



COASTAL AMERICA UPDATE

January-March

WINTER 2005

AN EXPANDING NETWORK *North Carolina Aquariums Designated The 18th Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center*

In recognition of the North Carolina Aquariums as an outstanding environmental institution, federal and state officials gathered at Kure Beach, NC, for a Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center designation (CELC) ceremony. Governor Michael F. Easley of North Carolina proclaimed January 13, 2005 as *Aquarium Day*. The Proclamation was one of many honors bestowed upon the Aquariums during their designation as the 18th CELC. The President's Ocean Action Plan released in December announced the NC Aquariums' CELC designation and the Administration's intent to expand the CELC network. P. Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Secretary, Department of Interior, represented the Administration at the January 13th ceremony. Scarlett stated, "the CELC network connects with more than 20 million people each year, educating them about the function and value of coastal resources." Benjamin H. Grumbles, EPA Assistant Administrator



Executives from the Federal, State & North Carolina Aquariums pose at The Alligator during an aquarium tour at Kure Beach.

for Water, presided over the commitments of 12 federal agencies. Grumbles said "the North Carolina Aquariums is distinguished among the 18 Coastal America Learning Centers because there are *three* North Carolina Aquariums. Strategically situated along the North

Carolina coast, the three aquaria can provide expansive outreach." David Griffin, NC Aquariums Director said, "this designation will make it possible for us to deliver our conservation message to far more people, far more effectively, than ever."

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Call for Nominations

Coastal America is accepting nominations for the 2005 Awards Program. The awards recognize outstanding partnership efforts to protect, preserve and restore coastal resources. The Awards Program also recognizes outstanding efforts that increase public awareness and education of our oceans and coasts. Nominations are due by May 2, 2005. Visit www.coastalamerica.gov for more information.

Coasts Week Celebration Planned

Coastal America will present the prestigious Senator John H. Chafee Coastal Stewardship Award during Capitol Hill Oceans Week (CHOW), June 7-10, 2005. Named after the late Senator Chafee for his lifelong national leadership in restoring and protecting our coastal environment, the Award will honor an individual who has demonstrated outstanding leadership of national significance. In conjunction with CHOW, Coastal America is sponsoring a session to discuss the President's Ocean Action Plan which was released in December. The Coastal America event is scheduled for June 6, 2005. Visit www.nmfsocan.org.

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Virginia Launches Its Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership

James L. Connaughton, Chairman of the Council On Environmental Quality, and Benjamin Grumbles, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water, joined the State of Virginia, the Virginia Manufacturers' Association, and Smithfield Foods to launch the Virginia CWRP on March 24, 2005. The ceremony was held at Richmond lawfirm Hunton & Williams. Dennis H. Treacy, Vice President of Environmental, Government and Community Affairs for Smithfield Foods, expressed enthusiasm over the launch. "CWRP is a major contributor toward our country's goal of restoring 100,000 wetland acres annually, and we are very pleased to play an integral role in the creation of the Virginia chapter," said Treacy.

Over 70 representatives from the private sector, Virginia State government, and environmental organizations attended. Key participants included Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr., Robert G. Burnley, Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and William J. Howell, Speaker of the Virginia House.

Smithfield Foods and Hunton & Williams will convene a meeting of interested corporations in the spring to discuss funding the first projects in Virginia.



(l-r) Dennis Treacy, Vice President for Smithfield Foods, James Connaughton, Chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, and Benjamin Grumbles, EPA Assistant Administrator for Water, make keynote remarks at the launch of the Virginia CWRP.

CWRP Updates

CWRP Seminar on Wetlands Restoration

USACE District Engineer Col. Thomas Koning moderated a wetlands restoration seminar in Boston, Massachusetts in December. The seminar highlighted CWRP accomplishments and encouraged additional corporations to join CWRP. Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs Ellen Roy Herzfelder presented state perspectives on

restoration. George Olson, The Gillette Company, and Rich Delaney, Horsley Witten Group, highlighted the Massachusetts CWRP Chapter's progress in supporting 45 projects and leveraging \$3.5 million in project support. Congratulations to the Massachusetts CWRP and the Northeast Regional Implementation Team for pulling together this important event.



(l-r) George Olson, The Gillette Company; William Cronin Jr., New England Development Corporation; Ellen Roy Herzfelder, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs; and Col. Thomas Koning, USACE, at the Massachusetts Seminar on Wetlands Restoration.

The CWRP Partnership

CWRP Progress

Through the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, about 200 private firms and 100 non-governmental organizations are working with Federal agencies to implement wetlands projects. With the addition of its newest chapter in Virginia, the CWRP has now expanded to 12 coastal states (ME, NH, RI, MA, NJ, DE, VA, GA, TX, CA, AK).

The number of state chapters is expected to increase in the near future. CWRP Chapters are currently forming in other states (NY, LA, MS). CWRP corporations are also funding projects internationally, with efforts underway in both Canada and Mexico. For further information, visit the CWRP website (www.cwrp.org).



International CWRP Update

Partnering to Protect Sian Ka'an's Wetlands

The Nature Conservancy, The Gillette Company, the United Nations Foundation, and Amigos de Sian Ka'an have formed a diverse partnership to protect the critically important but imperiled wetlands of Sian Ka'an. The partners are working through the International Corporate Wetlands



© TNC Mexico Program

ICWRP Partners are working to sustain Sian Ka'an's most threatened marine resources, including the manatee.

Restoration Partnership (ICWRP), a Coastal America public-private initiative.

Located just south of Cancun, Sian Ka'an is considered the crown jewel of the Mexican Caribbean. Sian Ka'an's concentration of coastal dunes, lagoons, mangrove swamps, seasonally flooded marshlands and lowland forests, provide habitats for everything from jaguars and sea turtles to monkeys and manatees. Unfortunately, coastal development, unregulated tourism, and unsustainable farming and fishing practices are threatening the integrity of Sian Ka'an's remaining wetland habitat. The ICWRP project seeks to protect these critical coastal habitats. The Mexican conservation organization, *Amigos de Sian Ka'an*, is implementing the project. For further information, please visit the ICWRP website at www.icwrp.org.

The ICWRP Sian Ka'an Project

Joining forces to protect the Sian Ka'an World Heritage/Ramsar Site in Mexico, partners are engaged in various activities:

- Implementing an easement and conservation land buyer program;
- Promoting the existing land use and zoning plan with landowners and government agencies;
- Working to acquire key tract of land that strategically protects an extensive wetland system;
- Mapping priority water catchment areas and analyzing freshwater contamination sources; and
- Promoting best practices for wastewater management to communities, local hotels, and property owners.

Principals Update

Principals' Quarterly Meeting

The Coastal America Principals held their quarterly meeting on Friday, March 11, 2005 at the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Conference Room in Washington, DC. Chairman James L. Connaughton, who is also Chairman of CEQ, convened the meeting. The Principals agreed on the methodology for preparing a cross-agency wetlands budget-tracking system. The system is being prepared to report on the President's wetlands goals. Also, the partner agencies agreed to work toward achieving agency-specific Strategic Implementing Actions. The Principals agreed to present the John Chafee Coastal Stewardship Award during Capitol Hill Oceans Week in June. Finally, they agreed to conduct a series of meetings with Regional Principals this spring and summer.

Reporting on the President's Wetlands Goal

Coastal America Principal Timothy Keeney, NOAA, is chairing the Coastal America Shared Budget Subcommittee. This interagency workgroup is developing a report on federal agencies' progress on the President's Wetlands Executive Order. The President's wetland goal is "to work to restore and to improve and to protect at least three million acres of wetlands over the next five years." CEQ Chairman, Jim Connaughton, praised the excellent efforts of the Subcommittee and the staffing by the National Coordinating Office in preparing a comprehensive federal snapshot of the President's goal. A progress report is expected for release by Earth Day 2005.

Regional Principals Meeting

Chairman Jim Connaughton is leading a series of Regional Principals meetings to strengthen the federal, state and tribal participation in the Coastal America Partnership. The first of these meetings will be held with the Northeast and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Implementation Teams on June 1, 2005, hosted by the New England Aquarium CELC. These two RITs have been highly successful in the past 13 years since the inception of their Coastal America partnership. The meeting will focus on regional governance and similar topics advanced in the President's Ocean Action Plan and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. Following the meeting, Regional Principals will interact with corporate leadership from the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership and discuss the President's wetlands goals.

CELC Highlights



Coastal America designating officials Ben Grumbles (l), EPA Assistant Administrator, and P. Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Secretary of Interior, sign a Memorandum of Understanding with North Carolina Aquariums Director, David Griffin, and Bill Ross (r), Secretary of Environment.

North Carolina Aquariums

(continued from page 1)

Fifth-grade student *Aquaneers* performed a skit as the finale to the NC CELC designation ceremony. The play ended with a dive show by Dr. Jack Hall, Chair, Environmental Studies, UNCW, in the 235,000-gallon Cape Fear Shoals exhibit.

Following the festivities, the federal and aquaria partners met to discuss priority efforts; expand educational activities to underprivileged children; and, obtain

real-time monitoring equipment to provide data on storms, tides, and currents. Coastal America appreciates the great efforts of Donna Moffit and Peggy Sloan of the NC Ft. Fisher Aquarium in orchestrating a truly outstanding designation. The three aquaria locations are: Roanoke Island, northern coast; Pine Knoll Shores, central coast; and Fort Fisher, southern coast.



Aquarium Aquaneers perform a skit at the Learning Center ceremony.



Inaugural meeting of the regional federal team and NC Aquariums to discuss priority projects.

Student Summit Delegation Invited on Expert Panel

The Monterey Aquarium student delegation from the first National Student Summit on Ocean Issues is continuing efforts on their *Commitments to Action*. The students returned to the Monterey Aquarium this past February to participate on a Marine Protected Area (MPA) panel. Summit students Marlee Payne, Michael Badge and Josie Hardy, now seniors, used their team's MPA presentation developed for the 2004 Summit. The students joined a panel of experts that included Holly Price, Resource Protection Coordinator of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary; Paul Reilly, California Department of Fish and Game; and Dr. Steve Palumbi, Stanford University's Hopkins Marine Station. The panel answered questions from the audience and shared their thoughts about placement, size and configurations of MPAs.

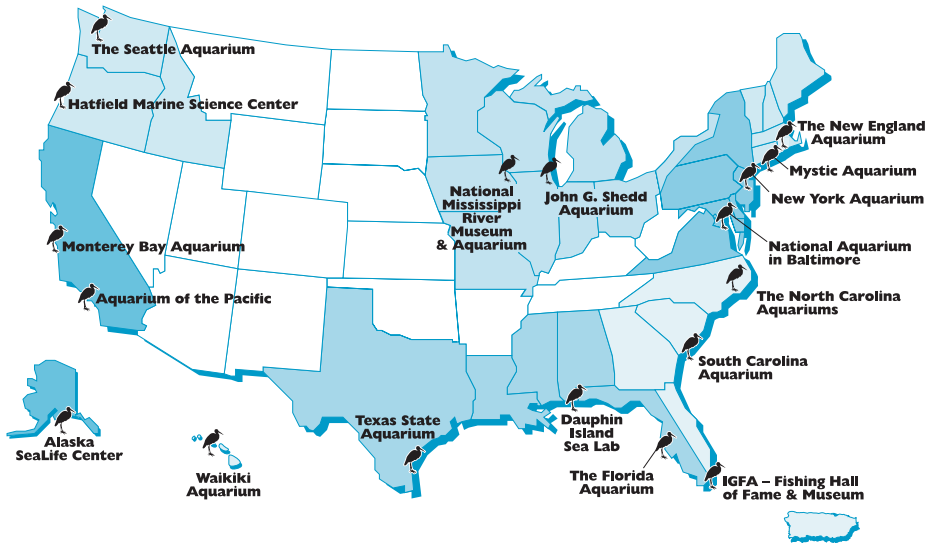


Monterey Student Summit Delegation (shown above) prepared a Marine Protected Area presentation that they readily use to teach and inspire others.

Coastal Education in America's Heartland

The National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa hosted a Coastal Services Center MPA workshop on January 30, 2005. "Disseminating this information to the people in America's Heartland is very important. We all need to be educated about our impact on coastal areas," said Jerry Enzler, executive director of the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium. The CELC brought together scientists, biologists, educators and river conservationists, from institutions such as the National Audubon Society, Loras College, and University of Dubuque.

Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers



World Wetlands Day Celebration at IGFA

The International Game and Fish Association (IGFA) hosted World Wetlands Day (February 2) at their outdoor wetlands park. Through the CELC Regional Ocean Conservation Club Education Director, Dawn Miller, recruited 12 high school student volunteers and designed activities for the local community. Thanks to the efforts of Joyce Namde, Department of State, the CELC was provided posters and materials for organizing the event.



Visitors to the IGFA World Wetlands Day learn about alligator habitat and wetlands.

Invasive Species Exhibit Completed at Hatfield CELC



Visitor to Hatfield Science Center explores invasive species exhibit.

On February 26th, the Hatfield Science Center opened the *Invasion of the Habitat Snatchers* exhibit. Funded by NOAA's National Sea Grant, the exhibit was several years in the making. The exhibit

is designed to foster an understanding of how invasive species enter and affect new environments, the factors that influence an invader's success, and how to prevent future invasions.

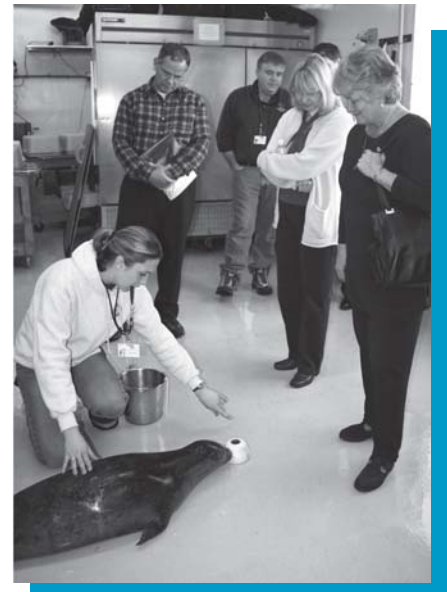
A Special Thanks to NOAA's Coastal Services Center

For the past two years, NOAA's Coastal Services Center (CSC) provided workshops through the CELC network on Understanding Marine Protected Areas. The CELCs provided outreach, facility space, and tours, while the CSC provided training and materials. We offer a special thanks to the leadership of Heidi Recksiek, NOAA/CSC, and the entire staff for their terrific efforts. And, a special thanks to the CELC network for hosting the event and reaching out to our coastal communities about Marine Protected Areas.

Spotlight on Alaska



Jeanne Hanson, NOAA Alaska Office, Tim Keeney, Commerce Deputy Assistant Secretary, and Tylan Schrock, Alaska SeaLife Center Director discuss Alaska Salmon at Aquaculture Research Tank.



Alaska SeaLife Center scientists feeding Harbor Seals during a briefing with Coastal America partners.

Alaska SeaLife Center

In February Timothy Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Department of Commerce, and Alaska SeaLife Center Director, Tylan Schrock, met to discuss CELC opportunities. The Center is researching

the relationship between fish populations and harbor seal feeding patterns. Their research includes evaluating the seals' food sources and climate conditions. Since the mid 1970s the harbor seal has declined in the Gulf of Alaska and Prince William

Sound. Researchers are studying whether the presence of fewer fatty fish, (e.g., herring, capelin, and sandlance) affect the seals' health. Mr. Keeney also discussed ocean observation systems and the President's Ocean Action Plan with the Center.

Alaska Silver Salmon Award

On February 7th, Mr. Timothy Keeney presented a Coastal America Award to the Alaska Silver Salmon Team, during the 7th Alaska Forum on the Environment. The award recognized outstanding partnership efforts in reopening eight miles of stream for unimpeded use by chinook and coho salmon, dolly varden char, rainbow trout and other aquatic species. Mr. Keeney read a congratulatory letter from President Bush.



"I applaud the Silver Salmon Creek Restoration Team's hard work and dedication. Through your partnerships with public and private sources, you have redesigned channel capabilities, opening miles of stream for fish passage on Kenai Peninsula, and have helped restore Silver Salmon Creek to a productive ecosystem."

*President George W. Bush
Letter dated September 8, 2004*

Events, Programs, and Other News

Coastal Conditions Report

On January 13th, EPA Assistant Administrator Ben Grumbles released EPA's National Coastal Condition Report II (NCCR II) at the North Carolina Aquarium CELC designation. The NCCR II describes and ranks the condition of national coastal ecological resources. Coastal managers can use the information to identify existing and emerging problems. The NCCR II reports that the condition of the Nation's coastal waters remains fair. EPA project manager, Barry Burgan, briefed CELC Education Directors during the March network call, about the findings. For more information visit: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/nccr/>.

Seafest 2004: Engaging Partners & Communities

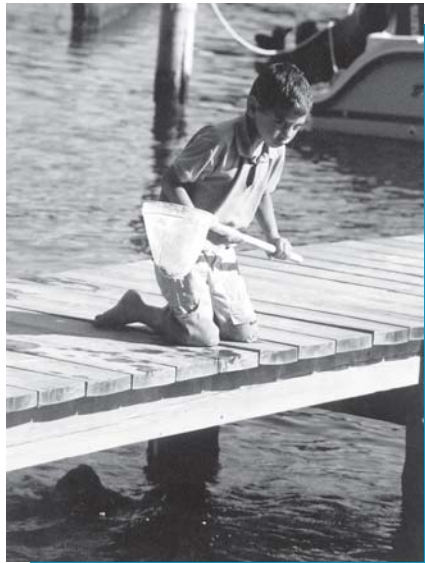
The Hatfield Science Center CELC is planning the Fourth Annual Seafest for June 25th. The Seafest offers the local community a chance to learn about marine science and interact with the Hatfield CELC. Federal partners, including NOAA, USDA, EPA, and USFWS, will also participate, providing information to thousands of visitors that attend this popular CELC event. The event is scheduled in conjunction with Hatfield Science Center's 40th Anniversary.

NOAA Education Grants

NOAA's Office of Education and Sustainable Development is soliciting 1- to 3-year proposals for environmental literacy projects by May 12, 2005. Funding is available to encourage the development of partnerships and to support existing, or foster growth of new, environmental literacy projects. Visit: www.noaa.gov.

New Educational Kit on Estuary Science

In April, a new online educational product developed by NOAA will become available on the Web for students and teachers. The discovery kit will explain the science of estuaries. This is the fourth in a series of discovery kits planned by NOAA. For further information visit: www.noaa.gov.



NOAA's new online education kit will teach children about the wonders of estuaries.

American Wetlands Month

May is American Wetlands Month, focusing on the economic benefits that wetlands provide. Federal, state, and local agencies will recognize the wonderful ways that wetlands enrich the environment and society. To learn more about activities for American Wetlands Month, go to: www.epa.gov.

Wonders of Water Campaign

The American Zoological Association (AZA), working with the John G. Shedd Aquarium, is launching the *Wonders of Water* public education campaign in April. Dot Seigfred from the AZA provided an overview of the campaign during the January CELC conference call. The campaign is designed to help families learn about and conserve water and the animals that depend on it.

Calendar of Events:

May

National Wetlands Month

June 1

Regional Principals Meeting
MARIT/NERIT
New England Aquarium
Boston, MA

June 6

Coastal America
Senator John H. Chafee Award
& US Ocean Action Plan
Symposium
Washington, DC

June 7-9

Capitol Hill Oceans Week
Washington, DC

June 5-10

Society of Wetland Scientists
Annual Meeting
Charleston, SC

July 11-18

National Marine Educators
Association Meeting
Maui, HI

July 18-21

Coastal Zone 05
New Orleans, LA

September 13-18

American Zoo and Aquarium
Association Annual Conference
Chicago, IL

September 19-23

Oceans 2005
Washington, DC

September 24

National Estuaries Day

Seigfred encouraged CELCS to incorporate the Wonders of Water into events such as Earth Day and World Wetlands Day.



“This designation will make it possible for us to deliver our conservation message to far more people, far more effectively, than ever.”

David Griffin,
North Carolina Aquariums Director



Coastal America welcomes its newest partner, the North Carolina Aquariums.

Regional Chairs

NORTHEAST

Bill Hubbard 978-318-8552

MID-ATLANTIC

Mario DelVicario 212-637-3779

John Wright 718-765-7062

SOUTHEAST

Bo Crum 404-562-9352

GULF OF MEXICO

Robert Bosenberg .. 504-862-2522

Bryon Griffith 228-688-1172

SOUTHWEST

Paul Michel 415-972-3417

Pat Rutten 707-575-6059

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Mark Chandler 808-522-8180

NORTHWEST

Mark Brown 503-375-5686

ALASKA

Mike Roy 907-786-3925

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Judy Beck 312-353-3849

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: Departments of Agriculture, Air Force, Army, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Navy, State, Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency and The Executive Office of the President.



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