

# COASTAL MANAGEMENT NEWS

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*Pala Lagoon, American Samoa*

## Pala Pals: Collaborative Watershed Management in American Samoa

In early 2008, staff from several of American Samoa's environmental management agencies, including the Department of Commerce, which houses the coastal management program; the Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources; the Coral Reef Advisory Group; and the territory's Environmental Protection Agency, discussed the need for better interagency collaboration to address environmental issues. The group decided to focus their efforts initially on one area—Pala Lagoon.

The Pala Lagoon, home to large mangroves, coral reefs, and important breeding grounds for several fish species, has degraded due to pollution and other human uses. Immediate action was needed to protect and restore the lagoon.

"Pala Pals," comprised of agencies with jurisdiction over the lagoon, as well as interested nongovernmental organizations, was created out of several informal discussions to share resources, management, and ideas on how to restore the lagoon. Pala Pals has grown into a formal, collaborative, interagency working group that meets regularly to coordinate all aspects of research, monitoring, and management to improve Pala Lagoon.

Since its inception, Pala Pals has expanded to include not just the original territory agencies but also the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), NOAA, Land Grant, and Sea Grant. This growing partnership is improving government coordination as well as

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increasing local expertise. One of the most significant challenges facing the island is the lack of qualified local staff. To help remedy this, ASCC and Pala Pals are working together to give marine science students an opportunity to conduct field and lab work by working as interns with Pala Pals members. The students receive valuable on-the-ground training, while the Pala Pals' agencies gain needed help to conduct necessary field work.

During its first year, Pala Pals focused on assessing the extent of pollution in the lagoon. These efforts included sediment core sampling to identify where runoff is having the greatest impact, regular nutrient and bacteria monitoring throughout the lagoon, and expanded monitoring of the streams flowing into the lagoon. The data collected will be entered into a comprehensive GIS database that can be used to analyze pollution dispersion and identify problem areas and potential pollution sources so that corrective management actions can be taken.

In addition to the monitoring efforts, Pala Pals has undertaken several wetland and mangrove restoration and public outreach projects. They also began developing a survey to assess resident perceptions of the lagoon. The information from the Pala Pals outreach, surveys, assessments, and studies will be used to develop the first ever comprehensive watershed management plan for the Pala Lagoon. The plan, which will be drafted primarily by the American Samoa Coastal Management Program, with input from each Pala Pals organization, will detail how and where development can take place and address environmental concerns and remedial actions that need to be undertaken.

While Pala Pals is still in its infancy, the efforts and successes during its first year showcase how government agencies in American Samoa can work together to help restore and protect the Pala Lagoon. For more information, contact Doug Harper at [Doug.Harper1@gmail.com](mailto:Doug.Harper1@gmail.com).

## Wisconsin Develops Tools to Protect Wetlands and Help Property Owners

In October 2008, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), the Wisconsin REALTORS® Association, and the Wisconsin Wetlands Association unveiled new informational tools to protect Wisconsin's remaining wetlands as well as current and prospective property owners.

The tools were developed with grant funding from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, the Great Lakes Protection Fund, and the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. Additionally, the project was supported and informed by the Wisconsin County Code Administrators, the Wisconsin Towns Association, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, and the Wisconsin Builders Association.

The tools include a lighthearted video guide, "Waking Up to Wetlands," that walks people through the steps they can take to determine if there are wetlands on a property. The video is available on the WDNR website and was also made available to all

Wisconsin Time Warner digital cable subscribers for free through the "On Demand" selection. Other tools that have been created and made accessible include online, interactive wetland maps and a downloadable checklist of plants, trees, and other wetland clues to look for when

evaluating a property. This information helps property owners understand the constraints as well as the benefits of wetlands. The tools also help builders avoid problems such as soggy foundations, legal trouble, and the prospect of fines for wetland mitigation.



*New informational tools help people "Wake Up to Wetlands" before they buy land or build upon it.*

Additionally, WDNR worked with the Wisconsin REALTORS® Association and the Wisconsin Wetlands Association to develop a real estate addendum to accompany offers to purchase. The addendum is a legal document that offers buyers an opportunity to determine if wetlands are present on a property and to negotiate a mutual remedy with the seller. If wetlands are confirmed, such remedies might include the ability to rescind or modify the offer terms. Citizen complaints of illegal wetland fills have been increasing in recent years, particularly as more people try to develop land that is considered marginal for development. The addendum aims to ensure that potential buyers are aware of the presence of wetlands on a property and the development constraints that wetlands may impose. Having well-informed landowners will minimize illegal wetland fills in the future.

The new tools, along with other informational sources, can be found online at <http://dnr.wi.gov/wetlands/locating.html>. For additional information, contact Travis Olson at [travis.olson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:travis.olson@wisconsin.gov).

## Comprehensive Ocean Management in Massachusetts

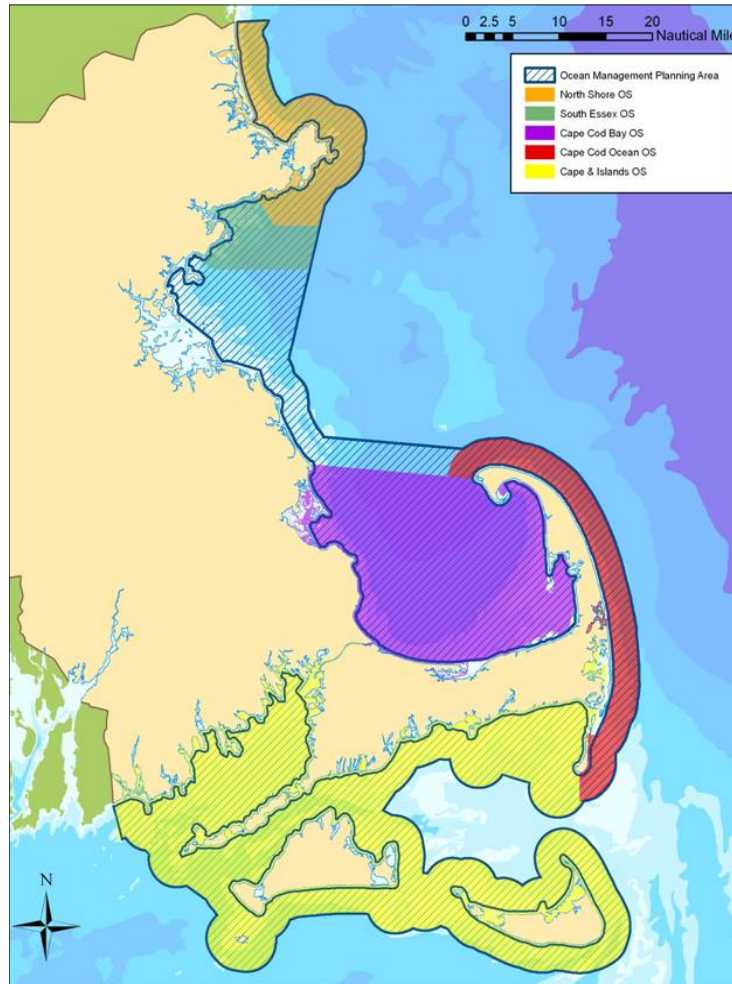
Massachusetts' 1,500-mile coastline and biologically rich ocean waters have shaped the state's history, economy, and cultural identity. In addition to traditional ocean uses—recreation and tourism, fishing and shellfishing, and shipping and trade—recent proposals related to energy, aquaculture, and the use of offshore sand for beach nourishment highlight a need to think more comprehensively about ocean resources and uses. Technological advances in renewable energy also bring an opportunity to address climate change, energy, and related environmental goals.

To respond to these issues, Governor Deval Patrick signed the Oceans Act of 2008, which requires the secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to develop a comprehensive ocean management plan by December 31, 2009. The Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program is a key part of the effort to develop the ocean management plan. Key elements of the Oceans Act include:

- **Comprehensive management of Massachusetts waters** — Comprehensive science-based planning will be used to ensure long-term protection and sustainable use of ocean resources. The plan must have a spatial component by identifying areas suitable for uses, activities, conservation, protection, and related management measures. Through the fall of 2008, a series of thematically organized work groups acquired existing data and spatial information related to habitat, fisheries, sediment, cultural and recreational resources, renewable energy, and navigation and transportation infrastructure to develop the scientific basis for the plan.
- **Ocean Advisory Commission and Science Advisory Council** — A 17-member Ocean Advisory Commission

is advising the secretary during plan development. A nine-member Science Advisory Council is assisting the secretary in developing environmental, economic, and social baseline data and will help develop a foundation for long-term, science-based ocean management. In the fall of 2008, both the commission and the council began their work, deliberating on potential goals and objectives for the ocean management plan and a baseline assessment of the ocean management planning area, respectively.

- **Appropriately scaled renewable energy**— Offshore renewable energy facilities of “appropriate scale” are allowed in state waters, except for the Cape Cod Ocean Sanctuary (offshore from the Cape Cod National Seashore), provided that facilities are consistent with the ocean management plan.
- **Fisheries management jurisdiction**— Commercial and recreational fishing remain as allowed uses subject to the existing jurisdiction of the Division of Marine Fisheries.



Massachusetts ocean management planning area and Massachusetts ocean sanctuaries.

The Oceans Act also requires that development of the ocean management plan be accompanied by an extensive public outreach effort. To meet this requirement, EEA conducted a series of 18 public meetings along the coast and inland in the fall of 2008 to solicit public comment on the goals and objectives of the plan. In addition, over 65 meetings were held with individual interest groups, advocates, industry representatives, and other stakeholders. Summary reports from these meetings are available on the EEA ocean planning website.

For more information, including background and technical material, please see <http://www.mass.gov/eea/> or contact John Weber at [john.weber@state.ma.us](mailto:john.weber@state.ma.us).

## Connecticut Applies GIS Tools to Identify Land Conservation Opportunities

The Connecticut Coastal Management Program, housed within Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection (CT DEP), recently completed an evaluation of the last best coastal land conservation opportunities in Connecticut. The CLAM project, short for Coastal Land Assessment Methodology, funded through a NOAA Coastal Zone Enhancement Program grant, is an integral implementation tool in Connecticut's Coastal Estuarine and Land Conservation Plan (CELCP). CLAM is a coastal land conservation planning tool used to identify large unprotected parcels with significant conservation value.

CLAM uses an automated GIS-based system that evaluates approximately 30,000 tax parcels using parcel evaluation criteria to identify the most significant remaining potential conservation opportunities near coastal waters.

Criteria include absence of structures or other development; parcel size; occurrence of critical coastal resources such as coastal waters, tidal wetlands, state or federally listed species habitat; presence of an outstanding natural landscape feature, such as an unmodified bluff; and proximity to existing protected open space. After the automated parcel evaluating process is complete, a preliminary score is assigned to each parcel. Higher scoring parcels are then further evaluated to more accurately assess each parcel's potential conservation value. Additional parcel analysis includes reviews of aerial photography, site inspections, and interviews with agency experts with specialized knowledge of coastal area ecological values, threat of development, and how protecting the parcel would achieve other agency conservation goals. After the additional analysis, parcels are classified into three conservation priority tiers according to their potential conservation value.

To date, 80 undeveloped parcels larger than 25 acres with potentially significant coastal resource conservation value have been identified within a 105 square-mile area defined by Connecticut's coastal boundary. The highest-ranked parcels are now being further assessed to identify

owners that may be interested in developing conservation strategies for their properties. Properties with owners willing to work with CT DEP and its conservation partners are being matched with potential federal land acquisition funding assistance programs such as the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. CT DEP has shared the results of CLAM with land trusts and municipal commissions to identify possible conservation opportunities for highly ranked conservation properties.



*Soundview acquisition property with East River and Long Island Sound in background.*

One pending conservation acquisition identified through CLAM demonstrates the program's value and will soon result in a 48-acre addition to CT DEP's East River Wildlife Management Area. The property, known locally as Soundview, will soon be acquired through funding provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program and contributions from 10 local conservation partners. Through CLAM, the Connecticut Coastal Management Program and its local partner, the Guilford Land Conservation Trust, identified the property and encouraged the landowner to conserve it for wildlife habitat conservation and passive outdoor recreation purposes.

As reflected by projects such as Soundview, CT DEP has found that early detection of land conservation opportunities through CLAM enable state and local resource managers to protect critically important coastal landscapes in a timely and efficient manner. For information about the CLAM project, contact Dave Kozak at [david.kozak@ct.gov](mailto:david.kozak@ct.gov).

## Bay Conservation and Development Commission Tackles Sea Level Rise with International Partnership

The Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), part of the California Coastal Management Program, continues to be a national leader in addressing coastal climate change impacts, particularly the impact of sea level rise in San Francisco Bay.

One of the most publicized impacts of global warming is a predicted acceleration of sea level rise. Between 1900 and 2000, water levels in the bay rose seven inches. As the historic rate of sea level rise increases due to climate change, water levels in the San Francisco Bay could rise an additional meter or more by the end of this century. This would inundate over 200 square miles of low-lying shoreline property and over \$100 billion worth of public and private development.

To help prepare for sea level rise, BCDC partnered with the Dutch-American consulting firm Arcadis, Holland's Wageningen University and Research Center, and the Delft-based Deltares, a consortium of Dutch research institutes. The Netherlands has hundreds of years of experience dealing with the protection and use of flood-prone land and can share its expertise with BCDC to help them address similar issues along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. The partnership received a \$200,000 grant from the Dutch government to sponsor an international

symposium bringing experts from Holland and the United States together to discuss climate change adaptation strategies. The symposium will be held in San Francisco in Spring, 2009.

In addition to the international symposium, BCDC is also holding an international design competition to identify innovative coastal community adaptation strategies. Planning and design professionals, consultants, developers, students, and the public will be invited to submit proposals. A highly qualified jury will evaluate all of the entries, and up to five of the most innovative entrants will be awarded stipends to further refine their ideas and to develop a detailed plan for a specific site along the San Francisco Bay shoreline. The design competition is funded as part of BCDC's current Coastal Enhancement Strategy developed under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act and supported with \$125,000 of Coastal Zone Enhancement Program funding from NOAA's Coastal Zone Management Program. A call for proposals is expected to go out late in January/early February 2009.

For additional information on the Dutch partnership, international symposium, or design competition, contact Brad McCrea at [bradm@bcdca.gov](mailto:bradm@bcdca.gov).

## CELCP Updates

### NOAA's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

#### State CELCP Plans

In order to be eligible to participate in the FY 2010 Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) competition, each coastal state must have a draft or approved CELCP plan that identifies priority conservation areas within the state. Between October and December 2008, NOAA approved two CELCP plans for Florida and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, bringing the total number of approved plans to six. Of the remaining 28 eligible states/territories, 26 states have drafted plans that are currently being reviewed by CELCP staff and state CZM specialists, and 2 states have not submitted plans. To see approved and draft CELCP plans, please visit the CELCP website at <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/welcome.html>.

#### FY 2010 CELCP Competition

The FY 2010 CELCP funding competition notice was published in the *Federal Register* on January 2, 2009. The funding opportunity notice, which contains the full details of the competition, along with project narrative and budget templates, and the CELCP checklist, are posted on the Funding Opportunities page of the CELCP website, [http://www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/celcp\\_fundingop.html](http://www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/celcp_fundingop.html) and on the federal grant opportunity website, <http://www.grants.gov/>. Proposals will be due March 31, 2009, at 6PM EST.

For more information, please contact Elaine Vaudreuil at [Elaine.Vaudreuil@noaa.gov](mailto:Elaine.Vaudreuil@noaa.gov) or Elisabeth Morgan at [Elisabeth.Morgan@noaa.gov](mailto:Elisabeth.Morgan@noaa.gov).

## Regional Meeting Round Up

Regional Coastal Zone Management meetings are a great forum for formal and informal exchange among state coastal programs, other state and local agency staff, and NOAA about critical coastal management issues. A few of the topics discussed at the most recent regional meetings are highlighted below. Full agendas and presentations for all meetings are archived at <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/news/archives/archivedmeetings.html>.

Presentations from the West Coast Coastal Managers' Regional Meeting, to be held at the end of January 2009, will be posted when available.

### Great Lakes

*Buffalo, NY, Sept. 23-25, 2008*

- Ecosystem-based Management in New York
- Working with Local Governments towards Effective Land Use Decisions
- Alternative Energy Projects
- Harbor Management Planning

### Southern and Caribbean

*Austin, TX, Oct. 28-30, 2008*

- Shoreline and Regional Sediment Management
- Promoting Collaboration among Coastal Programs and National Estuarine Research Reserves
- Alternative Energy
- Hurricane Recovery and Community Post-Disaster Planning
- Sea Level Rise

### Northeast/Mid-Atlantic

*Mystic, CT, Nov. 17-19, 2008*

- Energy and the Coastal Zone
- Climate Change Adaptation

### West Coast

*San Francisco, CA, Jan. 26-28, 2009*

- Climate Change
- Alternative Energy
- Ecosystem-based and Place-based Management

## Coastal Programs Division Launches CZMA Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News

NOAA's Coastal Programs Division has recently formed a Climate Change and Coastal Hazards issue team to better provide support on these important issues. One of the team's first tasks was to launch the CZMA Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News Update to keep state programs informed about climate change (as it pertains to coastal hazards) and coastal hazards activities, such as NOAA initiatives, legislative updates, national policy updates/other federal agency activities, funding opportunities, publications and websites, tools and projects, conference and meeting announcements, and requests for input. Currently, the update is sent out about once a month. If you are interested in receiving the update, please contact Christa Rabenold at [christa.rabenold@noaa.gov](mailto:christa.rabenold@noaa.gov).



Devastation of Bolivar Peninsula, Texas, following Hurricane Ike.

## 2009 Coastal Program Managers' Meeting

NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, in partnership with the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association, will host the annual Ocean and Coastal Program Managers' Meeting on February 24-26, 2009, in downtown Washington, DC, at the Washington Marriott. Meeting registration costs are \$425, and the online registration deadline is

February 16, 2009. Accommodations at the Washington Marriot are available at the government rate of \$209. The cut-off for this rate is January 26, 2009. For additional information, to register for the meeting, or to view a draft agenda, please visit <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/pmm/welcome.html>.

## – Spotlight on NOAA Resources

### National Marine Protected Areas Center Invites MPAs to Participate in National System of MPAs



On November 20, 2008, NOAA's National Marine Protected Areas Center, together with the Department of the Interior, launched the National System of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), the first comprehensive tool for bringing MPAs across all levels of government together to work toward common conservation objectives. The launch completes a multiyear effort working with the nation's coastal states, tribes, and stakeholders to define a system that will enhance the protection of the nation's natural and cultural marine resources. The nomination process for eligible federal, state, and territorial MPAs to be included in the national system is now open.

*The Framework for the National System of Marine Protected Areas of the United States of America* (framework) outlines key components of the national system, including national system goals and priority conservation objectives, MPA eligibility criteria, a nomination process for existing MPAs to be included in the national system, and a science-based, public process for identifying conservation gaps. The framework was developed with extensive involvement of the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee and focuses on the protection and conservation of ecosystems, cultural resources, and fisheries. The framework is online at <http://www.mpa.gov/>.

MPAs participating in the national system will benefit from the opportunity to work with other MPAs at the regional and national level to address issues of common concern, increased recognition of MPAs and the resources they protect, and improved integration with other ocean management initiatives, such as ocean observing systems. The system will also benefit the nation's conservation efforts by ensuring that

representative examples of the nation's natural and cultural marine resources are protected and providing a collaborative process to assess gaps in protection.

The release of the framework also marked the start of the nomination process for eligible federal, state, and territorial sites to be included in the National System of Marine Protected Areas. Using existing information from the MPA Inventory, the MPA Center has identified MPAs that meet the following entry criteria for inclusion:

- Meets the definition of an MPA, as defined in the framework; and
- Has a management plan that includes specific goals and calls for monitoring and evaluation (plan can be site-specific or part of a broader programmatic management plan).

Information on the final entry criteria—whether an MPA contributes to at least one priority conservation objective listed in the framework—will be provided by the managing agency through the nomination process. There are also additional criteria for cultural heritage MPAs.

Managing agencies of potentially eligible sites have been sent a nomination package and invited to nominate some or all of their sites for inclusion in the national system by February 13, 2009. All nominations will be available for public comment. After final review by the managing agency and the MPA Center, mutually agreed upon MPAs will be accepted into the national system. If you are interested in checking to see if your site is eligible for inclusion in the national system, see [http://www.mpa.gov/national\\_system/nominating\\_mpas.html](http://www.mpa.gov/national_system/nominating_mpas.html) or contact Lauren Wenzel at [Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov](mailto:Lauren.Wenzel@noaa.gov). For more information on the National System of Marine Protected Areas, MPA Inventory, framework, and nomination process, visit <http://www.mpa.gov/>.



The quarterly *Coastal Management Program Newsletter* was developed in response to state requests for assistance in improved communication/lesson sharing among the state and territory coastal management programs. Please let us know about interesting things going on in your coastal zone you would like to share with others. If you have any projects that you would like to highlight, please send a brief description to [Allison.Castellan@noaa.gov](mailto:Allison.Castellan@noaa.gov). The submission deadline for the next newsletter is April 1, 2009.

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