



Evaluation of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program

Final Report

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Coastal Services Center
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Executive Summary

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) launched the Coastal Services Center (CSC) in 1994 to support coastal managers and natural resource agencies by facilitating access to and utilization of the most up-to-date technology, information, and management strategies available in the field of coastal resource management. This support is accomplished as the Center works with state and local programs to resolve site-specific issues. The technology created and the lessons learned from these efforts are then transferred to the rest of the nation's coastal resource managers.

The Coastal Management Fellowship Program was created in 1996 to fulfill a dual purpose for CSC's current and future stakeholders: giving **postgraduate students** an opportunity for on-the-job education and training in coastal resource management and policy, and giving **state coastal zone management programs** assistance with specific projects. The two-year opportunity matches students interested in state coastal zone management programs with state programs that need their talents and skills, increasing the pool of qualified and trained future coastal zone managers in the process.

This report presents the results of an evaluation of the Fellowship Program that was designed and conducted by GEARS, Inc. The evaluation examined the Fellowship Program's **process** – e.g., how it was implemented, the types of projects undertaken, the characteristics of the applicant pool – as well as its outcomes. **Outcomes** addressed through this evaluation included whether and how states have integrated fellowship projects and applied them to high-priority issues and whether the Fellowship Program leads participants to work in coastal resource management after the two-year program.

Key Findings

Overall satisfaction with the Fellowship Program is very high among current and past fellows and their mentors. Sea Grant directors who responded to the surveys were less satisfied with their participation in the program, partly because the Coastal Management Fellowship Program is less of a focus for Sea Grant programs than their own fellowship program, which places students in federal agencies instead of state agencies.

The Fellowship Program is a win-win scenario, as intended, for both fellows and their host agencies. Overall, both mentors (representing their host agencies) and fellows felt that they benefited significantly from their mutual experience with the program. Fellows, as intended, gained the skills, contacts, and confidence that allowed them to transition successfully from academia to work (the majority in state programs); states had a variety



of technical and policy projects completed that would either not have been undertaken at all, or would have proceeded at a much slower pace.

Fellows and mentors see many opportunities for making a valued program even better. While the high overall satisfaction ratings and perceived benefits indicate a strong overall program, fellows and mentors did identify a number of specific areas in which the program could be improved. These included suggestions to make project descriptions more accurate and realistic, provide better training and ongoing support for mentors, higher salaries (especially for areas with higher costs of living) and more consistent (and accessible) benefits, a more revealing and perhaps broadened applications process, a less grueling matching process (although even critics admitted that the matching process yielded great results for fellows and host agencies alike), and more opportunities for contact – between and among fellows and mentors, and with the Coastal Services Center – before and after the fellowship.

Conclusion

Was the Fellowship Program effective in providing training to postgraduate students in coastal resource management and policy?

In general, the Fellowship Program must be considered a success in this regard. Nine of the past fellows rated the quality of the training and education they received through the Fellowship Program as “Excellent” (5 on a scale of 1 to 5) another 11 chose the next highest rating (4 on a scale of 1 to 5). Among past fellows who responded to the survey, 42 percent continued in state government and another 15 percent in federal agencies; 77 percent were still working in coastal management or related fields at the time of the survey. Even those who ended up in different fields gained experience and understanding of the nuances of state government, especially in the realm of science and policy. Some caveats noted by a few respondents include a tilt toward (and preference for) more concrete technical projects, rather than the somewhat more nebulous policy projects that are more difficult to undertake, to manage, and to show results from within a two-year time frame.

How effective was the assistance to the state coastal programs in improving, enhancing, and augmenting coastal resource management and policy for the state?

Asked how effective the Fellowship Program had been in improving, enhancing, and augmenting coastal resource management and policy for their states, past mentors gave the program a mean rating of 4.5 (on a scale of 1 to 5) and current mentors a mean rating of 4.14. Past mentors offered many



examples of how the fellows' work during their brief tenure in state agencies led to specific, measurable, and ongoing benefits for the host agencies. Past mentors reported that some of these projects would not have been undertaken at all because of shortages of staff, funding, or both. A number of the projects and tools are still in place (some with modifications and updates) and a few were used by other agencies and states. Examples of projects include developing a statewide tracking and monitoring system for non-point source pollution, a community-based coastal management plan to reduce surface use conflicts, a database for estuary management and an interactive Web site describing coastal public access, a stormwater management system inspection program, wetland restoration planning and mitigation policy revisions, planning for sea level rise and coastal hazards, and a sediment quality information database.

What are the program's long-term benefits for fellows and for states?

Fellows were exposed to state-level work in coastal zone resource management, with 77 percent of the 26 past fellows continuing in that field and setting beyond their fellowships (some in the same agencies). Others remained in resource management and marine work (such as fisheries or marine science), even if it was not specifically related to coastal resource management. Over half (56 percent) of past fellows agreed that participation in the Fellowship Program had been extremely helpful to their post-Fellowship careers and employment search, attributing their success to contacts and experience set in motion by their participation in the Fellowship Program.

States were able to complete many useful technical and policy projects that would not have been completed at all – or in a timely manner – without the Fellowship Program. Some were adopted by other states and programs, but this did not occur in a systematic way and does not appear to be among the program's most important benefits.

Overall, the Coastal Management Fellowship Program appears to be meeting its intended goals for its key customers: current coastal resource managers who need additional resources, creative ideas, and the most current technical knowledge to run their programs effectively, and students who are just beginning their careers and need the experience and on-the-job training to translate their academic skills and enthusiasm to the workplaces that need their infusion of talent and energy.



Introduction

The nation's 95,331 miles of ocean and Great Lakes coastlines are protected and managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA was formed in 1970 from a merger of three agencies with a rich history of scientific achievement and conservation dating back to Thomas Jefferson, who established the Survey of the Coast in 1807. The legacy of scientific accuracy and stewardship of natural resources continues in the 21st century with NOAA's work protecting marine fisheries and endangered species, producing charts that aid in air and nautical navigation, and partnering with states to protect coastal resources.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) launched the Coastal Services Center (CSC) in 1994 to support coastal managers and natural resource agencies by facilitating access to and utilization of the most up-to-date technology, information, and management strategies available in the field of coastal resource management.

This support is accomplished as the Center works with state and local programs to resolve site-specific issues. The technology created and the lessons learned from these efforts are then transferred to the rest of the nation's coastal resource managers.

The Coastal Services Center Mission:

To support the environmental, social, and economic well-being of the coast by linking people, information and technology.

The Coastal Zone Management Fellowship Program

CSC launched the Coastal Management Fellowship Program in 1996 to fulfill a dual purpose for its current and future stakeholders: giving **postgraduate students** an opportunity for on-the-job education and training in coastal resource management and policy, and giving **state coastal zone management programs** assistance with specific projects. The two-year opportunity matches students interested in state coastal zone management programs with state programs that need their talents and skills, increasing the pool of qualified and trained future coastal zone managers in the process.

Potential applicants and state coastal zone management programs both go through a parallel application process, from which 12 finalists and 6 state projects are chosen by a selection panel made up of program partners – Sea Grant, the NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management, state coastal zone management programs, the Coastal States Organization, and current and former fellows.

Of the 12 finalists, six fellows are matched each year to the six state programs during a week-long matching workshop. The workshop, which



includes an orientation session and presentations by both finalists and state program staff, gives fellows and their potential mentors from state programs an opportunity to interview one another and choose a mutually beneficial match. Once they are placed, fellows receive a salary (currently \$32,000 per year), a benefits package (health insurance and worker's compensation), moving expenses, and stipends for travel to professional development conferences and meetings. The fellows are employed by an administrative organization under contract with NOAA/CSC, which provides their salary and benefits.

The state coastal zone management programs, in turn, provide mentors who guide the fellows' work on each project as well as office space, equipment, and additional training. States also share the program costs, contributing \$7,500 each year in non-federal funds for each fellow. To date, 52 fellows have undertaken projects in 19 states.

Portrait of Current and Past Fellows and Their Projects

The surveys conducted for this evaluation collected some demographic information on the characteristics of fellows and on the types of projects they pursued during their fellowships.

The current fellows (8 of whom responded to the survey) are mostly in their 20s (2 are in their 30s), with three males and five females. One respondent self-identified as Asian and one as Latino/a. Half the current fellows are in the first year of their fellowships.

Among past fellows (26 of whom responded to the survey), four from the Fellowship Program's first cohort (1996-98) are represented, and at least one from every year thereafter. This group is evenly divided among males and females; most are in their 30s, with an age range of 28-48. In this group, all self-identified as white/Caucasian, and one as Latino/a. All but one completed at least 22 months of their two-year fellowship.



Sample Projects Listed in Survey Responses

Enhancing public access in the coastal zone

Assisting with coastal site plan reviews

Project management for coastal communities grants, including Web site design and updating

Adaptation to Bay-related impacts of climate change; marine debris

Database development and management (e.g., Dynamic Estuary Management Information System (DEMIS); sediment quality information database (SQUID))

GIS projects (California Coastal Resource Management GIS; GIS-based evaluation of inlet process impacts on oceanfront shorelines; GIS-based decision support tool for the identification of beach nourishment sites; wetlands restoration GIS; GIS-based decision-support tool for the identification of beach nourishment sites in California)

Permit monitoring and compliance system for coastal areas

Stormwater management system inspection program

Wetland restoration planning and mitigation policy revisions

Coastal erosion study

Coastal fish and wildlife habitat protection and restoration

Shellfish management plan

Sea level fish and coastal hazard planning

Ocean and coastal resource management information clearinghouse



Evaluation Overview

The CSC contracted with GEARS, Inc. in 2006 to design and conduct an evaluation of the Fellowship Program. With a decade of experience and dozens of fellows and their mentors able to reflect on the program’s contributions as alumni, this seemed an appropriate juncture to assess the program’s benefits to both fellows and the state programs they served.

Evaluation Questions

The GEARS, Inc. team designed an evaluation that examined the Fellowship Program’s **process** – e.g., how it was implemented, the types of projects undertaken, the characteristics of the applicant pool – as well as its outcomes. **Outcomes** addressed through this evaluation included whether and how states have integrated fellowship projects and applied them to high-priority issues and whether the Fellowship Program leads participants to work in coastal resource management after the two-year program.

Data Collection

To answer the evaluation’s process and outcome questions, GEARS, Inc. designed survey instruments to gauge the experiences of current and past fellows, current and past mentors, Sea Grant Directors, and CSC partners in the program. CSC gave significant input on and approved all surveys. In addition, all survey instruments received approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The number of respondents and response rates for each category are shown in Table 1. Copies of the survey instruments are provided in Appendix A. Appendix B includes the complete list of process and evaluation questions, as well as the instruments and data sources that informed each question. Appendix C provides some additional data and charts to supplement the data highlighted in the report.

Table 1: Survey Respondents and Response Rates

Respondent Category	Number of Respondents	Number of Surveys e-mailed	Response Rate
Sea Grant Directors	8	34	24%
Past Mentors	17	65	26%
Past Fellows	26	47	55%
Current Mentors	8	10	80%
Current Fellows	8	10	80%
Center Partners	2	6	33%
Total	70	132	53%



Data Analysis

The results from the surveys were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. For quantitative data, descriptive statistics were used to analyze responses. For qualitative data, written narratives were coded and organized by theme and content. These responses were then grouped according to similar content.

As with any set of data, some caveats are in order. In this case, the response rates varied substantially, with current fellows and mentors responding at an 80 percent rate and Sea Grant Directors and past mentors responding at rates of 24 percent and 26 percent, respectively. It is important to highlight that the Sea Grant Director response rate indicates the number of completed surveys. Nine (9) Sea Grant Directors, however, responded indicating that they did not have enough knowledge about the program to provide informative responses. These nine respondents indicated that their lack of knowledge was due to a number of factors including having no staff person currently in the office with substantial knowledge of the program, never having an applicant to move forward in the fellowship process, or feeling that they have played a cursory role in the fellowship process. In addition, only 2 of 6 Center partners responded – a very small sample, even if it represents a response rate of 33%.

About This Report

This evaluation report presents findings from the analysis of survey responses in four categories:

- Overall satisfaction with the program from the perspective of current and past fellows, host agencies and mentors, and program partners
- Specific benefits accruing to fellows, especially in terms of the program goal of transitioning from academia to work in state coastal zone management
- Specific benefits accruing to state coastal zone management programs, and
- Opportunities identified by survey respondents for improving the program.

A concluding section summarizes these findings in terms of the questions posed by the evaluation framework:

- Was the Fellowship Program effective in providing training to postgraduate students in coastal zone management and policy?



- How effective was the assistance to the state coastal zone management programs in improving, enhancing, and augmenting coastal resource management and policy?
- What are the long-term benefits for fellows and for states?

Key Findings

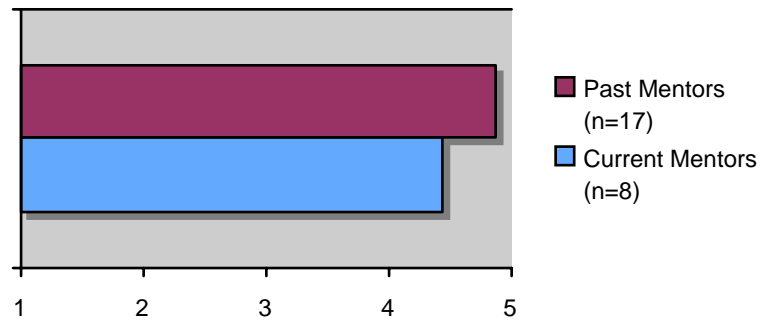
Key findings from the evaluation are:

- Overall satisfaction with the Fellowship Program is high.
- The Fellowship Program is, as intended, a win-win scenario that benefits both fellows and their host agencies.
- Fellows and mentors see many opportunities for making a valued program even better.

Overall satisfaction with the program is high.

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, overall satisfaction with the Fellowship Program is very high among current and past fellows and their mentors. Mentors, who are closest to the projects on which the fellows work throughout their 2-year fellowships, are best able to judge the contributions to their programs and agencies.

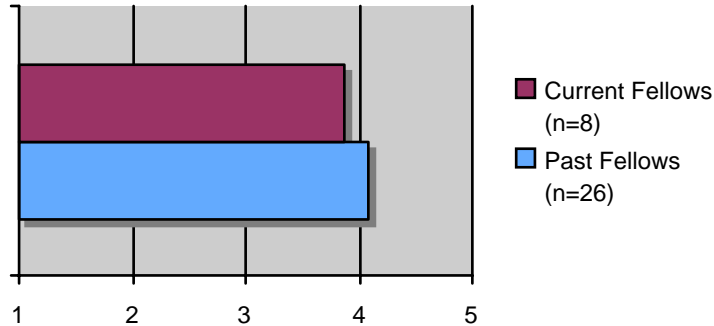
**Table 2: Current and past mentors:
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program? (Scale of 1-5)**



As discussed in greater detail below, **fellows** appreciated the fellowship’s prestige and its actual (or, in the case of current fellows, potential) value for networking and job placements. As fellows transitioned from academia to the professional world, they noted that the fellowships allowed them to enter projects at a higher level than might otherwise have been possible,

giving them both more responsibility and more confidence than an entry-level position would have.

Table 3: Current and Past Fellows:
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the training and education you receive(d) in the fellowship? (Scale of 1-5)



Although both current and past fellows gave the program high overall ratings, past fellows naturally had more opportunities to judge whether the program’s on-the-job and other training opportunities had helped them succeed in their subsequent professional pursuits. In some cases, current fellows had only been in their role for a few months at the time of the survey, so they had not yet taken advantage of some of the opportunities (such as attending professional conferences or becoming more immersed in their projects). Past fellows were particularly appreciative of the opportunities to network with other fellows and colleagues, and the many opportunities to travel to attend professional meetings and conferences. Over 80 percent of the past fellows believe their participation in the program affected their ability to get their current positions. As one put it, “I wouldn’t be where I am today without the fellowship.”

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without the fellowship.”

Mentors, speaking for their host agencies, cited a number of reasons for their high satisfaction ratings. Among past mentors, 14 (of 17) said the projects they proposed were ones that could not have been completed without a fellow’s contributions. Moreover, these projects represented opportunities to try out new ideas or methods with relatively little investment or risk. “The Fellowship Program was a great deal for us,” said one mentor. “We got lots of results for few dollars.” Mentors also pointed to the infusion of fresh ideas and the high skill level of the fellows in their programs (described in greater detail below).

“We got lots of results for few dollars.”

The **Directors of Sea Grant programs** who responded to the survey (8 of 34 surveyed, or 24%), gave the program lower overall ratings than the other

groups surveyed (2.75 on a scale of 1 to 5). The directors, who participate in the Fellowship Program as both a recruiting conduit for potential candidates and as members of the selection committee, gave several reasons for their lower ratings. These included their closer connection to Sea Grant's Knauss Fellowship, which plays a similar role matching students and projects in executive branch agencies, rather than the state emphasis of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program.

Two Sea Grant directors suggested that the final selection process for fellows is not as transparent as it could be, with one describing it as a mysterious "black box." Others noted that even though participation in the Fellowship Program was uneven across Sea Grant programs, those that *did* work hard to recruit and endorse applicants did not have their contributions recognized, nor did they receive as much ongoing communication from the CSC office as they would have liked. "We do it to be good citizens," one wrote, "but we really don't get that much out of it."

The program did receive high overall satisfaction ratings from the two **partner** organizations that answered the survey, but since only two of eight responded, this sentiment does not necessarily represent those of partners overall.

The Fellowship Program is, as intended, a win-win scenario for both fellows and their host agencies.

Overall, both mentors (representing their host agencies) and fellows felt that they benefited significantly from their mutual experience with the program. Fellows, as intended, gained the skills, contacts, and confidence that allowed them to transition successfully from academia to work (the majority in state programs); states had a variety of technical and policy projects completed that would either not have been undertaken at all, or would have proceeded at a much slower pace. Both fellows and mentors said they would participate again (and indeed many state agencies had multiple fellows over the years). Seven of eight current fellows and 25 of 26 of past fellows would recommend the Fellowship to others.

Benefits Perceived by Fellows

Fellows generally appreciated the relatively long two-year time frame, which allowed them to "dig in" in a substantive way. Fellows also cited the specific skills they gained through their fellowships. These included technical skills (particularly in using and applying geographic information system, or GIS, tools), interpersonal skills such as conflict resolutions and facilitation, and access to a wide variety of training opportunities.

Fellows were asked to rate their skill level in technology, software, research, management, communication, interpersonal skills, science, coastal resource management, policy, and the specific topic of their projects before and after

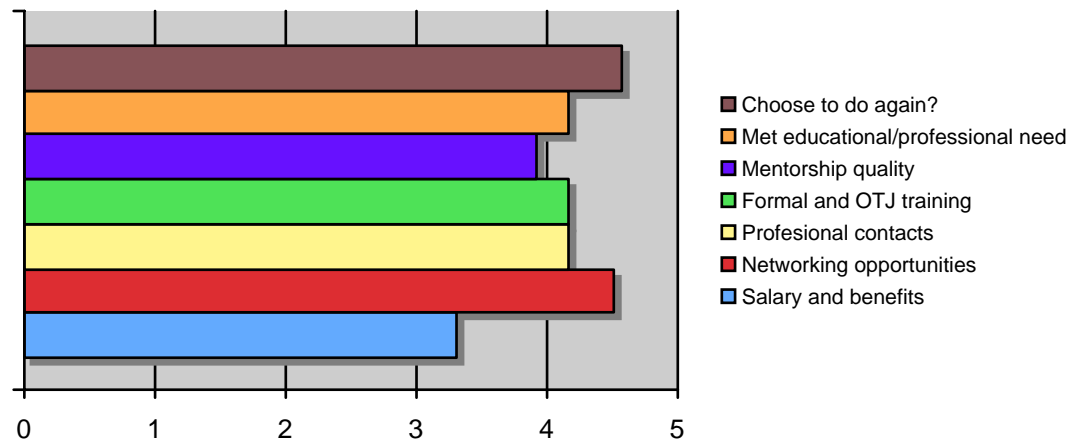


the fellowship. Past fellows felt they had begun the fellowship with good software skills and fair coastal resource management, policy, and project-specific skills. In all areas, they felt their skills had improved somewhat due to the fellowship.

In contrast to the past fellows, current fellows rated themselves as having good skills in the following areas when they entered the program: software applications, research, communication, interpersonal skills, and science. On average, they rated themselves as “poor” to “fair” regarding organizational management skills, coastal resource management, coastal and ocean policy, and project-specific skills. Although the current fellows reported moderate improvements in technology, interpersonal, coastal resource management, and project-specific skills, they reported little or no change in research, organizational management, communication, and science-based skills. In part, this may be due to the fact that four of the eight current fellows were still in the first year of their fellowship at the time of the survey.

Table 4 shows that past fellows gave the Fellowship Program high ratings overall. Asked whether they would choose to do it again, only 3 of the 26 expressed uncertainty; most said either “yes, definitely” (18 of the 26, or 69 percent) or the next highest rating (5 of the 26, or 19 percent chose 4 on a scale of 1 to 5). Table 4 also shows how highly the past fellows rated the networking opportunities available to them through the Fellowship program, with 8 of the past fellows specifically noting this in written comments as well.

Table 4: Benefits Perceived by Past Fellows (n=26)



Since the fellows were transitioning from graduate school to careers, the fellowship represented their first substantive experience in the world of work. It also represented an opportunity to “try out,” as one put it, both coastal zone management as a professional focus and state government as a setting. Based on the responses of the 26 past fellows who completed

surveys, 42 percent (11 of the 26) ended up working in state government, and another 4 (15 percent) accepted positions at the federal level – meaning that more than half (58 percent) pursued careers in the public sector. Three had entered the private sector, two worked for nonprofits or foundations, and five were working in academia.

As both fellows and mentors noted, the experience of working in state government for two years was valuable regardless of the professional setting in which a fellow might land. The value accrued from having gained a much more nuanced understanding and appreciation for how difficult it is to formulate and implement scientific policy within the constraints of state government.

Access to training was another important benefit for fellows, some of whom recognized that their colleagues in state government did not have the opportunities they did to travel to professional conferences and meetings. As noted earlier, networking was another benefit cited by current and past fellows – not only during the fellowship, but especially afterwards as they pursued careers in their fields.

The past fellows generally credited the Fellowship Program with significantly jump-starting and then accelerating their career paths. As noted earlier, among past fellows, 21 of the 26 respondents (81 percent) said their participation in the Fellowship Program had affected their ability to get their current jobs. At least five of them noted in written comments that they had stayed in the agencies where they were fellows after the Fellowship Program had ended. Others followed mentors to other agencies, and still others parlayed contacts and recommendations from supervisors or colleagues into other positions. One even ended up working for an agency that the fellow had interviewed with during the matching process. “I was hired by NOAA, OCRM, Coastal Programs Division,” said one past fellow. “What more could a person ask for?” Another noted that both finalists for the fellow’s current position were Fellowship alumni: “I think that says something!”

“I was hired by NOAA, OCRM, Coastal Programs Division. What more could a person ask for?”

Benefits Perceived by Mentors and Host Agencies

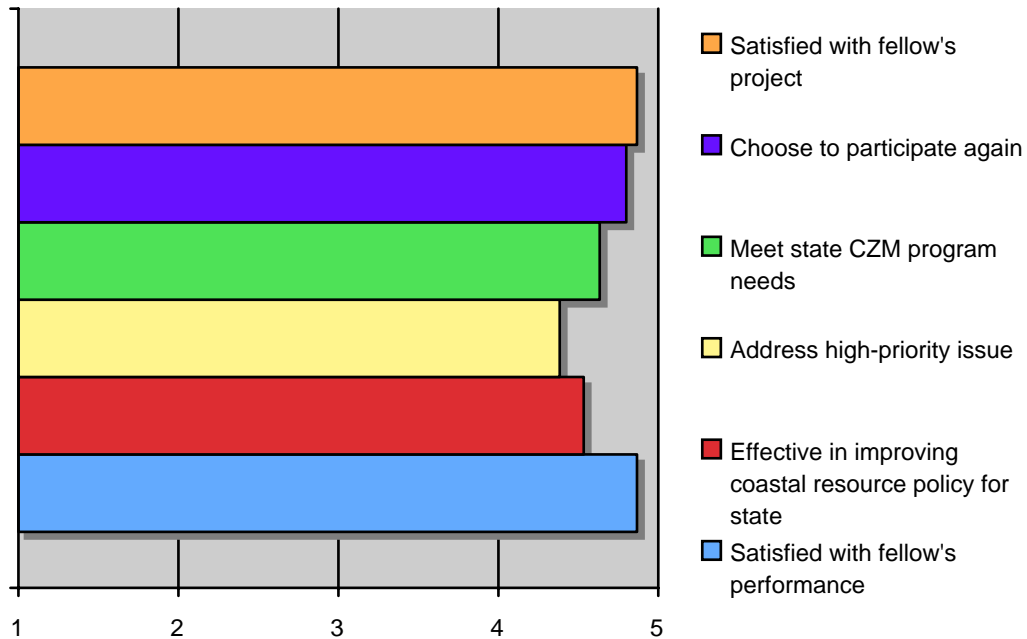
Table 5, below, shows some of the ratings for questions addressing the value perceived by past mentors in host agencies.

Both past and current mentors described coastal zone management programs that are operating in an environment of flat or declining budgets and limited staff time or hiring freezes. In one state, a mentor explained, the division couldn’t even hire temporary workers, so using the fellowship as a way to add an employee (who didn’t actually count as one) was tremendously helpful.



With very few exceptions, mentors noted the high skill level of the fellows in everything from GIS and other software to in-depth knowledge of coastal processes. A typical comment was, “The fellows were well-versed in coastal zone management, enthusiastic, articulate, able to work independently, able to write well, able to participate fully in discussions with diverse groups.” The types of projects proposed, they reported, required a high skill level and could not have been undertaken by an intern or a volunteer. In some cases, state programs did not have the technical skills in-house, so the skill infusion was particularly valuable – especially when it could be dedicated to a discreet effort for a full two years, such as creating a database or GIS mapping and analysis. Of the projects undertaken by the 26 past fellows, 21 (81 percent) were completed.

Table 5: Benefits Perceived by Past Mentors (n=17)



Some mentors did point out that it was difficult to manage and supervise fellows as employees, since they were not state employees. (Instead, as noted above, an administrative organization under contract with NOAA/CSC provides their salaries and benefits.) “That’s OK if the fellow is responsible and adheres to the agency’s workplace practices and routine,” this mentor wrote, “but can be disruptive if they chose not to do so.”

Other tasks could have been completed by existing staff, but would have taken much longer, at a pace of a few hours a week instead of the full-time, long-term attention they received from the fellows. Some would have

undertaken the projects anyway (because of their importance or because they were required), but felt the fellow's work yielded a better outcome: "We would have done a tracking project [for our Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution Program] regardless of whether or not we had a fellow, but were able to develop a much better and more comprehensive project with the fellow."

In addition to the immediate value of the projects, many offered long-term value as well. Past mentors described products from these projects that are still in use – e.g., a tool to track coastal non-point source pollution control efforts, another being considered by the state legislature for statewide implementation, a sediment sampling tool (SQUID) that was used by other Connecticut projects and is now being used to help formulate sediment sampling at the federal level, and data and maps for the Dynamic Estuary Management Information System (DEMIS), which was a prototype that became a core product of the Oregon Coastal Atlas and is now being used by many other agencies.

Although several respondents perceive the Fellowship Program to be a financial bargain for states, they also had mixed responses about whether they would be willing or able to contribute more financially. Some past mentors remembered contributions in the \$30,000 - \$40,000 range, while others recalled amounts in the \$12,000 - \$14,000 range. (A contribution of \$7,500 per year in state funds is required, for a total of \$15,000 per fellow – an increase from the \$10,000 total contribution requested of states when the program began.) Past mentors noted the in-kind contributions of office space, computers, training, their own staff time for mentoring, software, and other benefits such as access to the vehicle fleet for travel.

Asked whether their programs would be likely to contribute additional matching funds in the future (beyond the current \$7,500 per year), a quarter of past mentors (4 of the 17, or 24%) said it would be extremely likely, a third did not know (6 of 17, or 35%), and the others were scattered in between, with most tilting towards the "unlikely" end of the scale. A more pessimistic view prevailed among current mentors, none of whom thought additional funding was "extremely likely" in the future, but two of whom chose "not at all likely", with most in the middle or uncertain.

In written comments, some went on to explain that budgetary decisions were not theirs to make. Others noted that their budget was already strapped, with one commenting that the matching fund requirement had prevented them from submitting a proposal for the past several years. Still others were uncertain because the budget's flexibility changes unpredictably from year to year, depending on the yield of permit fees or state budget surpluses.

Both current and past mentors were asked whether their state programs would contribute additional matching funds if it varied by state according to



the OPM-designated locality pay percentages. Eleven respondents said they didn't know. (In written comments, three said they were not familiar with the term). Those who did respond seemed to be in favor if they were from states with a high cost of living (and that therefore have trouble recruiting fellows on the modest nationwide salary).

Fellows and mentors see many opportunities for making a valued program even better

While the high overall satisfaction ratings and perceived benefits indicate a strong overall program, fellows and mentors did identify a number of specific areas in which the program could be improved. It is worth noting that the lists of weaknesses and suggested improvements come from qualitative responses to questions, not rating scales. As such, some are noted by just one or two respondents, but are included here for the program staff's consideration.

Project Delineation

Even though most fellows were pleased with the scope of their projects and were able to complete them, a few complained that their projects were not clearly defined and one finished the work in the first 6 months of the fellowship (but was able to take on some other projects within the program). Another noted that the competition among states to have their projects emerge from the competitive screening process may inadvertently motivate some to propose more ambitious and unrealistic projects.

A few comments addressed the differences between technical and policy projects, with one respondent noticing a tilt towards technical projects. However, some believe that policy projects are more beneficial to both fellows and to their host agencies. A current mentor wondered whether some one-year projects might be feasible, which would allow fellows to respond to trends and immediate management and policy demands in agencies as well as emerging issues in coastal management that would benefit from policy directives on a faster timeline.

Some mentors and fellows questioned whether states really were committed to the projects they had proposed; in some instances, fellows experienced problems with getting guidance from their mentors or (more commonly) having appropriate office space and equipment to perform their tasks. One suggestion was to make sure the project is supported not only by mentors, but by their superiors as well. The fellow who made this suggestion said, "My project was a good idea theoretically, but the state was in no position to use the result. That's really frustrating."

One fellow suggested that a second-year "escape clause" might be worth considering for matches that do not succeed, for whatever reason. A mentor suggested that states be reminded throughout the process that the



fellowship program, while mutually beneficial, is designed primarily for the fellows' benefit; states' needs should not drive the process.

Several respondents suggested that states whose projects were not as advertised, whose mentors did not deliver in terms of guidance or support, or who otherwise did not fulfill their obligations should not be able to propose future projects (at least for one year).

Mentor Training and Support

Most past mentors were somewhat (41 percent) or very satisfied (35 percent) with the mentoring they provided to fellows. Two specific suggestions to strengthen the mentorship experience were to add a place on the program's Web site in which mentors could record and share their experiences and to hold a check-in or even a workshop at the 1-year mark in the fellowship to see whether mentors needed any additional support.

Not surprisingly, fellows see the mentor-fellow relationship as the "make-or-break" element in the fellowship. Several suggested better screening of mentors (especially the time they would have available for the fellowship).

Funding and Benefits

Both past and current fellows (and several mentors as well) noted that the salaries the program pays are low, especially for fellows assigned to areas with a higher cost of living. Those who had to stretch the salary in an area with high housing prices, like California, perceived this to be unfair. Across the board, fellows complained about the cumbersome and limited health insurance coverage; some felt the promise of coverage was misleading. The variation in benefits from state to state (because they were administered via the Sea Grant programs) was perceived as unfair. However, it should be noted that a different contractor now administers the insurance package for fellows and it is the same for all of them, so the insurance situation described by earlier fellows has changed.

Fellowship/Proposal Application Process

Fellows, mentors, and Sea Grant directors all had suggestions for improving the application process. A past fellow thought that some qualified applicants might be eliminated because of the funneling of finalists through the Sea Grant program. (The specific example was that Sea Grant states with only one university offering marine programs could nominate the same number of students as a state with multiple programs, immediately removing a disproportionate number of students from states with strong marine programs in their universities from contention.)

Some mentors and directors thought the questions asked of fellows could be improved, getting to more detailed information about their interests in coastal zone management. Another thought the dual academic references were redundant. Some found that the scoring criteria by which candidates are assessed make it difficult to differentiate them – especially because the



scores are so open to interpretation and lack any common parameters. One thought that a refresher course for Sea Grant directors covering the steps and purpose of the application process might be useful.

Matching Process

The workshop session during which fellow finalists are matched to state programs and mentors was described by several respondents as grueling, but effective. One fellow described it as an experience akin to being on *American Idol*.

Some had specific suggestions for improving the process – such as circulating state proposals earlier and more often to fellows to give them more time to consider them, and having the fellows specify the types of projects that would interest and engage them the most. Some suggested a more leisurely pace, with time to reflect on the various conversations and presentations. One respondent wished for a meal or social time between candidates and mentors, to assess whether they would interact well together during the two-year fellowship. Sea Grant directors found the final selection process to be murky (a “black box”) and expressed a wish that it be more transparent in the future. Some Sea Grant directors and mentors thought the pool of finalists and projects should be broadened to give both fellows and mentors more options from which to choose. Even the critics, though, readily admitted that the matching process does seem to work well, yielding an excellent match in nearly every instance.

Contact and Feedback

Some past fellows and mentors had gotten out of the habit of checking the program’s Web site, relying on it more during the application process itself. As noted above, a mentor suggested adding a page to the Web site set aside for mentors.

Fellows appreciated the contact with other fellows at the annual meeting; one suggested additional regional meetings to increase contact among fellows (especially those relatively isolated in some parts of the country).

Readership of the *Fellow News* appears to be high across the board among both current and past program participants. Readers highlighted the personal profiles of fellows and the quick access to information about other projects. One noted that some of the links to other states’ coastal management programs appear to be out-of-date, but this would be a valuable resource.

Some mentors and fellows expressed a need for more frequent feedback and contact during the fellowship itself, including a stronger liaison role for CSC staff.



Conclusion

What do the 70 survey respondents tell us in answer to the four outcome evaluation questions that frame the evaluation?

Was the Fellowship Program effective in providing training to postgraduate students in coastal resource management and policy?

In general, the Fellowship Program must be considered a success in this regard. Nine of the past fellows rated the quality of the training and education they received through the Fellowship Program as “Excellent” (5 on a scale of 1 to 5) another 11 chose the next highest rating (4 on a scale of 1 to 5). Among past fellows who responded to the survey, 42 percent continued in state government and another 15 percent in federal agencies; 77 percent were still working in coastal management or related fields at the time of the survey. Even those who ended up in different fields gained experience and understanding of the nuances of state government, especially in the realm of science and policy. Some caveats noted by a few respondents include a tilt toward (and preference for) more concrete technical projects, rather than the somewhat more nebulous policy projects that are more difficult to undertake, to manage, and to show results from within a two-year time frame.

How effective was the assistance to the state coastal programs in improving, enhancing, and augmenting coastal resource management and policy for the state?

Asked how effective the Fellowship Program had been in improving, enhancing, and augmenting coastal resource management and policy for their states, past mentors gave the program a mean rating of 4.5 (on a scale of 1 to 5) and current mentors a mean rating of 4.14. Past mentors offered many examples of how the fellows’ work during their brief tenure in state agencies led to specific, measurable, and ongoing benefits for the host agencies. Past mentors reported that some of these projects would not have been undertaken at all because of shortages of staff, funding, or both. A number of the projects and tools are still in place (some with modifications and updates) and a few were used by other agencies and states. Examples of projects include developing a statewide tracking and monitoring system for non-point source pollution, a community-based coastal management plan to reduce surface use conflicts, a database for estuary management and an interactive Web site describing coastal public access, a stormwater management system inspection program, wetland



restoration planning and mitigation policy revisions, planning for sea level rise and coastal hazards, and a sediment quality information database.

What are the program's long-term benefits for fellows and for states?

Fellows were exposed to state-level work in coastal zone resource management, with 77 percent of the 26 past fellows continuing in that field and setting beyond their fellowships (some in the same agencies). Others remained in resource management and marine work (such as fisheries or marine science), even if it was not specifically related to coastal resource management. Over half (56 percent) of past fellows agreed that participation in the Fellowship Program had been extremely helpful to their post-Fellowship careers and employment search, attributing their success to contacts and experience set in motion by their participation in the Fellowship Program.

States were able to complete many useful technical and policy projects that would not have been completed at all – or in a timely manner – without the Fellowship Program. As noted above, some were adopted by other states and programs, but this did not occur in a systematic way and does not appear to be among the program's most important benefits.

Overall, the Coastal Management Fellowship Program appears to be meeting its intended goals for its key customers: current coastal resource managers who need additional resources, creative ideas, and the most current technical knowledge to run their programs effectively, and students who are just beginning their careers and need the experience and on-the-job training to translate their academic skills and enthusiasm to the workplaces that need their infusion of talent and energy.



Appendix A

Survey of Current Fellows
Evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
Coastal Services Center (Center)
GEARS, Inc.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of current fellows as part of the evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program. Your answers to the following questions will help us improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the fellowship program and how it impacts state coastal zone management programs and the professional goals of fellows. We are interested in your honest opinions, both positive and negative.

This survey will take approximately 35 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey or refuse to answer any question at any time. There are no negative consequences should you decide not to participate in the survey. Only GEARS evaluation staff associated with this evaluation will have access to identifying information. Your survey will be combined with other surveys and only aggregate information will be reported in findings. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. All survey data will be kept in a secure location at GEARS and will be protected by GEARS to the extent allowed by the law. If you have any questions about the evaluation study, you can contact the lead evaluator, Dr. Deborah Brome, by telephone at 866-858-1261.

Information about Your Fellowship

Please provide the following information about your fellowship.

1. Which state coastal zone management program are you currently working?

2. Please indicate what year of the fellowship you are in. (Indicate only one)

1. First year
2. Second year

3. Please indicate the topic of the primary project you are working on during the fellowship.

4. Please indicate the topics of additional (side) projects you are working on, if applicable.

5. To date, please indicate the total number of coastal related conferences, workshops, and trainings you have attended as a fellow. _____

Of that number, how many did you attend using your fellowship professional development funds? _____

6. Please list all the conferences where you:

a. Made an oral presentation: _____

b. Made a poster presentation: _____

7. To date, have trainings and meetings helped to improve your knowledge and skill level? Yes No

8. To date, have trainings and meetings allowed you to expand your professional network? Yes No

9. To date, have you received constructive feedback from your mentor? Yes No

10. If you have received constructive feedback from your mentor, was it helpful? Yes No

11. If you have not received constructive feedback from your mentor, would you like to? Yes No

12. To date, have you had an opportunity to provide feedback to your mentor? Yes No

a. If you have not, would you like such an opportunity? Yes No

13. Do you read *Fellow News*? Yes No



If you read *Fellows News*, what do you find most appealing?

14. Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's website?

Yes No

If yes, can you easily find the information you are looking for?

Yes No

What type of information do you seek most often?

What topics or items currently not included on the website would you find useful?



Skills

We would like to learn more about the **skills you have acquired during the fellowship program**. In the table below, please rate yourself on the skill areas provided, by placing an "x" in the appropriate box. First rate your skill level upon entering the program and then rate your skill, to date, as a consequence of being in the program

Skills	Ratings									
	Upon Entering					Since being in the Fellowship Program				
	Nonexistent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Change	Slight Improvement	Moderate Improvement	High Improvement	
Technology (GIS, remote sensing)										
Software Applications (Excel, Access, Word, etc.)										
Research (research design, data gathering, etc.)										
Management (organizational skills, planning, time management)										
Communication (written and oral)										
Interpersonal (conflict resolution, working in groups, networking, working one on one)										
Science (biology, chemistry, physics, social science, oceanography)										
Coastal Resource Management										
Coastal and Ocean Policy										
Project Specific: _____										



2. What are the strengths of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

3. What are the weaknesses of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

4. What suggestions do you have for improving the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

Employment

Please provide information about your future employment goals.

1. What are your future employment plans?



3. Are you planning to pursue further education? ___Yes ___No

4. If yes, please list the degree you will seek and the type of program you will enroll in. (e.g., Ph.D. in Marine Science)

Respondent Information

The following questions will be used to help describe survey participants and all information will be reported in aggregate form.

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your gender?

- 1. Male
- 2. Female

3. Do you consider yourself to be Latino or Hispanic? ___Yes ___No

4. Please identify your race. (Indicate only one)

- 1. Black or African American
- 2. White/Caucasian
- 3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 4. American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 5. Asian

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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Survey of Current State Coastal Zone Management Program Mentors
Evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
Coastal Services Center (Center)
GEARS, Inc.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of state coastal zone management program mentors as part of the evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program. Your answers to the following questions will help us improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the fellowship program and how it impacts state coastal zone management programs and the professional goals of fellows. We are interested in your honest opinions, both positive and negative.

This survey will take approximately 40 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey or refuse to answer any question at any time. There are no negative consequences should you decide not to participate in the survey. Only GEARS evaluation staff associated with this evaluation will have access to identifying information. Your survey will be combined with other surveys and only aggregate information will be reported in findings. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. All survey data will be kept in a secure location at GEARS and will be protected by GEARS to the extent allowed by the law. If you have any questions about the evaluation study, you can contact the lead evaluator, Dr. Deborah Brome, by telephone at 866-858-1261.

Your Experiences

Please answer the following questions about your experiences with the fellowship program.

1. Which state coastal zone management program are you affiliated with? _____
2. How many fellows have you, personally, mentored? _____
3. In total, how many fellows has your state coastal zone management program had? _____
4. Do you read *Fellow News*? __Yes __No

If you read *Fellows News*, what do you find is the most appealing aspect?

5. Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's website? __Yes __No



If yes, can you easily find the information you are looking for? Yes No

What type of information do you seek most often?

What topics or items currently not included on the website would you find useful to have?

Your State Coastal Zone Management Program's Projects

Please answer questions about your fellow and his or her main project. If you have mentored more than one fellow, please provide that information under the section "Past Fellow and Project."

Current Fellow and Project

What year did your fellow arrive? (Check one) 2005 2006

1. What is your current fellow's project topic?

2. Would you have been able to undertake and/or complete this project without this fellow? Yes No

Please explain:



3. What is the contribution (e.g., \$\$\$, human resources, equipment, travel, training, etc.) from your state coastal zone management program toward this project?

4. What skills are needed for your fellow to successfully conduct this project?

5. Does your fellow have adequate skills to successfully conduct this project? Yes No

If no, what skills are underdeveloped or missing and how do you plan to rectify this situation?

6. Is it possible that this project could be used as a model by other states? Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:



7. Do you expect this project to be integrated into, or utilized by, your state's coastal zone management program? __Yes __No

Please explain why or why not, and if yes, how and when do you anticipate it being integrated or utilized (immediately after completion, 6 months later, one year later, etc.)?

8. To date, please indicate your overall satisfaction level associated with your fellow's performance. (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know

9. How satisfied are you with the mentorship you provide your fellow? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know

10. What additional resources would be helpful to prepare for, maintain or improve the mentorship of your fellow (e.g., mentor training, support network, etc.)?



If you mentored a previous fellow, please complete the following, if not, please skip this section:

Past Fellow and Project

What year did your fellow arrive: _____

1. What was your past fellow's project topic?

2. Would you have been able to undertake and/or complete this project without this fellow? Yes No

Please explain:

3. What was the contribution (e.g., \$\$\$, human resources, equipment, travel, training, etc.) from your state coastal zone management program toward this project?

4. What skills were needed for your fellow to successfully conduct this project?



5. Did your fellow have adequate skills to successfully conduct this project? __Yes __No

If no, what skills were underdeveloped or missing?

6. Has your project become a model that has been used by other states? __Yes __No __Don't Know

Please explain including how, by whom, and when it's been used:

7. Was this project integrated into or utilized by your state coastal zone management program? __Yes __No

Please explain why or why not and if yes, how and when was this project integrated or utilized (immediately after completion, 6 months later, or one year later, etc.)?

8. Overall, how satisfied were you with your fellow's performance? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Very	Somewhat	Neither Satisfied	Somewhat	Very	Don't
Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Know

9. How satisfied were you with the mentorship you provided your fellow? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Very	Somewhat	Neither Satisfied	Somewhat	Very	Don't
Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Know



Selection of Fellows and Operation of the Program

In answering the following questions, consider your current fellow and project.

1. Was the matching workshop an effective mechanism to select an individual with skills and experiences necessary to complete your state's project? Why or why not?

2. What can be done to ensure that there is a good fit between a fellow's interests/expertise and the state's needs?

3. In your opinion, is the amount and quality of communication between you and the Center adequate?
__Yes __No

If no, please describe how communication can and should be improved.

4. What factors are contributing most to the successful completion of your state coastal zone management program's fellowship project?



Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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Survey of Past Fellows
Evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
Coastal Services Center (Center)
GEARS, Inc.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of past fellows as part of the evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program. Your answers to the following questions will help us improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the fellowship program and how it impacts state coastal zone management programs and the professional goals of fellows. We are interested in your honest opinions, both positive and negative.

This survey will take approximately 35 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey or refuse to answer any question at any time. There are no negative consequences should you decide not to participate in the survey. Only GEARS evaluation staff associated with this evaluation will have access to identifying information. Your survey will be combined with other surveys and only aggregate information will be reported in findings. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. All survey data will be kept in a secure location at GEARS and will be protected by GEARS to the extent allowed by the law. If you have any questions about the evaluation study, you can contact the lead evaluator, Dr. Deborah Brome, by telephone at 866-858-1261.

Information about Your Fellowship

Please provide the following information about your fellowship.

1. Which state did you participate in the Coastal Management Fellowship?

2. Please indicate the two year period you participated in the Coastal Management Fellowship.

3. Of the 24-month fellowship period, how many months did you complete?

If less than 24 months, please explain why

4. Please indicate the title/topic of the primary project you worked on during the fellowship.

5. Please indicate the topics of additional (side) projects you worked on, if applicable.

6. Was the project you worked on completed during the two year period of your fellowship?

___Yes ___No

7. What factors most contributed to the successful completion of your project?

8. Please indicate the total number of coastal related conferences, workshops, and trainings that you attended as a fellow.

Of that number, how many did you attend using your fellowship professional development funds?

9. Please list all the conferences where you:

a. Made an oral presentation: _____

b. Made a poster presentation: _____

10. Did the trainings and meetings you attended during the fellowship help increase your knowledge and skill level? ___Yes ___No



11. Did the trainings and meetings you attended during the fellowship allow you to expand your professional network? Yes No

12. During the fellowship, did you receive constructive feedback from your mentor? Yes No

13. If you did not receive constructive feedback, would you have liked to receive it? Yes No

14. Did you have an opportunity to provide feedback to your mentor? Yes No

15. Do you read *Fellow News*? Yes No

If you read *Fellows News*, what do you find is the most appealing aspect?

16. Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's website? Yes No

If yes, can you easily find the information you are looking for? Yes No

What type of information do you seek most often?

What topics or items currently not included on the website would you find useful to have?



Skills

We would like to learn more about the **skills you acquired during the fellowship program**. In the table below, please rate yourself on the skill areas provided, by placing an “x” in the appropriate box. First rate your skill level upon entering the program and then rate your skill upon completing (or leaving) the program.

Skills	Ratings								
	Upon Entering					Upon Program Completion			
	Nonexistent	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Change	Slight Improvement	Moderate Improvement	High Improvement
Technology (GIS, remote sensing)									
Software Applications (Excel, Access, Word, etc.)									
Research (research design, data gathering, etc.)									
Management (organizational skills, planning, time management)									
Communication (written and oral)									
Interpersonal (conflict resolution, working in groups, networking, working one on one)									
Science (biology, chemistry, physics, social science, oceanography)									
Coastal Resource Management									
Policy									
Project Specific: _____									



2. What are the strengths of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

3. What are the weaknesses of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

4. What suggestions do you have for improving the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

Current Employment

Please provide information about your current employment.

1. Are you currently employed? Yes No

*(If **no**, please skip this section)*

2. Are you currently employed in coastal resource management and policy? Yes No

3. If no, in what field are you currently employed? _____



Education Information

Please provide the following information about your educational experiences.

1. What is the highest degree you have completed?
 1. Master's
 2. Ph.D.
 3. Other _____
2. What was your major in this degree program? _____
3. Are you planning to pursue further education? Yes No
4. If yes, please list the degree you will seek and the type of program you will enroll in. (e.g., Ph.D. in Marine Science)

5. What is the highest degree you completed prior to the fellowship?
 1. Master's
 2. Ph.D.
 3. Other _____

Respondent Information

The following questions will be used to help describe survey participants and all information will be reported in aggregate form.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your gender?
 1. Male
 2. Female
3. Do you consider yourself to be Latino or Hispanic? Yes No



4. Please identify your race. (Indicate only one)

1. Black or African American
2. White/Caucasian
3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
4. American Indian or Alaskan Native
5. Asian

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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Survey of Past State Coastal Zone Management Program Mentors
Evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
Coastal Services Center (Center)
GEARS, Inc.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of state coastal zone management program mentors as part of the evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program. Your answers to the following questions will help us improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the fellowship program and how it impacts state coastal zone management programs and the professional goals of fellows. We are interested in your honest opinions, both positive and negative.

This survey will take approximately 40 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey or refuse to answer any question at any time. There are no negative consequences to your decision not to participate in the survey. Only GEARS evaluation staff associated with this evaluation will have access to identifying information. Your survey will be combined with other surveys and only aggregate information will be reported in findings. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. All survey data will be kept in a secure location at GEARS and will be protected by GEARS to the extent allowed by the law. If you have any questions about the evaluation study, you can contact the lead evaluator, Dr. Deborah Brome, by telephone at 866-858-1261.

Your Experiences

Please answer the following questions about your experiences with the fellowship program at the time that you served as a mentor.

1. At the time that you served as a mentor, which state coastal zone management program were you a part of?

2. How many fellows have you personally mentored?

3. In total, how many fellows has your state had?

4. Do you read *Fellow News*?

___ Yes ___ No

If you read *Fellows News*, what do you find is the most appealing aspect?



5. Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's website? Yes No

If yes, can you easily find the information you are looking for? Yes No

What type of information do you seek most often?

What topics or items currently not included on the website would you find useful to have?

Your State Coastal Zone Management Program's Projects

Please answer questions about your fellow and his or her main project. If you have mentored more than one fellow, please provide that information under the section "Past Fellow #2 and Project."

Past Fellow #1 and Project

What year did your fellow arrive: _____

1. What was your past fellow's project topic?

2. Would you have been able to undertake and/or complete this project without this fellow? Yes No

Please explain:



3. What was the contribution (e.g., \$\$\$, human resources, equipment, travel, training, etc.) from your state coastal zone management program toward this project?

4. What skills were needed for your fellow to successfully conduct this project?

5. Did your fellow have adequate skills to successfully conduct this project? Yes No

If no, what skills were underdeveloped or missing?

6. Has your project become a model that has been used by other states? Yes No Don't Know

Please explain including how, by whom, and when it's been used:



7. Was this project integrated into or utilized by your state coastal zone management program?
 Yes No

Please explain and if yes, how and when was this project integrated or utilized (immediately after completion, 6 months later, or one year later, etc.)?

8. Overall, how satisfied were you with your fellow's performance? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Very	Somewhat	Neither Satisfied	Somewhat	Very	Don't
Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Know

9. How satisfied were you with the mentorship you provided your fellow? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Not at all	Somewhat	Neither Satisfied	Somewhat	Extremely	Don't
Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Know

If you mentored a second fellow, please complete the following, if not please skip this section:

Previous Fellow #2 and Project

What year did your fellow arrive: _____

1. What was your past fellow's project topic?

2. Would you have been able to undertake and/or complete this project without this fellow?
 Yes No



Please explain:

3. What was the contribution (e.g., \$\$\$, human resources, equipment, travel, training, etc.) from your state coastal zone management program toward this project?

4. What skills were needed for your fellow to successfully conduct this project?

5. Did your fellow have adequate skills to successfully conduct this project?

Yes No

If no, what skills were underdeveloped or missing?



6. Has your project become a model that has been used by other states?
 Yes No Don't Know

Please explain including how, by whom, and when it's been used:

7. Was this project integrated into or utilized by your state coastal zone management program?
 Yes No

Please explain why or why not and if yes, how and when was this project was integrated or utilized (immediately after completion, 6 months later, or one year later, etc.)?

8. Overall, how satisfied were you with your fellow's performance? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know

9. How satisfied were you with the mentorship you provided your fellow? (Circle the number that best reflects your answer.)

1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5	0
Not at all Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	Don't Know



Selection of Fellows and Operation of the Program

In answering the following questions, consider your current fellow and project.

1. Was the matching workshop an effective mechanism to select an individual with skills and experiences necessary to complete your state's project? Why or why not?

2. What can be done to ensure that there is a good fit between a fellow's interests and expertise and the state's needs?

3. In your opinion, was the amount and quality of communication between you and the Center adequate? Yes No

If no, please describe how communication could have been improved.

4. What factors contributed most to the successful completion of your state coastal zone management program's project?



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Survey of Center Partners
Evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
Coastal Services Center (Center)
GEARS, Inc.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of Center partners as part of the evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program. Your answers to the following questions will help us improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the fellowship program and how it impacts state coastal zone management programs and the professional goals of fellows. We are interested in your honest opinions, both positive and negative.

This survey will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey or refuse to answer any question at any time. There are no negative consequences should you decide not to participate in the survey. Only GEARS evaluation staff associated with this evaluation will have access to identifying information. Your survey will be combined with other surveys and only aggregate information will be reported in findings. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. All survey data will be kept in a secure location at GEARS and will be protected by GEARS to the extent allowed by the law. If you have any questions about the evaluation study, you can contact the lead evaluator, Dr. Deborah Brome, by telephone at 866-858-1261.

Experience with the Coastal Management Fellowship Program

Please answer the following questions about your experiences with the fellowship program.

1. What is your office's involvement with the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

2. Does your organization have direct contact (e.g., face to face interactions, email, and telephone conversations) with fellows once they are placed within state coastal zone management programs? Yes No

3. Does your organization have direct contact (e.g., face to face interactions, email, and telephone conversations) with state coastal zone management program fellowship mentors or programs? Yes No

4. Overall, are you satisfied with the state projects selected? Yes No

5. Overall, are you satisfied with the finalists selected? Yes No

6. Do you read *Fellow News*? Yes No

If you read *Fellows News*, what do you find is the most appealing aspect?

7. Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's web site? Yes No

If yes, can you easily find the information you are looking for? Yes No

What type of information do you seek most often?

What topics or items currently not included on the website would you find useful to have?



Ratings of Fellow and State Proposal Selection Process

Using the following rating scale, please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the fellowship.

- 1= Very Dissatisfied
- 2= Dissatisfied
- 3= Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- 4= Satisfied
- 5= Very Satisfied
- 0= Don't Know

Level of Satisfaction

Steps (i.e., process and timeline) for selecting state proposals	1	2	3	4	5	0
Criteria (i.e., rating categories and scoring system) used to evaluate state proposals	1	2	3	4	5	0
Steps (i.e., process and timeline) for selecting 12 finalists from applicant pool	1	2	3	4	5	0
Criteria (i.e., rating categories and scoring system) used to select the finalists	1	2	3	4	5	0
Matching conference as way to select fellows from finalist pool	1	2	3	4	5	0
Amount of contact fellows have with partners	1	2	3	4	5	0



6. What suggestions do you have for improving the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

7. Do you have any suggestions for improving the state selection process and selection criteria?

___Yes ___No

Please describe.

8. Do you have any suggestions for improving the fellow selection process and finalist selection criteria?

___Yes ___No

Please describe.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

OMB Control No. 0648-0553

Expires 05/31/2008

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aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to NOAA PRA Clearance Officer, OFA81, Station 9823, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.



Survey of Sea Grant Directors
Evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA),
Coastal Services Center (Center)
GEARS, Inc.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey of Sea Grant Directors as part of the evaluation of the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program. Your answers to the following questions will help us improve our understanding of the effectiveness of the fellowship program and how it impacts state coastal zone management programs and the professional goals of fellows. We are interested in your honest opinions, both positive and negative.

This survey will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the survey or refuse to answer any question at any time. There are no negative consequences should you decide not to participate in the survey. Only GEARS evaluation staff associated with this evaluation will have access to identifying information. Your survey will be combined with other surveys and only aggregate information will be reported in findings. Your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. All survey data will be kept in a secure location at GEARS and will be protected by GEARS to the extent allowed by the law. If you have any questions about the evaluation study, you can contact the lead evaluator, Dr. Deborah Brome, by telephone at 866-858-1261.

Experience with the Coastal Management Fellowship Program

Please answer the following questions about your experiences with the fellowship program.

1. Does your office have direct contact (e.g., face to face interactions, email, and telephone conversations) with fellows once they are placed within state coastal zone management programs? ___ Yes ___ No

2. Does your office have direct contact (e.g., face to face interactions, email, and telephone conversations) with state coastal zone management program fellowship mentors or programs once a fellow is placed? ___ Yes ___ No

4. Do you read *Fellow News*? ___ Yes ___ No

If you read *Fellows News*, what do you find is the most appealing aspect?

5. Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's website?

Yes No

If yes, can you easily find the information you are looking for?

Yes No

What type of information do you seek most often?

What topics or items currently not included on the website would you find useful to have?

Ratings of Fellowship Selection Process

Using the following rating scale, please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the fellowship.

- 1= Very Dissatisfied
- 2= Dissatisfied
- 3= Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- 4= Satisfied
- 5= Very Satisfied
- 0= Don't Know

Level of Satisfaction

Communication with the Center prior to the Sea Grant office recommending an applicant	1	2	3	4	5	0
Knowledge about the fellowship among graduate programs within your university system	1	2	3	4	5	0
Steps (i.e., process and timeline) for selecting and recommending applicants	1	2	3	4	5	0



4. What are the weaknesses of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

5. How does the Coastal Management Fellowship Program benefit you as a partner?

6. What suggestions do you have for improving the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

OMB Control No. 0648-0553

Expires 05/31/2008

Paperwork Reduction Act Information: In accordance with Executive Order 12862, the National Performance Review, and good management practices, NOAA offices seek to determine whether their customers are satisfied with the services and/or products they are receiving and whether they have suggestions as to how the services or products may be improved or made more useful. The information will be used to improve NOAA's products and services. Responses to this survey are completely voluntary. No confidentiality can be provided for responses, but you need not supply your name or address. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to NOAA PRA Clearance Officer, OFA81, Station 9823, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information



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Appendix B

Appendix B

Table of Evaluation Instruments Addressing Evaluation Questions

	Survey of Current Fellows	Survey of Past Fellows	Survey of Current Mentors	Survey of Past Mentors	Survey of Sea Grant Directors	Survey of CSC Partners
Process Evaluation Questions						
1. How was the program implemented and was it implemented in the prescribed manner?			X	X	X	X
2. How does the manner in which the program was implemented affect program results?			X	X	X	X
3. What were the characteristics of the fellows (e.g. educational background, gender, ethnicity/race, areas of expertise, residence, CSM state programs represented, etc.)?	X	X				
4. What types of projects were selected?	X	X	X	X		
5. What are the characteristics of the applicant pool? *						
6. Were Fellows satisfied with the program?	X	X				
7. Were the host projects satisfied with the fellows?			X	X		

	Survey of Current Fellows	Survey of Past Fellows	Survey of Current Mentors	Survey of Past Mentors	Survey of Sea Grant Directors	Survey of CSC Partners
8. Was CSC satisfied with the projects selected? Did the projects meet the goals and objectives of CSC? **					X	X
9. Were program resources utilized in the most effective manner?			X	X	X	X
Outcome Evaluation Questions						
1. How effective was the Costal Management Program in providing training to postgraduate students in costal resource management and policy?	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. How effective was the assistance to the state costal programs in improving, enhancing or augmenting costal resource management and policy for the state?	X	X	X	X		
3. What are the long-term benefits of the fellowship program? For example, did fellows tend to work for state or federal agencies after their fellowship?	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Did projects performed in one state generalize to other states?			X	X		

*GEARS will need CSC to provide this information.

**GEARS will need CSC to provide a response to this question, in addition to the response sought from partners

Appendix C

Appendix C: Additional Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Quantitative Data Tables

Please note: Scores for scaled questions are on a scale to 1 to 5; the “n” denotes the number of valid responses to that question in each category and thus may differ for some questions.

Experiences with and Information about the Fellowship

Which state coastal zone management program were you a part of?	
	State (# of respondents)
Past Mentors (n=14)	CA (n=3); CT (n=2); DE (n=1); LA (n=2); MA (n=2); ME (n=1); NC (n=1); NJ (n=1); OR (n=1)
Current Mentors (n=8)	CA (n=2); CT (n=1); MA (n=1); ME (n=1); NC (n=1); OH (n=1); VA (n=1)
Past Fellows (n=21)	CA (n=2); CT (n=2); LA (n=1); MA (n=2); ME (n=1); MN (n=1); NC (n=2); NY (n=1); SC (n=3); WA (n=2); PA (n=1)
Current Fellows (n=8)	CA (n=2); CT (n=1); MA (n=1); MD (n=1); NC (n=1); OH (n=1); VA (n=1)

Mentors: In total, how many fellows has your state coastal zone management program had?		
	Mode of # fellows	Range of # of fellows
Past Mentors (n=16)	4	2-7
Current Mentors (n=8)	1; 3 (bimodal)	1-6

Mentors: How many fellows have you personally mentored?		
	Mode of # fellows mentored	Range of # of fellows mentored
Past Mentors (n=16)	1	1-3
Current Mentors (n=8)	1	1-2

Past Fellows: Please indicate the two year period you participated in the Coastal Management Fellowship?	
Year	# of Mentors
1996-1998	4
1997-1999	2
1998-2000	4
1999-2001	3
2000-2002	1
2001-2003	2
2002-2004	3
2003-2005	4

Past Fellows: Of the 24 month fellowship, how many months did you complete?	
# of months completed	# of fellows responding
24	13
23.5	1
23	2
22	2
20	2
16	1

Fellows: Please indicate the total number of coastal related conferences, workshops, and trainings that you attended as a fellow?			
	Mean number of conferences	Mode	Range
Past Fellows (n=18)	5.11 (SD: 2.22)	5	3-11
Current Fellows (8)	6.25 (SD: 3.84)	N/A	0-11

Fellows: Of that number (i.e. conferences, workshops, and trainings) how many did you attend using your fellowship professional development funds?			
	Mean number of conferences	Mode	Range
Past Fellows (n=18)	3.78 (SD: 2.39)	The response “all” was the most frequently occurring response	3-11
Current Fellows (n=7)	3.57 (SD: 2.37)	2	1-7

Fellows: Have the conferences, workshops, and trainings...				
	Past Fellows		Current Fellows	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Helped improve your knowledge and skill ¹	24 (92.3%)	1 (3.8%)	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Allowed you to expand your professional network	25 (96.2%)	1 (3.8%)	7 (87.5)	1 (12.5%)

¹Only 26 past fellows responded to this question.

Fellows: Have you...				
	Past Fellows		Current Fellows	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Received constructive feedback from mentor	23 (88.5%)	3 (11.5%)	5 (62.5%)	3 (37.5%)
Had an opportunity to provide feedback to your mentor	22 (84.26%)	4 (15.4%)	6 (75.0%)	2 (25.0%)

Do you read the <i>Fellow News</i>?		
	Yes	No
Past Mentors (n=17)	13 (76.5%)	4 (23.5%)
Current Mentors (n=8)	8 (100%)	----
Past Fellows (n=26)	23 (88.5%)	3 (11.5%)
Current Fellows (n=8)	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)
Sea Grant Directors (n=8)	3 (37.5%)	5 (62.5%)
CSC Partners (n=2)	2 (100%)	



Do you use the Coastal Management Fellowship Program's Web site?		
	Yes	No
Past Mentors (n=17)	5 (29.4%)	12 (70.6%)
Current Mentors (n=8)	4 (50%)	4 (50%)
Past Fellows (n=26)	10 (38.5%)	16 (61.5%)
Current Fellows (n=8)	3 (37.5%)	5 (62.5%)
Sea Grant Directors (n=8)	4 (50%)	4 (50%)
CSC Partners (n=2)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)

Mentors: Did your fellow have adequate skills to successfully conduct this project?		
	Yes	No
Past Mentors (n=17)	15 (88.2%)	1 (5.9%)
Current Mentors (n=8)	8 (100%)	

Mentors: Would you have been able to complete/undertake this project without this fellow?		
	Yes	No
Past Mentors (n=17)	1 (5.9%)	14 (82.4%)
Current Mentors (n=8)	2 (25%)	6 (75%)



Mentors: Has/could your project become a model used by other states?			
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Past Mentors (n=15)		1 (5.9%)	14 (82.4%)
Current Mentors (n=8)	3 (37.5%)		5 (62.5%)

Mentors: Was/do you expect this project to be integrated into, or utilized by, your state's coastal zone management program?		
	Yes	No
Past Mentors (n=15)	13 (76.5%)	2 (11.8%)
Current Mentors (n=8)	8 (100%)	

Mentors: How satisfied are you with your fellow's performance?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	4.87 (SD: .50)
Current Mentors (n=8)	4.5 (SD: .76)

Mentors: How satisfied are you with the mentorship you provide(d) your fellow?	
Past Mentors (n=17)	4.13 (SD: 1.06)
Current Mentors (n=8)	4.25 (SD: 1.04)

Fellows: How would you rate the quality of the mentorship you received in the fellowship?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	3.92 (SD: 1.13)
Current Fellows (n=8)	3.38 (SD: 1.50)



Fellows: Would/do you recommend this fellowship to other students?		
	Yes	No
Past Fellows (n=26)	25 (96.2%)	1 (3.8%)
Current Fellows (n=8)	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)

Mentors: How effective is the fellowship in improving, enhancing, and augmenting coastal resource management and policy for the state?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	4.53 (SD: .64)
Current Mentors (n=8)	4.14 (SD: 1.07)

Fellowship Resources

How satisfied are/were you with the resources (hardware, software, office space, etc.) that the state coastal zone management program provides for fellows' projects?	
Past Mentors (n=16)	4.38 (SD: 1.02)
Current Mentors (n=8)	4.62 (SD: .52)
Past Fellows (n=25)	4.16 (SD: .90)
Current Fellows (n=8)	3.75 (SD: 1.49)

Mentors: In the future, how likely is it that your state would be able to continue additional funds towards fellows' salaries and benefits (up from the current \$7,500/year)	
Past Mentors (n=16)	2.31 (SD: 2.09)
Current Mentors (n=7)	2.14 (SD: 1.46)

Mentors: If additional matching funds varied by state (according to the OPM-designated locality pay and were used specifically to cover locality pay for your fellow), how likely is it that your state would be willing to contribute additional matching funds?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	1.07 (SD: 1.87)
Current Mentors (n=7)	1.71 (SD: 1.60)

Mentors: To what extent were you satisfied with your state's ability to address a high-priority issue through the fellowship program?	
Past Mentors (n=16)	4.38 (SD: .88)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.28 (SD: .76)

Mentors: To what extent did the fellowship program meet your state coastal zone management program's needs?	
Past Mentors (n=16)	4.62 (SD: .62)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.57 (SD: .79)

Fellows: How satisfied are/were you with the salary and benefits you received for the fellowship?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	3.31 (SD: 1.09)
Current Fellows (n=8)	2.50 (SD: 1.41)

Selection of Fellows and Training

Mentors: Overall, how satisfied are you with the (anticipated) outcomes of your fellow's project?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	4.87 (SD: .35)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.71 (SD: .49)

If you had to do it all again, would you choose to participate in the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	4.80 (SD: .41)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.43 (SD: 1.13)
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.58 (SD: .70)
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.00 (SD: 1.20)

Mentors: Overall, how effective was the Coastal Management Fellowship program in providing training to post graduate students in coastal resource management and policy?	
Past Mentors (n=13)	3.28 (SD: 2.20)
Current Mentors (n=7)	3.86 (SD: 1.77)

Mentors, Partners, Sea Grant Directors: Overall, how would you rate the quality of the Coastal Management Fellowship Program?	
Past Mentors (n=16)	4.88 (SD: .34)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.43 (SD: 1.13)
Sea Grant Directors (n=8)	3.14 (SD: .69)
CSC Partner (n=2)	4.5 (SD: .71)

How useful was/is the formal and on-the-job training provided to fellows during their fellowship period?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	3.13 (SD: 2.32)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.71 (SD: .49)
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.15 (SD: .92)
Current Fellows (n=8)	3.25 (SD: 1.83)

Mentors: How satisfied are/were you with the amount of contact you have had with your fellow during the fellowship program?	
Past Mentors (n=15)	4.73 (SD: .59)
Current Mentors (n=7)	4.71 (SD: .49)

How satisfied/useful are/were you with the professional contacts you/your fellow made/developed during the fellowship??	
Past Mentors (n=14)	4.78 (SD: .43)
Current Mentors (n=7)	3.43 (SD: 2.37)
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.15 (SD: .67)
Current Fellows (n=8)	3.88 (SD: .83)

Fellows: How satisfied are/were you with the networking opportunities available to you during the fellowship?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.50 (SD: .58)
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.12 (SD: .83)

Fellows: How helpful were the contacts you had with other fellows during the fellowship program?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	3.88 (SD: .99)
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.00 (SD: 1.69)

Fellows: Did/has contact with other fellows during the fellowship program allow you to learn about the projects of other state coastal zone management programs?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.54 (SD: .81)

Fellows: Did/has contact with other fellows during the fellowship program allow you to learn about the projects of other state coastal zone management programs?	
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.3750 (SD: .74)

Fellows: How satisfied are/were you with the amount of communication with the Center?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.12 (SD: .99)
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.13 (SD: .83)

Fellows: How would you rate the quality of the training and education you received in the fellowship?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.08 (SD: .84)
Current Fellows (n=8)	3.88 (SD: 1.36)

Fellows: To what extent has/is the fellowship program met/meeting your educational and professional needs?	
Past Fellows (n=26)	4.15 (SD: 1.12)
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.00 (SD: 1.07)

Fellows: How helpful was (do you expect) your participation in the fellowship program to (be to) your employment search?	
Past Fellows (n=25)	4.20 (SD: 1.12)
Current Fellows (n=8)	4.25 (SD: .89)



Mean Self-Ratings of skills by Past Fellows

Skill Area	Retrospective rating of skills upon entering fellowship ^a		Rating of skill improvement upon completing program ^b	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Technology	3.15	1.04	3.11	1.04
Software	4.11	.58	2.35	1.06
Research	3.96	.53	2.15	.88
Management	2.23	.99	2.23	.99
Communication	3.84	.67	2.69	.84
Interpersonal	3.57	.58	2.97	.87
Science	3.96	2.0	2.00	.80
Coastal Resource Management	3.32	.90	3.08	.72
Policy	3.17	.82	3.04	.89
Project Specific	3.25	.50	3.25	.50

^a The rating scale for the skill areas is 1=nonexistent, 2=poor, 3=fair, 4=good, and 5=excellent

^b The rating scale for the skill area improvement is 1=no change, 2=slight improvement, 3=moderate improvement, and 4=high improvement

Mean Self-ratings of skills by Current Fellows

Skill Area	Rating of skill upon entering fellowship ^a		Rating of skill improvement since being in fellowship ^b	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Technology	3.25	.88	2.0	.92
Software	4.38	.51	1.38	.74
Research	4.13	.35	1.63	1.06
Management	3.63	1.06	1.88	1.13
Communication	4.63	.52	1.63	.92
Interpersonal	4.00	.53	2.25	.88
Science	4.25	.46	1.5	.76
Coastal Resource Management	2.63	1.19	2.63	.74
Policy	2.63	.92	2.50	.53
Project Specific	1.67	.58	3.75	.50

^a The rating scale for the skill areas is 1=nonexistent, 2=poor, 3=fair, 4=good, and 5=excellent

^b The rating scale for the skill area improvement is 1=no change, 2=slight improvement, 3=moderate improvement, and 4=high improvement



Mean (and standard deviation) ratings of Sea Grant Directors and Partners with satisfaction with aspects of fellowship selection process.

Aspect of process	Sea Grant Directors (n=8)	CSC Partners (n=1)
Communication with Center prior to Sea Grant Office recommending applicant	3.5 (.76)	N/A
Knowledge of program among graduate students with your university system	3.0 (.82)	N/A
Steps for selecting and recommending applicants	3.5 (.58)	N/A
Steps for selecting state proposals	N/A	3.00
Steps for selecting 12 finalists from applicant pool	N/A	4.5 (.71) ^a
Criteria used by CSC external review panel to evaluate Sea Grant nominees selected as finalists	3.5 (.56)	2.5 (2.12) ^a
Criteria used to evaluate state proposals	N/A	2.00
Amount of contact fellows have with Sea Grant office during fellowship	2.8 (.44)	N/A
Amount of contact fellows have partners	N/A	5.0
Matching conference as a way to select fellows	N/A	5.0

^aTwo partners responded.

Qualitative Comments on Selected Questions

Comments from current fellows about whether they would recommend the Fellowship Program to others:

- The fellowship program/position allows the fellow to learn a great deal about project management in a relatively short period of time (2 years or less), at a relatively early stage in their career (right out of graduate school, most likely with minimal previous experience). As a stepping stone position, the fellow also has the opportunity to explore a slue of potential future career paths both within the state they are currently located as well as within numerous federal and regional nonprofit agencies
- Yes, but it depends on who that person is to some extent. I haven't loved this fellowship, but I've learned a lot about I want to do with my life. Part of that is in big thanks to the networking opportunities, conferences, and professional development work done with ECO. If there's someone who loves structure, I would highly recommend this fellowship to them. If there's someone who really wants to work in coastal management of any sort, I would recommend this project to them—even if they don't want to stay in federal or state government, it's good to know how these systems work. It's also becoming increasingly clear to me that not all state coastal management offices are like the one I'm working in, so that, too, is very valuable—had I just come here and taken a coastal planning job, I might have left coastal management all together, but through the fellowship, I see that there are many places for me to be within the field and even within governmental structures.
- Knowing the experience I have had with my two mentors, as I have worked to incorporate scientific concepts into political initiatives and policy into science, and recognizing how scientific facts are often manipulated to meet certain political agendas, I would not recommend this fellowship to anyone in the science community but might still recommend it to policy-driven folks.
- I would recommend with warnings – it is a good learning and growth experience and if you end up with a good/wealthy state program you have a lot of opportunities to attend conferences and trainings which is great for professional development. However, you have to be prepared for your project to already be completed and for massive issues to occur with your state agency in accomplishing your project. There can also be a complete lack of support, mentoring, and assistance which makes it very difficult when entering this new situation. Considering the painful interviewing process, the lengthy wait to find out if you are a finalist, and the supposed “prestige” of being awarded the fellowship, I was expecting to get more out of it and have much more support within my state.
- This fellowship gives recent graduates a chance to start their careers off with a BANG, not a whimper. Why go into a job where you have to work your way up from the bottom to prove that you can manage a project? The CSC CMF has given me the chance to design and actualize the right project for me and my host. I've got support and ownership of my



project. When I finish and am looking for my next job, I'm confident I'll have something I can point potential employers to, something that's real and I can be proud of.

- I would recommend it with a caveat. It is a great opportunity to 'plug into' a state coastal management. In my case, my mentor and agency had carefully planned for my project and tried, from the start, to fully integrate me into the agency. With help from my mentor, I have been able to progress successfully through my project and take advantage of opportunities to participate in other projects in the agency. However, I understand from other fellows that this is not always the case – particularly for a fellowship that shares time between two different offices/agencies, or where the project was ill-defined, or in cases when the project outcomes were not fulfilling a real need for the agency (e.g. the project had already been completed within the agency or elsewhere prior to the fellow's arrival).
- At present, it is hard not to feel that I could have gotten the same "experience" in a paid job. While I came into this position looking for professional growth opportunities, I feel that I have simply taken on a low-paying job, for reasons stated above.

Comments from past fellows about whether they would recommend the Fellowship Program to others:

- I wouldn't be where I am today without the fellowship. Getting experience working with a CZM program, but coming through the fellowship and having those connections was extremely helpful in launching my career.
- It was a very beneficial experience into both coastal management and the professional world.
- Excellent program for exposure to real-life applications of science and policy learned during a Master's program. The program also provides excellent opportunities to network with others in similar fields or with similar interests. A certain level of prestige accompanies those in the fellowship program, and in my experience, this is clearly noted by others in the scientific/policy fields. It also gives a clear advantage over others in similar job application situations.
- #4 It is an excellent opportunity to get practical work experience in a state agency. This is beneficial for future job searches or as a way to identify what types of work would be interesting to pursue or not to pursue. Sometimes knowing what you don't want to do is very valuable and the limited duration of the fellowship is a great way to determine this.
- Fantastic professional opportunity after grad school. Amazing opportunity for networking and making professional contacts in the field. Exposure to different aspects of the CZMA program from within the workplace.
- With the caveat that state agencies can be a highly political atmosphere. With that completely understood, it is very possible for a fellow to have a very satisfactory experience. All things considered, I would do it again.



- The two-year timeframe for this fellowship provides an excellent opportunity to both learn how a state's CZM program actually works and to really focus in on a specific project or management issue. I really enjoyed the ample opportunities for training, both through the annual conferences and courses at CSC. Networking with other fellows helped broaden my understanding of the coastal management across the country and learn about tools, etc that I might be able to draw on in the future. Lastly, I met a lot of people in the state and federal coastal management community which may benefit future career development.
- It's a great opportunity to get first-hand experience in coastal resource management. A good way to get your foot in the door as well. It greatly improves your communication skills.
- It's an excellent way to try out coastal management from the inside and get thorough experience from within a state agency. You are also able to interact with federal coastal managers
- I recommend this fellowship to other students because I think it offers a great introduction to working for state government on real natural resource policy and management issues. Linking fellows with mentors offers a tremendous opportunity for professional development, and eases the transition between academic and professional careers.
- I think that the experience is very dependent on what state/agency a student gets placed in, and also very dependent on the specifics of the project. For well-defined projects that deal with a discrete issue or outcome, particularly those that are technology-based (like creating a GIS assessment tool or an inventory database, etc) I think the program will be an extremely interesting and useful experience. Other projects where fellows are responsible for resolving policy or jurisdictional issues or barriers that permanent agency staff have been unable to resolve over the long term are not as ideal and don't end up providing as much of a sense of success, or result in as many tangible outcomes.
- It's a great way to transition from grad school into the working world by having a discrete project to focus on with a support network in place.
- The fellowship enables recent graduates to gain a more practical understanding of state and federal coastal management. There are numerous opportunities to develop invaluable professional relationships with peers, mentors, and potential employers. _The CSC is also an accessible and excellent resource.
- A great opportunity to get involved in many aspects of coastal/resource management. Great networking opportunity as well.
- I thought it was a wonderful and stimulating experience, and a really valuable one in terms of giving me an up-close view of the inner workings of coastal management at the state level.
- Definitely helped me determine what I did and did not want to do in the field of coastal management; gave me a 'foot in the door' as far as what coastal management was and how I fit into that arena



- I still think it is a great opportunity, but I tell students to make sure they know EXACTLY what they will be doing for the entire 2 years. Of course, things come up, but make sure you have at least 2 years worth of work to complete the project. The opportunity to travel to conferences is priceless especially with budget cuts in state government agencies that prevent travel once you are a full time employee.
- Great entry into CZM field, great experience and great networking opportunities
- It is a great opportunity, all in all.
- Any student coming out of a degree program focused on coastal management (as I was) would benefit from this program
- Definitely. It was a great experience to see what a CZM agency contends with on a regular basis and to be devoid of the budgetary constraints and other hecticness associated with state and federal governments good opportunity to experience working for a state coastal program- great networking opportunities- somewhat lousy pay- needs to increase!! Hard to live on current salary.

Past fellows' views on the Fellowship Programs' strengths

- Exposure to state coastal management. The two years allows you to become fully immersed in CZM.
- Definitely the contact and access to NOAA, the Coastal Services Center and other agencies. My questions were always welcome. I never felt isolated, but always very supported.
- Prestigious program that is becoming more and more well known amongst coastal zone management agencies and programs, and those in the science research fields. Provides a great pathway to working within the coastal zone management field, and exposure to a variety of different projects (other than just the fellowship project). Provides great networking resources through attendance/presentation at national conferences.
- The opportunity for newly graduated students to gain practical experience and for the states, someone (who costs the states relatively little) to undertake projects that wouldn't otherwise get underway without additional staff.
- The professional development opportunities available to the Fellow (contacts, networking, exposure to the field of Coastal Zone Management). Opportunity for State's to staff special projects that may not be staffed due to lack of resources. Fellowship provides steady supply of motivated, competent professionals into the workforce.
- Responsibility
- Mentor – Fellow relationship
- Networking with coastal managers probably the greatest advantage



- “Fraternity rush week” selection process was memorable
- In-depth view of an individual state CZM program; professional networking opportunities through conferences and workshops; training opportunities especially re: GIS. Also enjoyed the yearly meetings in Charleston or Bay St. Louis to connect and share experiences with fellows from our year class and overlapping years.
- The strengths lie in the opportunities given to up and coming resource managers. It is a great opportunity to be given a specific project and some freedom to develop that project within a state agency setting. Networking among fellows is also a strength.
- Project leadership and interaction with expert coastal managers. Secure funding from both the fellow side and state side.
- The two-year time period is long-enough to accomplish a significant amount of work and gain experience in a wide range of professional responsibilities. Placement with a state agency affords fellows an opportunity to work with agencies that may otherwise be difficult to gain meaningful (post-internship) employment. The fellowship can lead to long-term employment with the host agency and an expanded list of professional contacts to The ties to the Center provide a measure of status that helps fellows gain traction when meeting with other agencies (e.g. US Army Corps of Engineers).
- Provides real world job experience in a small and niche-laden field
- good matches, projects
- The fundamental concept of the fellowship; the post-fellowship networking advantages; the training opportunities
- Gives fellows a time between grad school and the work force to take stock of what is available and what they enjoy. When more than one state partner is involved it also gives fellows a chance to see different workplaces, work ethics, and work loads.
- Money for travel. The resources to provide the 3 days in Charleston. It has a fabulous reputation, I think, and former fellows have a edge in future interviews, especially since its related to NOAA which always looks good on a resume.
- Great experience in state CZM, networking, connection to the CSC , project management experience, professional growth, attendance & speaking at conferences.
- Offering funding for professional development and conferences- very cool!!_
- A strength would be the direct placement of skilled graduates in programs that need those skills, but may be unable to hire due to statewide restrictions. This is excellent for both the student and the state.
- matching workshop, networking opportunities



- uniqueness, personal- you pretty much know everyone, stature
- Having to relocate to a new state/work environment is both a strength and weakness. It was difficult to logistically move and then to think about moving back once fellowship ended. Hard to look for job in another location after losing touch with home-based networks.

Current mentors on whether they would have been able to undertake the project without a fellow

- This project required one person dedicated to this project alone and with technical, writing, and communication skills.
- While the project is important to the Ohio Coastal Management Program, the man-hours of existing staff are allocated for other tasks. It would have been difficult to complete the project successfully with existing staff while still maintaining the quality of service that is required/expected for other tasks. Having a Coastal Fellow allows existing staff to split their time on the project and other Coastal Management duties.
- This project was unfunded. Although once we obtained NOAA authorization for the fellow, the legislature directed BCDC to develop a plan for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail, without NOAA's assistance through the fellow program, we would have had to redirect staff from our core program in order to complete the project in the timeline established by the legislature.
- As was discussed in our project proposal, both monitoring compliance with California Coastal Commission permits (issued under the California Coastal Act) and designing a methodology for doing this routinely was something that we had not been able to staff, given the current workload and assignments of CCC employees and the need for a systematic study and recommendations about barriers, options and methods of such work..
- This is the type of project (developing a visual impact assessment methodology) that current staff would never have the opportunity to do, given the pressures of daily work. We lack the ability to set aside sufficient time to research and develop a new management tool.
- The NC Coastal Program had been planning the shoreline datum comparison project and would have carried it out eventually. However, the ability to integrate the goal with a defined fellowship project allowed an expeditious completion of the task.
- The work plan still need sto be implemented whether the fellow exits of not. It's a real life job.
- Our limited staff and resources are focused on meeting our legislative, regulatory, and public service mandates, so this in-depth analysis would not be able to occur without the assistance of a full-time, qualified coastal fellow/associate.



Past mentors on whether they would have been able to undertake the project without a fellow

- While it was and continues to be a very important issue area, with ever-increasing workloads and ever-decreasing budgets we simply would not have had the resources to dedicate to it.
- We did not have the dedicated staff or expertise for this one time effort
- Due to heavy workloads, we would not have had the time to devote to this worthwhile project
- This was very nearly a full time job for two years, and required a high level of skill. We had no staffing available, and it is unlikely that a volunteer of sufficient skill could have donated this much time.
- Having dedicated staff to undertake a multi-year stakeholder process, contract with consultants on the technical work, and writing and presenting a project report would have been difficult without the fellow. Resources and funding would not have permitted such work to occur in the course of day to day work.
- Just not enough staff
- This project required one person dedicated to this project alone and with technical, mapping, and communication skills.
- We simply did not have the staff positions that could be dedicated. As a dedicated Coastal Fellow with a specific project with deadlines and deliverables, we were able to complete the project without being diverted and tasked with other needs that emerge. The Coastal Fellow was buffered from that.
- Not enough staff resources (time) and not sufficient staff with proper expertise and skills.
- Project entailed a vast amount of data collection, review and analysis that was beyond the realm of normal staff work. The project required someone with knowledge of coastal processes who could dedicate a large block of time to the development and execution of this study. It could not have been handled by interns or by staff who might be able to put a few hours every week to the project.
- At that time, the state of Louisiana strictly limited the number of employees that could be working. We could not even hire temporary employees. So having someone work that was not counted as an employee was a great benefit to the Division. Existing employees were all very busy and did not have time to devote to a new project. It was the only way to gain an employee to devote to a new or special project.
- We would have but it would have taken longer than we needed to get it finished.



- New Jersey has very few staff in its Coastal Management Office, which constrains the number of new initiatives that it can undertake.

Current mentors' comments on how effective the fellowship is in improving, enhancing or augmenting coastal resource management and policy for the state

- This project is establishing state policy and guiding the future of our CZM smart growth and coastal hazards programmatic areas
- The fellowship allows the Ohio Coastal Management Program to move forward on the Lake Erie Shore Erosion Management Plan. The Plan will be used by the Office of Coastal Management to support policy development that will focus on protecting valuable coastal property and restoring coastal resources and habitats. The plan will consist of the supporting science and recommendation for policy and incorporate existing ODNR policies, especially those related to sand resources and aquatic habitat restoration.
- The effectiveness really depends on the state's existing capacity and the specific project. All four past fellows started from scratch in terms needing to build a base for the state's technical capacity and information. Two of the projects were limited only to regions within the state because of the state's size and the lack of baseline information
- The fellowship program has often provided invaluable support to the coastal management program, and had allowed us to undertake policy initiatives that we otherwise could not have done.
- As stated previously, this shoreline datum comparison project is a small part of an overall large strategic goal of the NC Coastal Management Program. Because the Fellow has gotten to work on this piece as well as other related projects, they realize the big picture and broader implications of their work.
- The ability to understand that public policy is not yes or no but often shades of grey. This runs counter to academic science training. The ability to understand that compromise is often an important component of public policy. The ability to recognize that some decisions are made not based on science, but the squeaky wheel concept.
- It is too early in the project to tell...

Past mentors' comments on how effective the fellowship is in improving, enhancing or augmenting coastal resource management and policy for the state

- For the same reasons that this particular project wouldn't have been accomplished without a Fellow, many similarly important issues could not be addressed with the limited human and financial resources available.



- Allows us to develop and complete tasks that would otherwise never get accomplished due to time and resource constraints
- Important work gets done that wouldn't have been done otherwise. However, we have to make better use of integrating this work into coastal zone management after the Fellow leaves.
- The Fellowship Program is helpful to furthering coastal resource and management, e.g., in our case, filling a need for monitoring information on marinas, but it is just a small piece of everything the 3 agencies (Coastal Commission, Conservancy and BCDC) are tasked with doing....
- Again, since this person left, it has been minimal, but we have had 2 others that we have utilized their projects to help us rewrite our CZ rules
- We are a small program and do not have the staff to accomplish what we have through the Fellowship Program
- The products produced by the fellows continue to have value today. The fellows provided a valuable service and resource to local government agencies and other state agencies that was otherwise lacking in the department and proved the value of that resource to the department so that it became an integral need and component of the current program.
- The fellows who have worked in California have developed useful information that improve decision-making. To the extent that better information leads to better decisions and the history of good decisions leads to better policy, then the fellow projects have improved policy.
- They did a good job and succeeded in their projects. But changing the policy for a state program is more than a two year commitment. Their work was very valuable to the division and should not be diminished.
- Project could not have been completed without Susan
- Extremely effective since the fellowship program provides the state CMP the opportunity to research and fully develop policy for an issue that would otherwise be unlikely to be addressed in a timely way or would be less thoughtfully developed due to constraints on staff time and availability.

