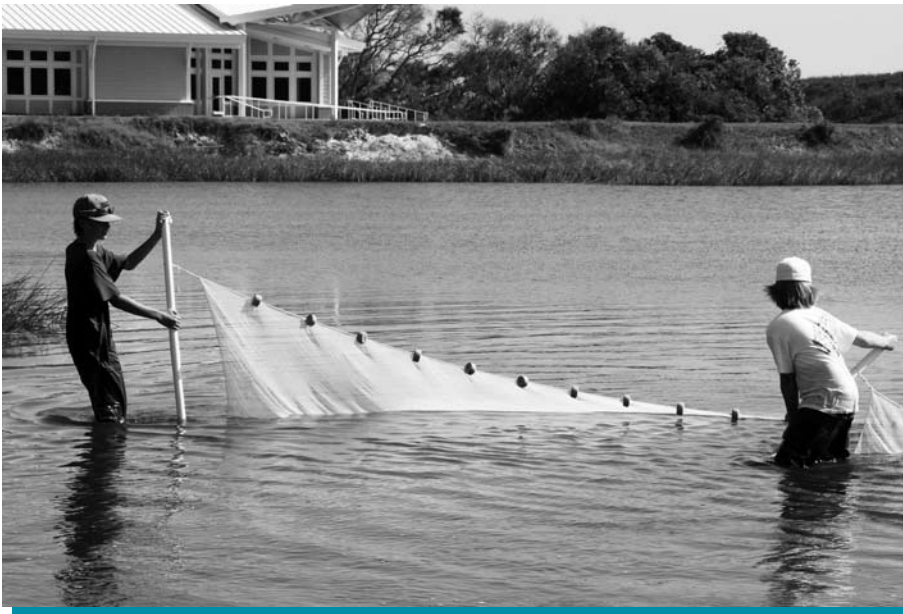
Aerial photo of the Woodlands Trail and Park.



Students enjoying the Woodlands Trail and Park.

Learning in Florida's Environment Program Receives Partnership Award

On November 15, 2007 Florida's Learning in Florida's Environment Team (LIFE) was awarded with a 2007 Coastal America Partnership Award for their efforts to improve and expand environmental education in Florida while fulfilling state education priorities. At a ceremony held on the idyllic Honeymoon Island State Beach, the



Students participate in field work through Florida's LIFE program

Director of the NOAA Coastal Services Center, Margaret Davidson represented the Coastal America Partnership and applauded students and teachers involved in the initiative for taking the lead to enhance coastal and ocean education in their communities. Receiving the partnership award on behalf of the LIFE Program was Florida's Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Michael Sole who was congratulated for his leadership to advance ocean education in Florida.

One of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FL DEP) strategic priorities is to increase diversity and involvement in environmental science. In an effort to meet this priority, the FL DEP's Office of Environmental Education developed the Learning in Florida's Environment (LIFE) program. To date, nine LIFE program sites have been established on public lands in six state parks, two national estuarine research reserves, one national forest, and one national wildlife refuge. At the conclusion of the ceremony participants were treated to a boat ride and site tour of Florida's most visited State Park.

America's WETLAND: Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana Receives Special Recognition Award

On November 30th 2007 America's WETLAND: Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana was awarded a 2007 Coastal America Special Recognition Award for developing the largest and most successful public education campaign in the states history. The Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mr. H. Dale Hall presented the award on behalf of the Partnership. The Campaign was awarded during a luncheon ceremony at the America's Energy Coast Leadership Forum in Baton Rouge, LA for their leadership in the effort to protect and restore Louisiana's vanishing coast through a variety of initiatives including broadcast and print media, tours, high profile summits and a website.

UPCOMING AWARDS CEREMONIES

FKNMS Coral Protection and Restoration Program Coastal America Partnership Award

On February 2, 2008 Members of the FKNMS Coral Protection & Restoration Program will be commended for their foresight and initiative to save and

relocate susceptible corals. Recognizing the threat to corals living in vulnerable coastal systems Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary personnel and their partners including government agencies, public and private aquaria, universities, research labs and volunteers, formed the Coral Rescue, Relocation, Nursery and Beneficial Use Program. Since its inception in 2003 the Program has rescued more than 7,000 coral colonies which are either relocated to restore depleted areas, used to educate the public, or used for research to protect coral reefs for the future.

California "Thank You Ocean" Campaign

The California public ocean awareness campaign, "Thank You Ocean", will be honored with a 2007 Coastal America Partnership award on February 11th 2008 at the Aquarium of the Pacific. The popular Thank You Ocean Campaign is a statewide partnership organized by NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program and the State of California Resources Agency; it is strongly supported by the California Ocean Communicators Alliance, an impressive network of over 300 California communications specialists from ocean-related agencies, organizations and business.

Salmon in the City Stewardship Initiative

On February 13, 2008 Mayor Mark Begich and the Municipality of Anchorage will be awarded for implementing the multi-agency stewardship initiative, Salmon in the City. At a special luncheon ceremony during the annual Alaska Forum on the Environment, the initiative will be awarded for their efforts to accomplish several projects to remove barriers to fish passage, maintain and restore riparian habitats, and increase public involvement in salmon and watershed stewardship in Anchorage. The program is part of a national effort to ensure healthy populations of Pacific salmon.

Innovative Readiness Training Program

Army Projects in Support of the Ocean Action Plan

On October 8, 2007, Will Nuckols, Coastal America Project Coordinator, and Army Diving and Watercraft Officers briefed Jim Connaughton, Chairman, CEQ, Gerhard Kuska, CEQ, Dan Walker, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and Dan Basta, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries Program, on Army projects in support of the Ocean Action Plan aboard an Army Ship. They also conducted a site visit



Photo: Will Nuckols

En route to the James River Reserve Fleet, aboard the Army Landing Craft El Caney, CPT PJ Inskip, Commander of the Army Dive Company, provides a briefing on the Army Dive Company's efforts to combine military training with environmental projects in need of diving support.



Photo: Will Nuckols

Martin Walker, MARAD, DOT, provides a tour and briefing to a group aboard the USS Gage, World War II attack transport ship. Discussions aboard the ship included the fate of the ships on MARAD's non-retention list, such as the Gage, and whether they will be scrapped or possible continue their life as artificial reefs.

of the Navy Reserve Fleet on the James River in Virginia. Department of Transportation (DOT)/Maritime Administration (MARAD) provided the James River Reserve Fleet overview and transportation to the fleet was provided by an Army Landing Craft Utility (LCU) from Ft. Eustis, VA. Converting ships to reefs has an IRT connection as a former MARAD ship, the ex-USAFS Vandenberg, is poised to be towed to Florida as a sea-tow training exercise where the ship will become an artificial reef. A discussion on reefing additional "non-retention" reserve fleet ships is ongoing.

from page 3 - Great Lakes

and support and contribute to Great Lakes projects and education programs. EPA Region 5 and Coastal America are also working with the Shedd Aquarium to develop content for the Ocean Today Kiosk that will be installed and operational by the opening of the Smithsonian Ocean Hall in September 2008.

Pacific Islands (PIRIT)

The PIRIT team has identified marine debris to be a significant problem in the Pacific Islands Region and is investigating ways to address the

problem through federal partners and the IRT program. The PIRIT team is also seeking corporations to become involved in a CWRP chapter representing the region.



Students learn research methods through field work and education brought on through the LIFE program.

Events Calendar

February 2

Florida Coral Award Ceremony
Key West, Florida

February 8

Mid-Atlantic Regional
Implementation Team Meeting
New York

February 11

Thank You Ocean Partnership
Award Ceremony
Long Beach, California

February 13

Salmon in the City Partnership
Award Ceremony
Alaska Forum on the
Environment
Alaska Regional Principals
Meeting
Seward, Alaska

February 26

CWRP National and State
Meeting
Washington, D.C.

April 19

Duwamaish Alive! Coalition
Partnership Award Ceremony
Seattle, Washington

April 22

International Earth Day
Marine Debris Event Series

May 30

Captain's Ball
National Mississippi River
Musuem and Aquarium
Dubuque, Iowa

June 3-5

Capitol Hill Ocean Week
Washington, D.C.

June 8

World Ocean Day



Jim Connaughton, Chairman of CEQ, and Dr. Martha Saunders, President of USM, sign the Memorandum of Understanding between Coastal America and the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center, designating it as a Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center. For full story, see page 1.

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Coastal America is a partnership among federal, state and local governments and private alliances to address environmental problems along our nation's coasts. The federal partners are: Executive Office of the President, Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, State, Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration and The National Science Foundation .



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