

Terms of Reference
NOAA Science Advisory Board
Working Group to Evaluate NOAA's Extension, Outreach and Education-

Background

During the March 2006 Science Advisory Board (SAB) meeting, NOAA Administrator Conrad Lautenbacher expressed concern with NOAA's ability to effectively engage its constituents. At the previous Science Advisory Board meeting in November 2005, Ron Baird, Director of NOAA's Sea Grant Program, gave a presentation on the Byrne Report on engagement and extension within NOAA. At the March (2006) meeting, Louisa Koch, NOAA Director of Education, described efforts under way within NOAA to develop an effective, coherent and authorized Education Program for NOAA. As a result of the discussion following both presentations, the SAB recommended that "NOAA establish a short-term Extension, Outreach, and Education working group of the SAB." The purpose of the working group will be to support the SAB in providing advice to NOAA to strengthen, coordinate, organize and improve its extension, outreach, and education activities to fully engage its constituents."

Charge to the Working Group

The Working Group will explore opportunities to enhance the impact of NOAA's extension, outreach and education activities with its constituents, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Define NOAA's purpose and unique role in extension, outreach, and education.
- Identify opportunities at different levels of geographic granularity (e.g., local, state, regional, national and international).
- Identify opportunities for NOAA's research enterprise to better connect with constituencies through extension, outreach and education.
- Review the legislative authorities of NOAA in the areas of extension, outreach, and education and the opportunities to expand these authorities.
- Explore the communication paths between NOAA and its constituents with the goal to improve channels and enhance processes.
- Cite Best Management Practices and examples that could be broadly utilized within NOAA.
- Review training opportunities and funding support for NOAA programs and staff involved in extension, outreach, and education.

Term and Composition

The Working Group will consist of up to eleven members selected by the SAB from a pool of candidates generated by both the SAB and NOAA. The Group will be established by November 2006 and will submit a draft report to the SAB by November 2007. The revised draft, including SAB comments, will be submitted for public comment and a final report will be presented to the SAB at the March 2008 meeting. The panel will be disestablished following the transmittal of its final report by the SAB to the Under Secretary.

Support

NOAA's Science Advisory Board office will cover travel and other costs related to four meetings of the Working Group in that time period.

Mary Anne Whitcomb will provide staff support to the panel.