

Sea Grant Review Panel Meeting

March 5, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

- Add election of officers to the call to order
- Welcome to and swearing in of Terry Gardiner.

Motion: Move that panel elect West Chair and Woeste vice chair until next regular election in 2009 (Stephen). Second: Heath. Accepted.

- Panel thanks N. Robinson for his service to the panel.

NSGO Director's Update – Leon Cammen

NIMS:

- SG looking for better ways to communicate within the network and to build a national picture of what the program does as a whole.
- NIMS will be used for reporting impacts, activities, etc. and data mining.
- The system is up and suggestions from the network are being looked into.
- Expect that programs will use NIMS for annual reporting this fall. Roughly half of the programs are using NIMS now.
- NIMS focuses more on accomplishments and impacts—past databases have focused mainly on budget tracking.
- Reports through NIMS will be the basis for the State of the Sea Grant.

Discussion on NIMS:

- Focus teams will be responsible for using NIMS info to paint a bigger picture for external use.
- Metrics are useful but impacts need to be upfront in any external document.

Coastal Integration Exercise:

- Huge opportunity for SG and for all NOAA coastal programs. SG is right in the middle of this process and we need to stay involved.
- Working relationships exist at the state level but are lacking at the national level.

Regionalization:

- Based on notion that NOAA wasn't connecting well with stakeholders (or internally)
- Everyone in NOAA should know about what other NOAA offices are doing in that region.
- SG should be highly involved and help other offices know how to use/involve SG.
- Regional research plans: 3 regions will start in a few months—proposals are being reviewed now.
- Reauthorization language emphasizes SG's responsibility to work regionally.
- PPI, Paul Doremus has the lead for this in NOAA.

Reauthorization:

- In the final steps of the NOAA clearance process. From NOAA it goes to DoC and then to OMB (interagency review).
- Legislative side is going much more quickly. It then goes to the Science Committee in the House and Commerce in the Senate.
- No major issues have been identified within the administration.

Discussion on Reauthorization:

- If there's a request for information, the panel should have enough information to respond.
- Suggestion of informational visits the hill and a report back to the Director.

Staffing:

- NSGO staff size is decreasing.
- NSGO losing two IPAs in August—additional IPAs in the future will be dependent on funding availability.
- New hires: Extension Leader, Program Officer (social sciences, CCD) paid for out of SG appropriations. Aquaculture Manager will be funded out of NMAI funding.

2008 Budget:

- Core funding back to 2005 level (not in real dollars).
- From now on, funds that are de-obligated are not available.
- Everything else down 30%. A larger budget is necessary to build these areas back up.
- Regional planning was added to budget.

Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation (PIE):

- NRC recommended improving national strategic planning and better integrating planning with evaluation process.
- RIT and COPE were still missing integrating planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- PIE requires programs to change but it's designed to facilitate collaboration. When complete, programs/projects will be on the same cycles.
- Implementation planning is the next step. More detailed performance measures, metrics, timeline, etc. This will be the first thing focus teams take on. We've never asked teams to track metrics (through NIMS).
- NSGO would like the panel to focus mainly on the national picture. Panel would be involved in evaluations, site visits, PRP (once every four years). This will help panel stay up to date on what programs are doing and give it a national perspective.
- PIE is ready to go into the NOAA approval system.

Discussion on PIE:

- Suggestion that panel endorse PIE document but discuss importance of additional funding and expertise for NSGO for such changes with NOAA leadership.

Motion: The panel endorses the integrated PIE principals in the PIE document (Bell). Second: Weis. Motion passes

Knauss Fellows Update – Miguel Lugo

- Working on increasing fellows' knowledge of SG. SG 101 will be held later this month as a way to connect fellows to the network.

Discussion on Knauss Fellowship:

- Suggestion that fellows spend time in their host SG programs.
- NSGO is also looking into building a support network for fellows (particularly legislative) who might have questions and need local answers.

Panel's Annual Work Plan – R. Duce, R. Heath, and B. Stubblefield

- Survey responses to the panel's role in the new assessment process and ways to enhance future funding were rated priority A or B. Secondary actions were operational, evaluation of new SG programs and more strategic issues (aside from funding issue). Panel should review document and prioritize involvement.

Discussion on Annual Work Plan:

- Suggestion to pick one strategic issue in addition to the top two. First two are in same category. Perhaps select some out of the strategic category and some out of the operational category.
- Examination of declining research is probably a strategic priority (what should the SG do about it? What has the impact been? Should SG focus research on smaller areas, partner with others, only focus on outreach, etc?)
- Panel should put together a committee to look into declining research.
- Another timely, strategic issue is the role of SG in climate service. NOAA is developing a climate service. Panel could demonstrate what SG already does with climate, our expertise and linkages to universities who are already doing a lot of climate work.
- NSGO isn't looking to expand SG's mission, just highlight the work we're already doing. This needs to be done sooner than later. The most helpful thing the panel could do in regards to climate would be to outline the capabilities of SG that would be useful to climate service and what SG could do if it had the resources.
- Given time constraints, NSGO might want to provide information on what SG can do in terms of climate for the panel to package.
- Suggestion to appoint two panel members to create task force with SG directors to help Leon figure out how to demonstrate SG's role in climate services.
- Panel could utilize Jack Thigpen's climate retreat meeting as a resource. Conference call Friday 3pm EST to determine when/where they're having a meeting. Jim Hurley will send info on climate conference call to entire panel.
- Two assignments from the Chair: 1). What has SG's role been in climate change (near term); and 2) where could/should SG go from here?

- Request to establish a research committee as well and include SGA and outside experts. Could take 6 months or more.
- West and Woeste will take on the first two priorities with Leon (determining the future of regional collaboration and revising the SG charter and procedures manual). The other two (research and climate) should be handled by these committees.
- The climate change group should include people from inside beltway to help support SG's position, not just experts.
- Social science isn't as large a priority, but should be kept in the foreground. The panel could look into what kinds of social science SG should focus on, what is missing, and what mechanisms (matching incentives, NSIs, etc) should be used to encourage social science.
- Alden will write up a request/idea for the committee's charge.
- Duce will lead Research committee and define the scope of the committee. Alden will draft charge of the climate committee. Chair and vice chair will work with Leon on PIE.

NOAA Legislative Outlook – E. Webster (sent alternate)

- This is a historic budget request in that it's higher than what Congress did last year (\$3.9M last year and current request is \$4.1M). Part of this, however, goes to pay increases, inflation, building repairs, etc. Also increases for satellite sensors/development, Ocean Action Plan, Priority Plan, and Magnuson-Stevens.
- We expect congress to go into long-term CR.
- Aquaculture Act another priority—has come to a stand still.
- Bills that might move this year: Coral Reef Reauthorization, Hydrographic Services Improvement Act, SG reauthorization, CZM Act, smaller Climate Change bills (climate change science program which allows NOAA to start a national climate service; ocean acidification program, climate change adaptation programs, etc. all of which are NOAA related) (cap and trade systems and other big bills probably won't move this year though)—Congress wants to pass something on climate change this year.
- A plan on a national climate change service will probably come out soon.
- The Vice Admiral has supported expanding to a more comprehensive climate service and mentioned it at a hearing. Congressional staff put that in the bill on the senate side.
- Coral Reef reauthorization bill: Gives more authority to do restoration after ship strikes on reefs.
- SG reauthorization is on track to clear this year. It's a non-controversial bill.
- Nothing on Chesapeake Bay right now. Congressman Gilchrest won't be returning.

Outlook for Sea Grant Re-authorization – J. Hathaway, House Resources Staff

- Hopes to produce a bill that Panel will support and encourages panel input.
- Not sure how the cap will be evaluated. It's subject to further discussion.
- A draft should come out to the panel and NSGO soon.

- Input and testimony at a hearing is the start of what is needed from the panel. A characterization of some of the issues the panel would like us to focus on would be appreciated.
- This last year the Science committee was excited about energy, climate change, satellite oversight—the dry side of NOAA rather than the wet side.
- Professional staff contacts on the science committee: Jean Fruchie, staff director at science committee or Shameer Williams.

Other Business – Miguel Lugo

- Volunteers from panel are needed to review 2009 Knauss applications for final selection in April and 2-3 days (in person) the first week of May.
- West and Gardiner volunteer to serve on the selection committee.

Motion to adjourn.

SG Panel Meeting
March 6, 2008

Overview of March 5:

- Hearing might occur April 3rd and the panel will be invited. John Woeste recommended to testify on behalf of the panel.

Pennsylvania Sea Grant Institutional Program Review – R. West

- PA was an extension program, then a coherent area program, and is now applying for institutional status.
- Site visit scheduled for March 31-April 2 and recommendation will be available soon after.

FEE Review – J. Woeste

- Committee members (Woeste, Jeff, Smitten) meeting April 21-23 in D.C.
- Coordinators within network have been preparing a briefing book for the review.

Discussion on FEE Review:

- Funding depends on NMFS support—we don't have any solid commitments yet.
- Report didn't ask programs for NMFS-specific partnerships/info—when reviewing you might want to try to highlight that.
- Suggestion that individual programs get local agencies to testify as to the benefits of FEE.
- FEE was NSI money not core. To continue FEE, SG won't have some other NSI.
- NSI is research. Giving NSI money to FEE adds to declining research.

NSGO Administrative Review – R. Heath

- Panel decided in the fall that they wanted an update of the Duce Report as to the appropriate level of support for the NSGO.
- West, Stubblefield, Stickney, Heath are on the committee—charged to determine NSGO needs, comparable programs, staffing history/budget, cap discussion, fees, etc.
- There are three areas that the NSGO focuses on:
 - National leadership/development: partnerships, new programs, etc to bring in new money.
 - Network leadership: looking at network research, extension, etc. and assessment.
 - Capacity building?
- Administrative review will be complete in about a month.

Discussion of NSGO Review:

- Decreasing funding is hindering the NSGO's ability to provide national leadership.
- Other programs operating on a 5 percent national office funding level are just passing the money through, not trying to lead a national program. They also aren't expanding.

- NOAA's 2011 budget is in the works—they're trying to cover the erosion of the base. Productivity is about the same, but there's substantial staff burnout. The budget office doesn't necessarily see this.
- The opportunity cost of not have a development effort deserves attention. The panel might want to look into what would be different if the cap were higher.

Discussion of NSGO cap:

- There might be other ways to get around the cap. Program roles might not need to come out of the cap. Perhaps such roles could be regionally based?
- NSF contracts out to keep costs down.
- Farming out leadership could be difficult. A central figure is necessary and that role is performed by the NSGO.

The New Sea Grant Strategic Plan – J. Byrne

- Gathered existing information, convened stakeholder meeting, SG week sessions. Draft received significant comments. The plan is now with the NSGO and has to go up through NOAA.
- Comments on first draft:
 - Not enough education or research, intro was too dire, etc.
- The revised report: Started with SG vision/mission, SG values, partnerships, integrated activities, unbiased, science-based organization, within NOAA it is one of few involved with users.
- Three cross-cutting goals and four focus areas.
- (Our goals are discrete objectives/nouns where strategies are actions/verbs): Goals include:
 - Research (research)
 - Informed public (education)
 - Decision-making processes that are inclusive (engagement)
- Plan sets direction and priorities. SGA doesn't have to line up perfectly with goals, just align in a significant way.

Discussion on Strategic Plan:

- SP and PIE will go up the NOAA chain together. PIE goes as a report to congress so it will have to be cleared by NOAA. NSGO will brief the Admiral. As for the SP, it gets endorsed/approved by NOAA line offices and eventually the goes to the Admiral. SP will be guidance for the next 5 years, and the framework for the focus teams' boundaries/priorities, plan for NSIs, etc. We already utilizing this document.
- SP could serve as a public relations tool.

The Role of Focus Teams – J. Murray

- Focus teams will develop detailed implementation plans, then programs will either align current SPs or create a new one by September 2008.
- Immediate task—developing the implementation plan (need to get national implementation plan to network by late June) for alignment in September (which will enable them to begin RFPs in November).

- Theme teams varied in roles and responsibilities. No real assigned tasks, uneven leadership, etc. Focus teams should be different.
- Overarching role: To help programs implement the SP. Focus teams will:
 - Include 7-10 members/team; chaired by someone in the NSGO. SGA will appoint Vice Chairs. Experts from outside the network will also be on the teams. This is 4-year commitment and will be functional and geographically balanced.
 - Create partnerships
 - Develop new initiatives
 - Facilitate planning and implementation
 - Synthesize and report on SG activities on an annual basis
 - Further solidify SG's identity, catalyze cooperative efforts among SG programs, NSGO, NOAA, and others.
- Chairs and vice chairs have been selected.
- Schedule:
 - March 10: Nominations are due.
 - March 17: Focus team chair and vice chair submit roster to NSGO
 - March 21: Invitations sent to focus team nominees
 - Week of June 9: Four focus teams meet to develop a national implementation plan.
- NSGO needs help from the panel to look at 31 alignment memos. Panel can endorse memos or ask director to amend it if it's not ambitious enough.
- Panel should think about which panel members should serve on the focus teams.

Discussion of Focus Teams:

- Concern that experts won't be experts in designing implementation plans.
- The NSGO and CSC will provide guidance throughout the process.
- Panel member assignments:
 - Healthy Coastal Ecosystems: J. Weis
 - Hazard Resiliency: J. Byrne
 - Sustainable Coastal Development: R. Heath
 - Safe and Sustainable Seafood: J. Stephan
 - (Possibly Nancy for Hazard Resiliency or SCD)

NOAA Coastal Integration Effort – S. Levenbach (OMB) and D. Kennedy

D. Kennedy:

- Pass back language has been incorporated into broader language throughout NOAA.
- OMB asked OCRM, CSC, NCCOS, and SG for a plan on how to better integrate and communicate. Tasked to identify a few priorities, budgets, investments, and how they line up across agencies.
- Submitted response in fall 2007 but OMB said it wasn't enough and requested a strategic plan for coasts. Offices also asked to identify redundancies and expand the coastal programs. New plan due by September of 2008.
- OMB wants to see roles and contributions of each program, metrics, and how to implement coordination, structure issues, redundancies, etc.

- Coastal Enterprise: NOAA selected coasts as a theme for a new administration. Builds on CZMA visioning. More challenges than strengths. Increasing pace/scale of impacts on coastal communities, lack of integrated coastal mission and mandates, increasing demand for services and products, limited capacity of coastal decision-makers to understand and use NOAA products. Also, limited long-term monitoring data, OMB/congressional lack of understanding as to NOAA's role, and a lack of high level performance measures.
- Next steps: NOAA HQ has appointed NOS to lead effort. Also trying to implement key strategies as part of fall 2007 response.
- To think about: How does the panel see SG contributing to NOAA's Coastal Enterprise activities?

S. Levenbach:

- OMB's goal is to improve performance and efficiency.
- For example, many of the coastal programs work in HABS—they could work together, focus on different aspects of extramural grants.
- Focusing on SG's strengths will help this process and make sure the coastal plan plays to those strengths.
- OMB's goal is to encourage offices to have a unified vision, and then go out and partner with other agencies.

Discussion on Integration:

- Panel requests copy of the fall 2007 integration response.
- "Coastal programs" include brown and blue water, but also coastal zoning issues.
- Main concern of OMB is both overlap and programming gaps. Originally the redundancy was the main concern, but in defining responsibilities, gaps will become more obvious.
- Enterprise team is looking for input, including the panel's view of SG's specific role, how you differentiate, etc.
- Emily's request is available on the OCRM website.
- SG's strengths are the network and brand recognition (Levenbach).
- There is some momentum around the idea that coastal issues are important in NOAA. This is an opportunity for everyone. Constituents need to help promote the idea that coastal issues are important to NOAA. Not just get more money, but help build momentum through support.
- D. Kennedy will get back to the panel with a timeline for when the team would like input on how SG fits into this effort.

SGA Update – P. Anderson

- Signatures from SG beneficiaries—strong testimony and letters to the hill.
- Pushing House and Senate to add SG to priority programmatic request list.
- Reauthorization: SGA working with panel and Joel Widder. SGA went to talk to authorizing committee in December. There's a lot of consensus on what needs to be included in the bill.

- SGA is preparing for focus teams and reviewing theme teams. SGA would like to see regional representation, expertise, mix of extension and research on the teams.
- Network Advisory Council (put together by John Kramer). Working to include all parts of the network. Council meets periodically to bring up issues of concern and do work for the SGA by supporting:
 - Research directors working with NSGO on NIMS.
 - Fiscal officers doing fact finding on match and leveraging to demonstrate value added.
- Next SGA meeting will be in New Orleans in the fall (overlaps with the panel meeting). Looking at November 18-21st right now.
- Areas the panel can help the SGA:
 - Working NOAA leadership
 - Participate in focus teams
 - Develop the State of the SG Report
 - Report on the issue of redundancy and coastal programs—the panel has a legitimate voice in crafting SG’s story. Other groups don’t have a FACA committee.
 - Building on NSGO national development.

Discussion on SGA update:

- R. Duce will follow up with P. Anderson regarding panel priorities.

Transition Planning and NOAA’s Regional Efforts – P. Doremus

- Responding to array of external drivers to help us adapt/react regionally.
- Service delivery is a key focus as is the ability to utilize and build existing partnerships.
- Not trying to transform current line office structure but rather to focus on a regionally-distinct mix of goals.
- Regional priorities:
 - Hazard resiliency
 - Integrated ecosystem assessments
 - Integrated water resource services, and
 - Regionally-distinct priorities and capabilities
- Strategic topics:
 - Consistency with NOAA strategy
 - Clear and persuasive societal demand
 - Clarifying NOAA’s role
- Possible themes (developing strategy papers on each of themes):

○ Climate	○ Transportation
○ Coasts	○ Ocean systems and marine life
○ Water quality	○ People and infrastructure
○ High impact weather	
- SG’s contribution on the coastal side and help with what a coastal strategy paper might look like would be valuable. SG should articulate societal needs and how it contributes to understanding provides linkages to end-users.

Discussion of Regional Efforts:

- Outreach is SG's strength even on climate and it needs to be realized as such within NOAA.
- NSGO has been involved in the discussions of a climate service. NOAA regional teams are still in the initial stages.

NOAA Engagement Report – J. Stephan and J. Byrne

- Extension Outreach and Education Working Group:
 - Charged to enhance extension, outreach and education activities
 - Funding was discussed: how to make NOAA seem more important to congress/public?
 - 8 findings and 34 recommendations.
- America Competes Act: Charges NOAA administrator to develop formal and informal education at all levels to educate public as to its science and what it does (with no additional resources provided).
- 3-year pilot project to coordinate NOAA-wide education/outreach project: Gulf region selected as the pilot. \$1.5m for 3-year project that places SG extension agents in NOAA line offices (including the weather service). This is a way of changing the culture whereby NOAA thinks extension is the go-to agency for engagement.
- Report goes to SAB next week.

Discussion of NOAA Engagement Report:

- Of the 34 recommendations, there is one (1.4) specific to SG, which states that SG should include a climate component.
- NOAA has an education council and there was a recommendation that the focus on engagement (10% of NOAA's budget should go to engagement). If this is implemented, it changes the nature of NOAA and moves it toward service and away from just data/fact finding. Need to watch to make sure SG's extension service isn't absorbed into NOAA.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee:

- No report

Nominations:

- Reported yesterday

Re-authorization

- Not yet come to a consensus on the cap.
- Contact committees about re-authorization.

Public Comments:

- None

Other Business

- Finalize dates of next panel meeting – semi-joint meeting in New Orleans with SGA suggest November 12-14.

Motion: Hold November 12-14 meeting in New Orleans to coincide with the SGA meeting (Bell). Accepted

- Interested in a tour by LASG.

Motion: Spring meeting to occur February 10th-11th, 2009 to coincide with the SGA meeting Feb. 10th and the 30th anniversary reception for the Knauss Fellowship. Accepted.

- R. West and J. Murray will meet with OMB.
- Suggestion to send out a one-page talking paper to S. Levenbacher as to why SG is important. Panel members will send out an email to J. Murray on this.

Procedures Manual:

- All suggestions were the same. There are four members of the exec. committee (chair, vice chair, and two past chairs)—suggestions were that there would be instead one panel member at large rather than a past chair on the committee.

Motion: The panel endorses the DRAFT procedures manual as presented by the panel procedures manual committee (Bell & Stephan) on a “provisional” basis until the November 2008, panel meeting. The panel procedures manual committee will incorporate relevant elements of the planning, implementations and evaluation system, and other proposed revisions that might appear to be relevant into a DRAFT procedures manual that will be presented to the panel for final approval at the November 2008 panel meeting. Second: Duce Unanimous approval.

Climate Committee:

- R. Alden drafted language. Chair will appoint a task force
- J. Hurley will take the lead on the climate issue and involve the panel as needed. He will also contact panel after his climate retreat call tomorrow for an update.

New FACA Stationary:

- Panel would like electronic version.

Charter:

- One change by lawyers was to item 7 to say NOAA may establish sub-committees not the panel.

Research Committee:

- Chaired by R. Duce.
- B. Stubblefield, J. Weis, and R. Alden (and possibly N. Rabalais) will assist.
- Committee would like at least one SG director. Possibly Kramer, Grau, or and Andren?
- Once terms of membership are settled, R. Duce can start work upon return in June. Meeting in July or August?

Adjourn public session.