

## **THE NEXT GENERATION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT: BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**

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As coastal communities adapt to changing conditions, the coastal management community must also adapt. Coastal Zone Management was born in the 1970s. Many of the scientific, academic and government champions of the original movement will soon be retiring just as the country is recognizing the need to drastically change the way we do business on the coast. This change opens up opportunities to rethink what we work on, who we work with, and how we get things done. New leaders will need to be visionary in their approach and equipped with the appropriate skills to address coastal issues associated with climate change, sustainable economic growth, homeland security, immigration, energy supplies, social security, human health and safety, water and food availability, environmental protection, recreation needs and technological advances.

In 2007, a café conversation was held during the Coastal Zone conference to discuss how to transition to a new generation of coastal managers. This initial dialogue led to several additional panel discussions and workshops at conferences around the country over the past year and half including: The Coastal Society 2008, The NOAA Ocean and Coastal Resource Management Program Managers Meeting 2008, Restore America's Estuaries 2008, as well as during the upcoming 2009 Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation Conference. These sessions were designed to engage a diverse audience and to brainstorm around the following questions: 1) what coastal environmental, economic, and social challenges should leaders be prepared to address in the future, 2) how to engage stakeholders during management discussions to ensure effective solutions, 3) who will be considered a coastal manager in the future and how to recruit diverse perspectives and populations and, finally 4) what skills and training will be required for professionals at all career stages to effectively manage our coasts in the future.

This 2009 café conversation will build off of a summary of the previous conference sessions and participants will identify actions to help solve the common gaps and challenges. Breakout groups led by leaders from academia, government, and non profit organizations will contribute practical ideas to make clear progress on addressing topics such as: establishing leadership fellowships or mid-career training opportunities; working with academic programs to ensure the essential skills identified are taught to graduate students; providing support to ensure effective succession planning; identifying useful networking tools to address workforce management needs, etc. Facilitators and key partners will lead the generation of action items and identification of next steps and responsible parties. This café conversation will be a working session to move the

important dialogue about the future of coastal management into actionable steps and clear outcomes.

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