



NOAA | *training*

# A Synopsis of the Fiscal Year 2007



**NOAA Coastal Services Center**  
LINKING PEOPLE, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY



# **A Synopsis of Fiscal Year 2007 Training Provided by the NOAA Coastal Services Center**

In keeping with the mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center, training programs at the Center offered a number of courses designed to help coastal professionals acquire new information, skills, and tools to improve coastal zone management. Classroom trainings covered a wide range of topics, from process skills to coastal issues to geospatial technology. More than 1,100 coastal professionals from 36 different states attended Center trainings in fiscal year 2007. A review of post-course evaluations revealed exceptionally positive feedback: 93 percent reported that their time was well spent, and 94 percent reported achievement of the learning objectives.

In addition, the Center offered a number of e-learning courses that logged thousands of user sessions. At the end of this fiscal year, we began an evaluation of our Web-based courses, and resultant improvements and content updates should begin in fiscal year 2008.

## **I. Courses Offered** (Descriptions for most courses are available at [www.csc.noaa.gov/training/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/training/).)

### **Training Offered Through the Coastal Learning Services (CLS) Program:**

- Project Design and Evaluation
- Public Issues and Conflict Management
- Negotiating for Coastal Resources
- Coastal Community Planning and Development (with Human Dimensions program)
- Evaluation 101
- Survival Skills for Coastal Resource Managers (Web)
- Web Content Design and Evaluation (Web)
- Needs Assessment Training (Web)
- Public Trust Doctrine (Web)
- Special Trainings:
  - Ecological Services Basic Training (in partnership and for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service)
  - International Trainings – Several trainings were tailored and presented at National Marine Sanctuaries workshops for their South China Sea and Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape Projects
  - Ecosystem-Based Management (three-hour pilot at the Coastal Zone 07 conference)

### **Geographic Information System (GIS) Training Offered through the Integration and Development (I&D) Program:**

- Introduction to ArcGIS
- Coastal Applications of ArcGIS
- GIS Tools for Strategic Conservation Planning (pilot: participant info not included in report)

### **Training Offered through the Coastal Remote Sensing (CRS) Program:**

- Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts

## II. Course Locations

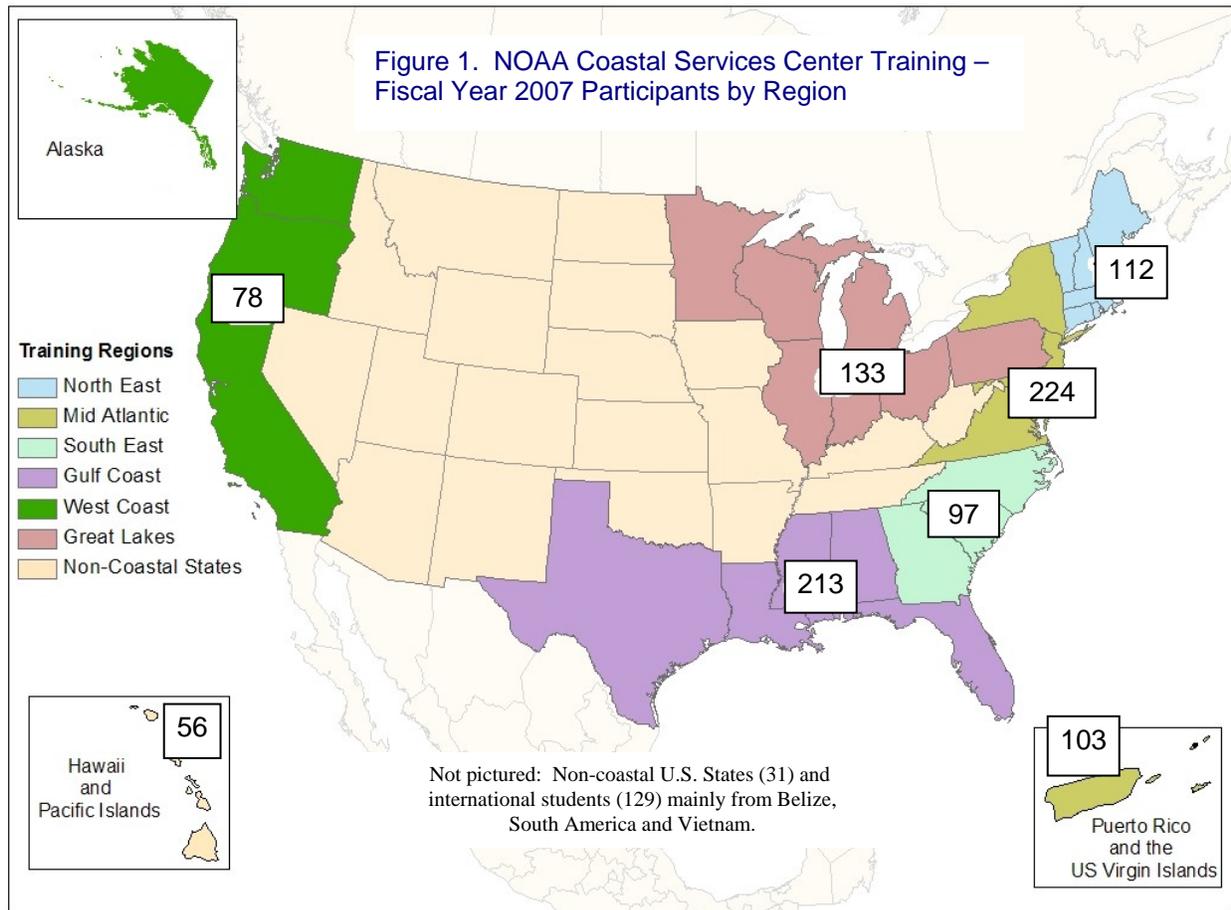
In fiscal year 2007, courses were taught in 23 different states, as well as in Washington D.C. (at Silver Spring), the Virgin Islands, and at the Center. The geographic range of locations covered all the major coasts in the continental U.S., Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. We also participated in trainings with NOAA's Office of International Affairs in Colombia and Vietnam, and with the Nature Conservancy in Belize. Sixty-one training classes were held, representing 118 training days. In addition, CLS provided 26.5 days of on-site technical assistance (TA) as follow-up to training (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Location of Center Trainings and Number of Training Days

State	No. of Courses	No. of Participants	No. of Training Days	No. of TA Days
CO	1	19	2	
DC	1	32	1	
FL	6	127	12.5	
GA	1	21	2	
HI	2	51	4	
IN	2	51	6	
MA	3	51	6.5	
MD	6	90	11.5	2.5
ME				10
MN	1	30	2.5	
MS	2	26	4	
NH	2	32	4	
NY	2	56	4.5	2.5
OH	2	38	4	
OR	3	72	4.5	
PA	1	22	2	
PR	1	21	2	
RI	1	22	2.5	
SC	1	22	2.5	
SC at Center	6	74	15	
TX	2	44	4	
VA	1	12	2	
VI	3	89	6	
WA	2	23	4	
WI	1	12	0.5	
WV	1	16	5	
International (Belize, Colombia, Vietnam)	7	123	3.5	11.5
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>1176</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>26.5</b>

## III. Participant Demographics

Over 1,100 coastal professionals attended Center courses this fiscal year. They came from 36 different states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, and represented all major coastal regions around the country. We also had 31 participants from non-coastal states and 129 from international locations. States with the largest numbers of participants included Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, and Virginia. A breakdown of participants by region is shown in Figure 1 and Tables 2 and 3. We experienced ample representation from all major coastal regions except Alaska.



**Table 2.** Geographic Distribution of Participants by Home State or Location

State	No. of Participants
AL	6
AZ	2
CA	13
CO	22
CT	2
DC	14
DE	4
FL	130
GA	21
HI	56
ID	1
IL	3
IN	48
KY	1
LA	19
MA	54
MD	98
ME	4
MI	1
MN	28
MO	3
MS	9
NC	30
ND	1
NH	28
NJ	1
NY	62
OH	38
OR	54
PA	22
Puerto Rico	21
RI	24
SC	46
TX	49
UT	1
VA	23
Virgin Islands	82
WA	11
WI	15
International	129
unknown	2
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>1176</b>

**Table 3.** Regional Distribution of Participants

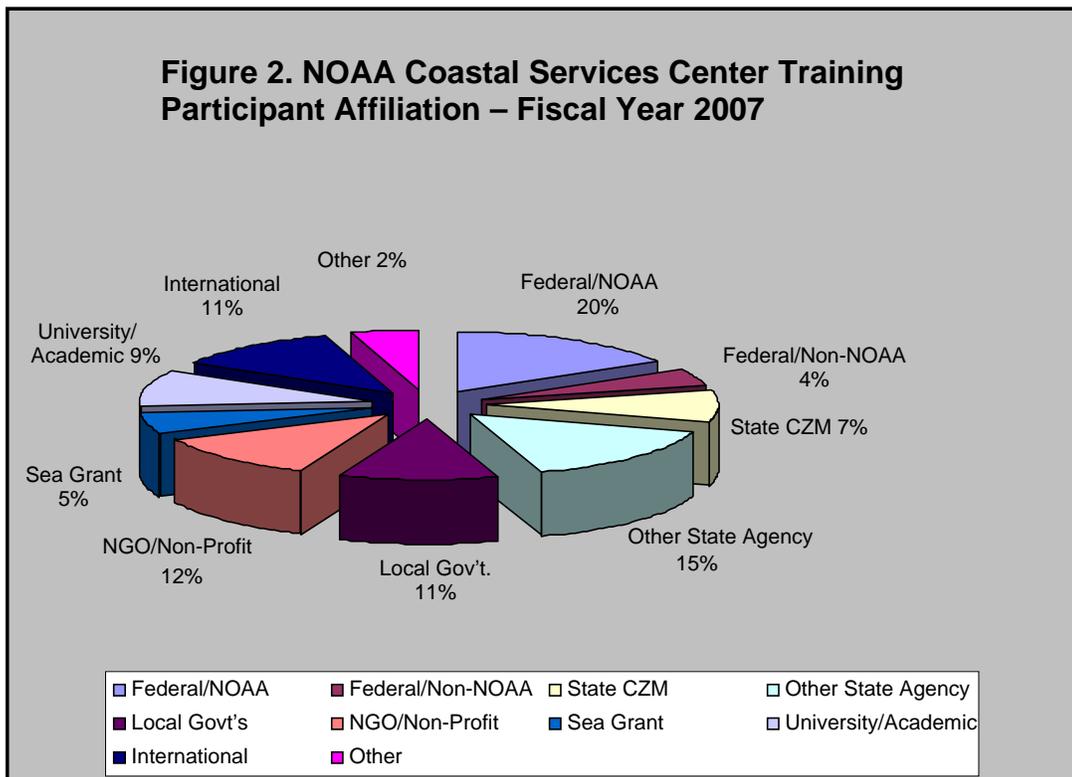
Region	No. of Participants	% of Total
Caribbean – U.S.	103	9%
Great Lakes	133	11%
Gulf of Mexico	213	18%
Mid-Atlantic	224	19%
Northeast	112	10%
Pacific Islands	56	5%
Southeast	97	8%
West Coast	78	7%
Non-coastal U.S.	31	3%
International	129	11%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>1176</b>	<b>100%</b>

Participant affiliations were wide-ranging and included state and federal government, academia, nonprofit organizations, and others (Table 3, Figure 2). The majority of participants were from state governments (270 participants, or 23 percent of total numbers).

**Table 3.** Fiscal Year 2007 Center Training: Participant Affiliation by Program

Affiliations	No. of Participants	% of Total
Federal/NOAA	234	20%
Federal/Non-NOAA	47	4%
State CZM*	87	7%
Other State Agency	179	15%
Local Government	124	11%
NGO/Nonprofit	143	12%
National Estuary Program*	4	<1%
National Estuarine Research Reserve*	8	1%
Sea Grant*	59	5%
University/Academic	109	9%
Private Industry	28	2%
International	129	11%
Other	25	2%
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>1176</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Data were only collected at this level for participants in CLS courses.

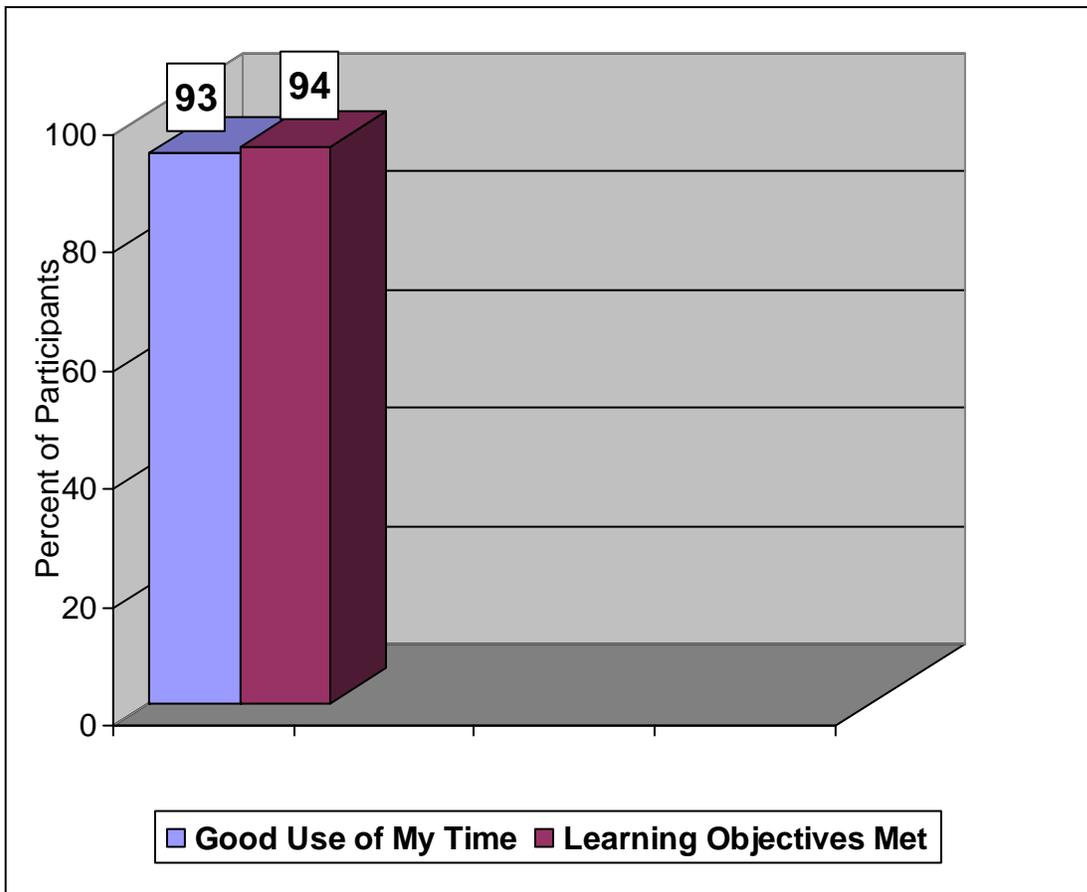


#### IV. Course Evaluation

In approximately 58 courses taught by the Center this fiscal year, participants submitted standard evaluation forms. These forms were reviewed for two key measures: (1) whether the course was a good use of a participant’s time; and (2) whether the course’s learning objectives were met. A stratified random sample of approximately 25 percent% of the forms—which included at least three forms from each course during different times of the year—yielded the following results.

On average, 93 percent of participants thought that attending the class was a good use of their time. Based on skills and knowledge questions keyed to class objectives, participants indicated that, on average, 94 percent had met the course objectives.

**Figure 3. Evaluation Metrics**



## V. Web-Based Learning

CLS maintained and updated as necessary four distinct e-learning opportunities for Center customers this fiscal year. These included training on Survival Skills for Coastal Managers, Web Content Design and Evaluation, Needs Assessment, and the Public Trust Doctrine.

This fiscal year, Web-learning data were compiled from October through July (10 months). Based on a very conservative counting technique, each course mentioned in the previous paragraph logged thousands of user sessions (*unique visits*), the highest being Survival Skills for Coastal Managers, with a count of more than 19,000. *Repeat visits* for each course ranged from 1,401 to more than 5,000. *Significant paths*, which indicated users viewing four or more pages in a visit, ranged from 17 to 127 per month, the higher figure for the Needs Assessment Training.

### 1. Survival Skills for Coastal Resource Managers

[www.csc.noaa.gov/cmfp/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cmfp/)

Unique Visits: 19,439

Repeat Visitors: 5,341 = 27%

Significant Paths: 1716 = 17 per month

What can we learn from the figures cited above? On average, 534 visitors per month find something of value and return to this e-learning site. On average, 17 times per month a significant path is created by a visitor in which four or more pages are viewed. These figures indicate that visitors are deriving benefits from the content.

Where an actual Internet Protocol (IP) address can be identified, server logs show the site accessed multiple times by visitors from Maryland state government, U.S. Army, U.S. Forest Service, Stanford University, Kenosha Unified School District, and others.

The reference section of this course receives by far the most visits, because it provides succinct overviews of the myriad laws and agencies involved in the coastal zone. For the main course sections, information on conflict resolution and the overview of academic and professional disciplines receive the most usage.

Organizations Web-linked to this course:

- Sloan Consortium
- Florida Ocean Alliance
- Jordan Cove Energy Project
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Greenbelt Consulting
- University of North Carolina
- Penn State University

## **2. Web Content Design and Evaluation**

Web Content Design and Evaluation

[www.csc.noaa.gov/wcde/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/wcde/)

Unique Visits: 5,383

Repeat Visitors: 1,711 = 31%

Significant Paths: 776 = 78 per month

What can we learn from the figures cited above? On average, 171 visitors per month find something of value and return to the site. On average, 78 times per month a significant path is created by a visitor viewing four or more pages. These figures indicate that visitors are deriving benefits from the content.

Where an actual IP address can be identified, server logs show the site accessed multiple times by visitors from Stanford University, U.S. Navy, Department of Homeland Security, and others.

Statistics show various sections of the course being accessed, with the most popular sections being those on target audience determination and developing personas.

Organizations Web-linked to this course:

- Georgia Southern University

## **3. Needs Assessment Training**

[www.csc.noaa.gov/needs/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/needs/)

Unique Visits: 16,274

Repeat Visitors: 4,161 = 26%

Significant Paths: 1268 = 127 per month

What can we learn from the figures cited above? On average, 416 visitors per month find something of value and return to the site. On average, 127 times per month a significant path is created by a visitor viewing four or more pages. These figures indicate that visitors are deriving benefits from the content.

Where an actual IP address can be identified, server logs show the site accessed multiple times by visitors from U.S. Army and others.

Statistics show the course being used as a “just-in-time” resource, going through a specific section and then exiting the course. This was the Center’s intent.

Organizations Web-linked to this course:

- University of Tennessee
- Sloan Consortium

## **4. Public Trust Doctrine**

[www.csc.noaa.gov/ptd/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/ptd/)

Unique Visits: 3,756

Repeat Visitors: 1,401 = 37%

Significant Paths: 965 = 97 per month

What can we learn from the figures cited above? On average, 140 visitors per month find something of value and return to the site. On average, 97 times per month a significant path is created by a visitor viewing four or more pages. These figures indicate that visitors are deriving benefits from the content.

Where an actual IP address can be identified, server logs show the site accessed multiple times by visitors from Stanford University, EcoEarth, various attorneys' sites, MeadWestvaco, and others.

Users of this course appear to be examining significant portions in one viewing so that they may learn more about the Public Trust Doctrine.

Organizations Web-linked to this course:

- Conserve Online
- Honolulu Star Bulletin
- Property Rights Research
- University of Maryland, Baltimore

## **VI. Partnered Training**

**1. Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape Project, Planning for Sustainable Tourism in MPAs.** The Center partnered with the National Ocean Service International Program Office and National Marine Sanctuaries Program (NMSP), as well as Conservation International, to develop and present an Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape Management Capacity Building workshop focused on sustainable tourism. The NMSP has formed a partnership with Conservation International and UNESCO to provide training to build management capacity for the Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape (ETPS) to qualify for nomination as the first serial marine World Heritage site. This two-week workshop was held on Gorgona Island, Colombia, November 6-18, 2006, and attended by marine protected area (MPA) managers from national parks within Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, and Colombia. Aspects of the training included tailored strategic planning, management planning, natural and marine resources management, managing visitor impacts, sustainable tourism development, and program design and evaluation curriculum. Key participant materials were translated from English to Spanish for the workshop.

**2. South China Sea Planning for Sustainable Tourism in MPAs Training.** The Center partnered twice this fiscal year with the National Ocean Service International Program Office and National Marine Sanctuaries Program, as well as Conservation International, the Danish International Development Agency, World Wildlife Fund, SeaWeb, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources–Vietnam, and Vietnam Ministry of Fisheries to develop a capacity-building pilot project for South China Sea marine protected areas (MPAs). The training program's intended purpose is to provide a knowledge base for developing local and regional capacity and expertise in designation, implementation, and management of MPAs. The program provides developing nations with the opportunity to benefit from the experiences of other developing or developed nations that may have a longer history of MPA management. The program also facilitates shared experiences that promote cooperation on designation and management of a global system of MPAs. Training programs for the South China Sea pilot project were held in Cat Ba, Vietnam, December 4-11, 2006, and Phu Quoc, Vietnam, April 6-16, 2007.

**3. Nature Conservancy Parks in Peril.** The Center partnered with the Nature Conservancy to bring a modified Public Issues and Conflict Management training to the Parks in Peril Learning Exchange, November 10-16, 2007, in Belize City, Belize. Participants at the meeting were park managers and stakeholders from the Latin American Caribbean region. The goals of the conference:

- Build capacity of regional marine conservation practitioners through skills-based training, networking, and collaborative problem-solving opportunities;
- Improve effectiveness of marine protected area management and regional conservation strategies in the Latin American and Caribbean region through yearly interactions and meetings;
- Coordinate local marine conservation strategies with eco-regional plans and international Protected Area Program of Work agreements; and
- Explore regional learning exchanges through case studies and place-based exercises.

**4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services Basic Training.** The Center partnered again this year with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Conservation Training Center to update and present a weeklong training for USFWS Ecological Services (ES) biologists. The training covered all aspects of ES operations, including understanding the Public Trust Doctrine, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, National Environmental Policy Act, wetlands regulatory review, hydropower relicensing, contaminants, endangered species, the USFWS partners and coastal programs, mitigation policy, and strategies for success.

**5. GIS Tools for Strategic Conservation Planning.** In an ongoing effort, the Center partnered with the Conservation Fund and the National Conservation Training Center to develop, dry run, and successfully pilot a course entitled GIS Tools for Strategic Conservation Planning. The course will provide coastal managers, land trusts, and local governments with valuable tools for long-term planning on landscape scales to ensure the conservation of valuable and integrated habitat.

## **VII. Two-Year Perspective**

This is the second year in which a Center-wide training report was generated. Training numbers did not vary greatly between the years, although this year showed a slight increase in numbers of training participants (from 1060 to 1176). Our web-based course offerings likewise showed comparable utilization between the two years. Evaluation metrics for both years remained very high, with 93 percent of participants reporting that they thought the training was a good use of their time and 94 percent reporting that course objectives were met.

Cumulatively, training over the two-year period reached 2,236 coastal professionals. These individuals came from 47 states, including all the coastal states plus Alaska, the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Pacific Islands.