



# FELLOW NEWS

News for and about the NOAA Fellows

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April 2006 Issue 29



## FOCUS ON FELLOWS: Robert Freudenberg



Coastal Fellow Rob Freudenberg was born and raised on the South Shore of Long Island, New York, about an hour east of New York City and five minutes away from the Great South Bay.

“Living only a few blocks from the bay, I spent much of my childhood exploring the fascinating beach and wetlands ecosystem surrounding it. Whether it was examining the remains of horseshoe crabs that would wash up on the shore or taking on the stands of

*Phragmites* growing along the shore (one memorable battle left me with eight stitches in my hand), the bay offered me the opportunity to learn about the coast and laid the foundation for my interest in coastal management.

“I continued to have significant experiences with the coast throughout my young life, including learning to bodysurf with my dad in the ocean, fishing and crabbing in Long Island’s many ‘hot spots,’ and snorkeling in the coral reefs of the U.S. Virgin Islands. While I enjoyed each of these experiences, I also began to notice how the coast around me was changing, particularly as Long Island’s coast became more and more developed. Not only were some coastal parks being lost to development, the local bay park where I spent much of my childhood became closed to all but a select few paying residents (foreshadowing the work I currently do as a fellow).”

In 1998, Rob’s desire to learn more about the environment and coastal issues brought him to the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, where he earned a bachelor’s degree focusing on ecotoxicology.

“Things really came together for me when I completed a summer semester prior to my senior year studying wetlands on the Baja peninsula of Mexico. The coursework gave me the opportunity to study the policy implications of dealing with a local, polluting cannery and the planning prospects of converting the local fishing village into a resort area. This experience and the lessons I learned there still affect the decisions I make today.”

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

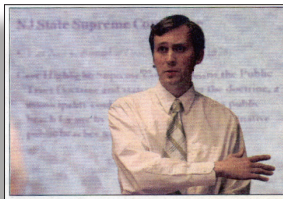
In 2004, Rob went on to earn his master of public administration degree in environmental science and policy from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) in New York. While at graduate school, he volunteered for Riverkeeper's Hudson River team—an organization that helps students and other community members learn about the natural and cultural history of the Hudson River Valley and the watersheds of the New York City drinking water supply.

"My experience with Riverkeeper involved working with local residents and politicians on an advocacy campaign to draw attention to an ongoing oil leak into a local creek along the [Greenpoint] Brooklyn waterfront."

After graduation, Rob worked for the Wildlife Conservation Society compiling a Hudson River sturgeon management report and for NY NJ COAST, a legislative commission dealing with coastal issues in and around New York and New Jersey's shared coastal waters, where he summarized key reports and explored pressing coastal management issues. Each project provided him with valuable environmental experience and a thirst to learn more. Luckily, he was alerted to another important opportunity.

"Actually, I found out about the fellowship from my girlfriend who's on a variety of environmental Listservs (that she actually reads!). When she saw the announcement for the fellowship, she knew I'd be hooked, and I was!"

Rob applied to the program and was placed in the Coastal



Robert Freudenberg of the state Department of Environmental Protection discusses beach access at a workshop yesterday.

## Public beach access debated at meeting

By LAWRENCE MEEGAN  
Staff Writer

ISLAND BEACH STATE PARK — The rights of the public to access New Jersey's beaches was the focus of a Department of Environmental Protection workshop at the Interpretive Center yesterday.

The workshop was one of five the DEP offered throughout the state during April.

It was offered to government officials, land use

Doctrine," said Robert Freudenberg, an official of the DEP's Office of Policy Planning and Science. "The state is charged to protect that right."

"The Public Trust Doctrine establishes the right of the public to fully use land, water, air and the natural resources for a variety of public uses," according to a DEP press release.

Those uses can include

*An article written about Rob's presentation at the Department of Environmental Protection conference*

Management Office of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for his two-year fellowship.

"My project consists of working on a variety of policy initiatives involving public access to New Jersey's coast. The goal of the project is to increase awareness among the public, local government officials, and state policy makers of the importance of preserving and enhancing public access to the coast. This goal has been manifested in a number of different end products, including the design and implementation of municipal and public workshops, production of a public access handbook, the launching of a Web-based inventory of public access ways, and amending a coastal permitting rule."

Rob knows that, after all his hard work and dedication, his research has paid off and will continue to benefit New Jersey for years to come.

"Most of my project work is work that can be built off of, so while my

portion will be complete, others will be able to carry on with the efforts I've been working on."

Because each participant's individual and career goals are unique, the programs mean different things to different people.

"The fellowship has provided me with valuable opportunities to connect with people who are passionate and knowledgeable about coastal issues in a variety of fields. It has also enabled me to learn the important lessons of how policy is enacted at the state and federal levels. Most importantly, I've been able to explore a number of my interests (through conferences, side projects, etc.) that are proving helpful in taking my next step."

A New Yorker at heart, Rob hopes his next endeavors are within the Tri-State area; however, he's ready for whatever career opportunities come his way.

"Having worked in New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Policy, Planning and Science, I've been fortunate to gain more experience in planning and am anxious to build upon this experience working in waterfront planning and redevelopment with a focus on smart growth. I also look forward to exploring more ways of using media, art, and culture to carry environmental messages. For now I'd love to stay in the New York City metropolitan area, but my horizons are wide open for the future." 

For more information about the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's fellowship project, contact Rob at [Robert.Freudenberg@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:Robert.Freudenberg@dep.state.nj.us).


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## FOCUS ON THE FELLOWSHIP: Sea Grant Endorsements

The NOAA Coastal Services Center has received the 2006–2008 Coastal Management Fellowship endorsements from Sea Grant. The Center received 23 applications from 13 Sea Grant programs across the country. Using four criteria—academic performance and diversity of educational background, endorsement by the applicant’s Sea Grant director, support from two letters of recommendation, and content of the applicant’s goal statement—12 finalists will be selected from among these candidates.

A workshop to match states with fellows will take place in Charleston, South Carolina, from April 25 to 28, 2006. Of the finalists selected, six will be placed with a host state. Each of the selected host states will send its fellow mentor to the placement workshop, and the semifinalists will be brought to the workshop at the expense of the Center.

The workshop consists of an orientation, project proposal presentations, finalist presentations, finalist and host state interviews, and fellow matching. If a state does not find a suitable candidate during the workshop, it will be given the option to defer fellow placement for one year. States will only be allowed one deferment before they have to reapply. No contact between prospective hosts and finalists should be made before the placement workshop.

This year, the host states are California, Maine, Massachusetts, Ohio, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia. For more information on 2006 state projects, please visit the fellowship Web site at [www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows/06\\_stateprojects.html](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows/06_stateprojects.html) or contact the fellowship coordinator at [csc.fellowships@noaa.gov](mailto:csc.fellowships@noaa.gov). 

## FOCUS ON THE CENTER: On-Line Modules

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Coastal Services Center provides a number of on-line courses and modules to help coastal resource managers learn more about the coastal community. The modules provide step-by-step instruction and are constantly being assessed to provide the most up-to-date information available. Some of the on-line courses are profiled here.

### **On-line needs assessment learning module.**

This module illustrates the terminology, tools, and methods of needs assessments. According to the NOAA Web site, “A needs assessment is a systematic investigation of an audience(s) to identify aspects of individual knowledge, skill, interest, attitude and abilities relevant to a particular issue, organizational goal, or objective.” This course includes how to develop assessment instruments such as surveys and questionnaires, where needs assessments fit in the project development process, and the basic steps in conducting needs assessments.

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

### **Public Trust Doctrine course.**


This program presents a basic overview of the Public Trust Doctrine, its legal origins and geographic scope, the responsibilities of the states, and much more. The information

can help coastal managers understand the many problems states encounter finding a balance between public and private uses for navigable waters and their shores. [www.csc.noaa.gov/ptd/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/ptd/)

### **Web content design and evaluation course.**

Every coastal management organization has a Web site, or is thinking about creating one. This course is designed for Web content creators to develop more relevant and effective Web sites for their stakeholders and the public. The on-line module provides a foundation of knowledge for understanding the needs of Web users and tailoring Web content to meet those needs, as well as examining possible evaluation methods. Learn what information should be put on the site, the target audience, and how to know if a Web site is an effective tool for the organization.

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

The Center also provides in-house training in Charleston, South Carolina, or can bring the classes to your facility. To view all the courses and see what the Center has to offer, visit [www.csc.noaa.gov/training/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/training/). To request training, contact the Center’s Coastal Learning Services program at [nos.csc.CLS\\_trainers@noaa.gov](mailto:nos.csc.CLS_trainers@noaa.gov). 

# 2005–2007 Coral Reef Management Fellows

THE CORAL REEF MANAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM HAS PLACED FELLOWS IN FIVE JURISDICTIONS TO SUPPORT ISLAND CORAL REEF MANAGEMENT EFFORTS.

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Sharon Gulick is working in American Samoa with the Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG), a group of territorial and federal agencies that coordinates all of American Samoa's coral reef management activities. Sharon leads CRAG's

Population Pressure Working Group in the development and implementation of projects. She also helps develop and participate in CRAG's education and outreach efforts, including a year-long Rare Pride campaign focusing on protecting sea turtles and their coral reef habitats.



Lihla Noori is working at the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Division of Environmental Quality on the island of Rota, in cooperation with the CNMI Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Fish

and Wildlife, and the Coastal Resources Management office. Lihla is responsible for the coordination of a local action strategy project to restore the Talakhaya watershed, assisting with marine monitoring efforts, and promoting community involvement in the management of a local marine protected area. Lihla will also be conducting outreach and education projects, with a focus on building natural resource management capacity in CNMI. She is partnering with the Northern Marianas College to develop an environmental education day camp and working with Rota High School to establish and facilitate the Rota Environmental Action and Leadership (REAL) group.



Romina King is working at the Guam Bureau of Statistics and Plans' Coastal Management Program. She is developing the Guardians of the Reef—an organization of high school students in Guam dedicated to creating sustainable solutions to

local environmental issues through community action projects. The Guardians of the Reef program is an attempt to build management capacity in Guam by engaging and empowering Guam's youth as active stewards for present and future generations. Guardians of the Reef is also working to increase public awareness and understanding of environmental issues and resources.



Katie Siegler is working at Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources in the Division of Aquatic Resources. She is currently finalizing the Climate Change and Marine Disease Local Action Strategy (LAS), which outlines a plan for managing reef

ecosystems with increased resistance and resilience. She will be working on all the local action strategies, with a focus on the Land-Based Sources of Pollution LAS and the Climate Change and Marine Disease LAS. She will be involved in developing and assessing bioindicators of coral reef health so that stressors can be identified before mortality occurs. There is also interest in establishing biocriteria for Hawaiian stony corals as a means of monitoring reef health over time.



Maria del Mar Lopez-Rivera is working at the Puerto Rico Natural Reserves and Wildlife Refuges Division (NRWRD) within the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, where she oversees all issues pertaining to the Coral Reef Initiative and the

management plan development initiative. She is working on the final management plan for the Bioluminescent Bay Natural Reserve in Vieques—probably the only pristine bioluminescent bay left in the world. Throughout the fellowship, Maria will continue to revise and prepare management plans for high-priority natural reserves.

Fellows traveled to their respective islands following an orientation meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, January 16 to 20, 2006. The host agency supervisors also attended the orientation meeting, at which the fellows and supervisors learned about fellowship policies and procedures, developed strategies the fellowship program could use to help build on-island capacity, received training in more effective communication, and worked together to begin developing two-year project plans. The fellows also received professional development training focused on facilitative leadership, meeting management, and communication skills.



## Coral Reef Management Fellowship Orientation



*Mayra Garcia, the supervisor from Puerto Rico, gave a hand constructing the team's "doghouse" during the leadership training.*



*The fellows started working on their project plans while at orientation training. Fellow Sharon Gulick and her supervisor Gene Brighthouse start to work out the details of her project in American Samoa.*

The group made time for social activities while at orientation. A reception at the Bishop Museum included traditional Hawaiian food, music, and décor. Museum exhibits were also open to the group.



*Guam Fellow Romina King and her supervisor, Vangie Lujan.*



*Romina, Gary Toves (supervisor in CNMI), Libla, Sharon, Maria del Mar, Katie, and Meghan Gombos (fellowship coordination committee) pose for a picture after a morning hike at Makapuu lighthouse.*



*Hawaii Fellow Katie Siegler and her supervisor, Athline Clark.*



*Sharon, Romina, Libla, and Pacific Island Assistant Paul Anderson stand proud with their "doghouse" during ECO leadership training.*

### CREDITS AND INFORMATION

*Fellow News* is published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center to relay information about the fellowship program and provide a forum for information exchange among fellows, mentors, Sea Grant, and the Center.

Please send you questions and suggestions for future editions to  
[csc.fellowships@noaa.gov](mailto:csc.fellowships@noaa.gov)

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

### APRIL

10–14: **National Hurricane Conference**  
Orlando, Florida  
[www.hurricanemeeting.com](http://www.hurricanemeeting.com)

### MAY

3–5: **Shoreline Change Conference II: A Workshop on Managing Shoreline Change**  
Charleston, South Carolina  
[www.csc.noaa.gov/shoreconf/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/shoreconf/)

8–10: **American Water Resources Association's 2006 Spring Specialty Conference: GIS and Water Resources IV**  
Houston, Texas  
[www.awra.org/meetings/Houston2006/index.html](http://www.awra.org/meetings/Houston2006/index.html)

14–17: **The Coastal Society's 20th Biennial Conference**  
Saint Pete Beach, Florida  
[www.thecoastalsociety.org](http://www.thecoastalsociety.org)

### JUNE

4–7: **2006 National Main Streets Conference**  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
<http://conference.mainstreet.org/>

5–9: **2006 Greater Everglades Ecosystem Restoration Conference**  
Lake Buena Vista, Florida  
<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/GEER2006/>

11–16: **Association of State Floodplain Managers 30th Annual Conference**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
[www.floods.org/Conferences,%20Calendar/albuquerque.asp](http://www.floods.org/Conferences,%20Calendar/albuquerque.asp)

14–16: **Annual Conference of the Mid-Atlantic Sections of the American Water Resources Association: Stream Restoration and Protection in the Mid-Atlantic Region**  
Branchville, New Jersey  
[http://awra.org/state/new\\_jersey/mac2006/](http://awra.org/state/new_jersey/mac2006/)

For more information on upcoming events, please visit [www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/conferences.html](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/conferences.html).

## NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER TRAINING

### APRIL

4–5: **Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas** – Hudson River Valley Greenway

5–6: **Remote Sensing for Spatial Analysts**  
NOAA Coastal Services Center

18–20: **Public Issues and Conflict Management**  
Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)

24–25: **Introduction to ArcGIS I**  
NOAA Coastal Services Center

25–26: **Project Design and Evaluation**  
Pennsylvania Sea Grant

26–28: **Coastal Applications of ArcGIS**  
NOAA Coastal Services Center

### MAY

9–10: **Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas** – North Carolina NERR

15–17: **Public Issues and Conflict Management**  
NOAA Coastal Services Center, California

18–19: **Negotiating for Coastal Resources**  
NOAA Coastal Services Center, California

\*Training classes are limited to project partners and NOAA line offices.

24–25: **Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas** – Apalachicola NERR

31–June 1: **Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas** – Weeks Bay NERR

### JUNE

6–7: **Project Design and Evaluation**  
Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program

For more information on these courses and other training offered by the Center, please visit [www.csc.noaa.gov/training/](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/training/).

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