

Florida Oceans and Coastal Council

April 15 & 16, 2008

Rm 107, Carr Building, Tallahassee, Florida

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

2 OBSERVERS/REPRESENTATIVES

Members present:

Voting Member	April 15, 2008	April 16, 2008
Jim Cato	X	X
Billy Causey		
Jane Davis		
Ernie Estevez	X	X
Holly Greening	X	X
Karl Havens		
Rob Hendricks		
Jerry Lorenz		
John Ogden	X	X
Shirley Pomponi	X	X
Lisa Robbins		
Jerry Sansom		
Jody Thomas	X	X
Peter Ortner		
Tom Waite	X	X
Non Voting Member		
DACS Director Sherman Wilhelm	X	
DEP Deputy Secretary Robert Ballard (Sole designee)	X	X
FWC FWRI Director Gil McRae (Haddad alternate)	X	X

DAY ONE, Tuesday, April 15, 2008

WELCOME BACK/INTRODUCTIONS /AGENDA REVIEW

Stephanie Bailenson, FDEP Alternate to Co-Chair Robert Ballard, represented Mr. Ballard who was obligated to attend a Cabinet meeting. She announced that this meeting would be for gathering information only; any decision-making that may be necessary would be made on a noticed conference call on Monday, April 21.

Members asked if there was any good news from the Legislature regarding the budget. Ms. Bailenson indicated that discussions were continuing; this is a very active Legislative session. Both Budget Bills (House and Senate) have funding for operations of the Council contained in them.

The Facilitator, Janice Fleischer, went on to review the Agenda (**Exhibit A**) and Meeting Guidelines.

All Reports of Proceedings, Meeting Guidelines and Public Comment Guidelines can be found on the Council website at www.FloridaOceansCouncil.org.

LIAISON UPDATE

Council Liaison, Nicole Robinson, was unable to attend this meeting. In her place, previous Council Liaison, Steven Wolfe, attended the meeting. Mr. Wolfe delivered the Liaison Update (**Exhibit B**). Several items were mentioned in the presentation, including:

- The Water Resources Monitoring Council (WRMC) has concluded FY 2007-2008 workshops for its Integrated Data Management (IDM) effort.
- GOMA (Gulf of Mexico Alliance): the first Annual Monitoring Forum will be held in St. Petersburg, Florida June 3-5, 2008. The theme is Data Comparability and Coastal Nutrient Criteria

Member questions:

1. Will this be an open workshop? (the one for DEP Nutrients for Estuaries)
 - a. Yes, open to anyone
2. Is the GOMA field measurement QA workshop effort comprised of mainly government agencies?
 - a. Yes, for now, initially attendees will be the state samplers.

Gil McRae, Co-Chair, FWC/FWRI, followed with a report on the Oceans Council Resource Assessment (RA) and Research Review (RR):

Research Review

- This is essentially an online data finder.
- The current product will be presented in June, 2008.

Member comment: Include the Legislature in the opening of the Research Review.

Resource Assessment

- Interviews are being done of Council members to help define what this effort will be.
- It is the intent (by June, 2008) to get the framework completed and FWC will make sure it is implemented in some fashion.
 - Don't want this to be a "sit on the shelf" effort; much attention to making sure it is used/valuable.

Member Comments:

1. During the interviews the connection of many of the projects began to become evident.

NOEP Ocean Economic Study:

- the Principal Investigator has set a deadline of June 20, 2008 to have it sent out

Member comments:

1. Difficult information to obtain; fairly extensive.
2. The problem is institutions are so complex/hard to pinpoint who should be asked to answer particular questions.
 - i. Many departments are combined so determining coastal funding is hard to do.
3. Will the Council have a chance to review the Study?
4. Isn't the Council somehow responsible for the Study?
 - i. Anyone wanting to review it is welcome, Steve Wolfe will send it out to Council members.

PRESENTATION: IDM UPDATE

Ellen McCarron, FDEP, Project Director of the IDM effort, delivered an update report on the IDM. At this time, all members should have received the Functional Requirements for the IDM effort. This portion of the project is at the pre-“blue print” level, meaning “what are the basic things needed to build the system?” The next phase, if funded, will be the more detailed “blue print” phase, with a prototype.

The IDM Team is maintaining awareness of other efforts that are happening in the same subject matter across the U.S., they are looking at the other projects for potential partnerships/avoiding duplication.

The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is beginning a monitoring-system database related to CERP, it is a sophisticated system and the IDM project team has contacted and met with the SFWMD on this project.

Despite budget limitations this year, it is the hope to continue this IDM effort. There may be grant possibilities. The Legislature has taken notice of the IDM and shown interest. A new version of the current Functional Requirements document will be out this week by Friday, April 18, 2008.

Members comments/questions:

1. Is the IDM project mostly dependent on outside contractors and is that why the budget situation has such an impact?
 - a. Contracting is essential, internal staff would not be able to get to the level of detail needed.
 - b. There has been a lot of effort put in to this effort by other state agencies.
2. What sort of problems are there remaining since so many agencies gather their data in their own way?
 - a. Mostly the different technologies used by each entity; each agency has a system in place already and to get everyone on the same system is very difficult especially in a tight budget year.
3. There will always be budgeting problems due to the expense of changing systems.
4. This is obviously a big effort, are there any efforts that have been successful that are as big as what we are planning?
 - a. The CERP system at SFWMD.
5. The benefit of this effort is that a foundation for data compatibility has been defined and created.
6. You can make use of this at any level.
7. Are there any other states that have done this (create a monitoring-system database)?
 - a. Texas and Georgia- we are looking into discussing this with them to see what they are doing.
8. If the SFWMD has the best system currently, could it be used for our purposes?
 - a. We are looking into just that.
 - b. There are many levels of leveraging going on with this.
 - i. GOMA is also interested.
9. Technical is a stumbling block, but the upper decision makers need to be approached to understand the value of this.
10. ACOE is involved in the CERP zone system with SFWMD.

Question: is the Council interested in getting more involved with the GOMA efforts? This is an opportunity to collaborate. (Keep it in the back of your mind as we keep talking).

PRESENTATION: FL-COOS STRATEGIC PLAN

Jyotika Virmani, FL-COOS (Exhibit C) delivered a presentation on the strategic plan of the Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System (FL-COOS) Consortium.

FL-COOS is communicating with the IDM project team to explore integration possibilities between the two efforts (COOS and IDM). There are federal standards with which FL-COOS must comply; but it their understanding that the IDM standards being developed will be broad enough to incorporate those federal standards.

Member comments/questions:

1. What about moving existing moorings to cover other areas?
 - a. This is a problem, because you could lose long term data and this could be harmful re: data history.
2. Have you identified end users and what products they might need?
 - a. COOS gets queries (ex: weather service).
 - b. They are working on a DVD and a stakeholder survey.
 - c. It seems like there is much opportunity for end users; find out what they need and provide to it to them (the end users).
 - d. Also getting money from end users to help with this effort.
3. One thing we've never faced as a Council or FL-COOS is the astronomical cost of running a system like this.
 - a. Seems like the only way to do this is with public/private partnerships.
 - b. They are trying to build a coordinated system.
4. Weather forecasting is approximately one-quarter of NOAA's budget (overall budget is approx. \$3.9billion).
5. Maybe we need a user driven system which helps get money.
6. In California, predicting upwelling conditions is very important and they have a sophisticated system to do these predictions.
 - a. Very impressive system.
7. What is the current status and cost for the Ocean Observatory?
 - a. Approx. \$1 billion, but costs have grown approx. 4 fold; many of their projects are on hold because of lack of funds.
8. FL-COOS has produced a written report; it will be sent to all Council members.
9. There should be prioritization of types of information:
 - a. This might help with getting funds.
 - b. Each source of money has its own criteria attached to it.
 - c. This makes it hard to prioritize.
10. Is there a sense around the table about what is most important?
 - a. See Core Variables in the presentation.
 - b. National priorities are:
 - i. Coastal inundation
 - ii. Water quality
 - iii. Safety and efficiency
 - iv. Human health
 - v. Aquaculture
 - vi. Climate
11. Lack of wind measurement; this is missing from ocean observing.
12. Do SECOORA, GCOOS, AND SEACOOS have their own strategic plans?
 - a. Yes
13. It is amazing that wind data is not included.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment invited; no one spoke.

For Public Comment Guidelines, see the Council website at www.FloridaOceansCouncil.org.

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BREAK

At this stage of the meeting, members took a short break.

PRESENTATION: GOVERNOR'S CLIMATE ACTION TEAM (CAT)

This presentation was postponed until the next meeting.

PRESENTATIONS ON CLIMATE ACTION EFFORTS:

Jay Levenstein, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs) delivered the first of several presentations on agency efforts related to climate change (**Exhibit D**).

Following Mr. Levenstein's presentation, a dialogue followed with the members:

1. Do you have a comparison of conversion among all these different types of fuels; which gets you more fuel for land/cost?
 - a. We don't have the figures at this time.
 - b. Simple conversion would be very useful using solar power here in Florida.
2. Efficiency of conversion: there is a lively debate; I am skeptical of these efficiencies because they don't take all aspects into account especially with corn.
 - a. Other biomass conversions might be useful.
3. How do we take into account water and energy conservation while we encourage use of alternative fuels?
 - a. This is not the only solution; just one of many.
4. Types of ethanol: some of your projects do what you have shown to be inefficient or not really viable in Florida.
 - a. Bagasse being used now; it is a product of sugarcane here in Florida.
5. Happy to see something that keeps ranchers and farmers on the land; one of the threats to coastal waters, however, is runoff from agricultural practices (as well as urban runoff); marginal lands might be closer to streams, etc. What care is being taken to prevent negative effects?
 - a. We would not jump into anything before exploring all negative and positive effects.
 - b. IFAS is doing this as well.
 - c. Growing crops that don't need as much water; not need fertilizer; these are things being explored.
6. Has the agency looked at the value of using Florida's native vegetation for sequestration (carbon from the atmosphere- carbon credits)?
 - a. Yes, looking at all practices, agriculture, forestry.
 - b. Also being considered for new land use.
7. Has anyone held up the impaired waters areas to see which crops would have the lowest negative impact on these impaired waters?
8. In order to use algae you must use plankton algae and it is a hothouse method.
 - a. Use the fastest growing species we can find.

Gil McRae, Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission and co-chair of the Council, delivered the next presentation on FWC climate-change related programs ([Exhibit E](#)).

Member comments:

1. If a lot of armoring occurs in natural areas, it changes what happens around it.
2. Are there reports and papers on this presentation?
 - a. Yes, we can send them out to Council members if requested.
3. No possible way to separate out the impact of global warming over the effect of developmental impacts (population growth).
4. In the long term, climate change will make things either move or die.
5. If we don't want the loss of natural areas due to population growth, then you must think about living more densely.
6. Is DEP/FWC's management strategy to increase resilience in the natural areas?
 - a. Yes, as well as preserving those systems that are functioning normally; keeping development out of those areas.
7. Stock enhancement and restoration of the habitats, we always acknowledge that stony corals are very sensitive. Should we be looking at more resilient corals? Some selective breeding but cautiously.
 - a. Need to be careful re: disease.
8. Enhancement takes away from looking at how we can live within a sustainable environment, no matter how well intended. We need to look at what things can be done to ensure sustainability.
 - a. Not only coral reefs.
9. Doing whatever we can do now is critical and at the same time we need to have a larger scale view as well.
10. Attempting to be carbon neutral is a goal we should be seeking.
11. Climate change needs to be put in the context of everything else.
12. Question is what you can do economically to get folks/politicians to be behind the effort.
13. Some new species may in fact be beneficial, not all exotics are bad.

Russ Frydenborg, Department of Environmental Protection delivered the next presentation on development of hard coral bioassessment methods as potential indicators of climate-change effects on reefs ([Exhibit F](#)).

Member Comments:

1. How do you classify reef types?
 - a. We are proposing a basic methodology and need to talk with those who are specifically involved in this.
2. You are at the initial stages; you could use FWC/FWRI's videos of corals; that is a large data group and has a lot of information; analysis could be done at a desk using these videos.
3. Are you comparing to other states that are doing the same thing?
 - a. This is happening by how we are approaching the issue.
4. We need to be legally defensible in our work.
5. We have shown the decline of corals but have not shown cause and effect.
6. Once you declare something as "impaired", there is a legal mandate to reduce the impairment.
7. You may want to include some other variables; sub lethal variables should be considered as well.
8. You can establish water quality standards for a specific geographic area (really more of a bioregion).

The final presentation was delivered by Paul Johnson, Florida Coastal and Ocean Coalition, on their climate initiatives ([Exhibit G](#)- text document).

Member comments:

1. I think this is fantastic; you have hit some wonderful areas that need to be addressed in Florida.
 - a. Salt water intrusion
 - b. Aquatic areas
2. Confused about “protect and restore coastal and marine ecosystems in preparing for change in coastal sea level changes”.
3. Will your reports cover economic estimates or values of inaction?
 - a. It was done but was primarily coastal.
4. How do you see what the Council is doing if it is complementary to your group?
 - a. We are all pulling this together.
 - b. The best we can do is collaborate, make sure the ideas make sense, bring it to the public.
5. Does your report take a position of which of the sea level rise is the most likely?
 - a. We should be reporting through the Climate Action Team to the Governor.
6. We (the Council) stop short in our work of saying “One should do this”, rather we are just doing description and probabilities of effects; whereas your work does make these recommendations.
 - a. We are an advocacy group so we don’t shy away from making recommendations.
7. Are there any publications on wetland movement as the sea level rises.
8. In Florida sea level has not been rising; it is staying relatively stable; this is itself may be a problem because there has (up to now) a very gradual rise and the environment and humans are accommodating this gradually. What would happen if it begins to happen very fast.
9. We need anecdotal information along with the science.

COUNCIL LOGO DISCUSSION

At the last meeting, the Council had discussed developing a logo unique to this Council. Prior to this meeting, some logo suggestions had been sent to Council members for consideration. At this meeting, none of the suggested logos were acceptable to the Council. Council members gave the following feedback to Co-Chair, Sherman Wilhelm, DACS, who volunteered to bring back a “banner type” of logo for Council approval at the next Council meeting (or before if possible).

Member Feedback:

1. Steer away from blue and black.
2. Like the generic #4, don’t put a picture of any wildlife.
3. #4 has the broader concept.
4. I like the idea of having more submittals.

CLIMATE 101 PRIMER

Member comments on how to continue:

1. I think this still needs lots of work.
2. We were thinking of various audiences.
3. Why are we doing this if there is a Climate Action Team (CAT)?
4. Maybe just list the things this Council believes the Legislature should pay attention to and not tell them what to do.
5. It was decided to do this to make sure the Ocean was included in discussions regarding climate change.
6. I don’t see this document as the last word. I would like to see something go forward that can be improved with time. I don’t think we need an advocacy document. Even if we do much less we can do it in a trustworthy way.

7. I like the idea of an evolving document that isn't "finished"; it could even inform future councils.
8. Suggested Formatting:
 - a. Introduction to each section
 - b. Easily understandable "findings" the three columns
 - c. A form of Executive Summary: Some discussion of the effects, either in bulleted form at the beginning or after "findings".
 - d. Put the effects behind the appropriate driver to provide backup for the bullets.
 - e. A general conclusion
 - f. Make recommendation if appropriate.
 - g. The entire document has a one page overview.
 - h. Add an additional section on economics.
 - i. References
9. How did you come up with the three sections: certain, probable and possible?
10. What this needs is a "hero" to produce the single text document.
11. Should we have actual "recommendations"?
 - a. It could be contained in the "responses" or "results" section.
12. The Governor's CAT is not coming out with anything immediately; we aren't under that much of a time crunch.
13. Maybe on the Monday, April 21, 2008 teleconference call, we could put one section in order to really work through the details of this format (Cato below) and see if it works. **Increasing Greenhouse Gases for the Monday session and Ernie Estevez is the "hero".**
14. We need to make sure we have good backup for any statements we are making and if there are none, do not make the statement.
15. We should have human health effects/infrastructure/cross cutting effects.
 - a. This is what I was thinking about with "responses" (Cato)
 - b. There are some findings/studies on human health and infrastructure that can be used to assist in the discussion/decisions. Essays as well.
16. Invasive/Native sections should be combined (they are under the temperature section); they are two sides of one coin.
 - a. In the new format, effects may have multiple drivers.
17. If we get into human health, infrastructure, etc. do we run the risk of forgetting something?
18. You don't want to get too long a list, you can lump.
19. You should also point out those items that will be okay with climate change.

Cato suggested format:

Section

Findings (Certain, Probable, Possible)

Effects of the findings

Responses (what we as people can do about it, i.e. "the result of no action is....")

Economics

Long Term solutions (maybe in responses section)

References

PUBLIC COMMENT

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COUNCIL OPTIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD

Left for the second day

ADJOURN

DAY TWO, Thursday, April 16, 2008

COUNCIL OPTIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD

The Council went immediately into its discussion of its options for moving forward:

1. If we have a June meeting we should do a self inspection.
2. We will know about budget by June.
3. Think about the needs of Florida at more than one level since there is potentially money coming from Federal Government and then plan for what we want to do/recommend what is done.

Workshops and Conference Discussion: (Exhibits H and I-list of conferences and options for involvement)

1. Having a meeting ourselves with a partner on a particular issue.
2. Create a one/two day panel of national/world leaders and write a paper on what affects Florida, if we are going to organize anything.
3. Can we use the existing money for contract money for example for Climate 101? Or hire someone to do the event planning.
4. August is Florida Wildlife Climate Change conference (FWC sponsored and looking for other sponsors).
 - a. Find out if they have a dedicated oceans session.
 - i. They could expand on a session to include ocean issues.
 - b. We could roll out the primer at that time too.
5. I don't want us to just throw in money to an existing conference, I like the 1 to 2 day panel/workshop of national/Florida leaders.
6. Combine our June meeting with talks with from leaders in the field.
 - a. Topic could be the economics.
 - b. One of the outcomes could be "so what?"
 - c. Ask some other business leaders from the state to attend as well.
 - d. Hire a contractor writer to put results into a 2 page document.
 - e. Ports/recreational and commercial fisherman/media/tourism/beaches
 - f. Task the Ocean Alliance to bring in people.
7. There is another EPA effort on Ecosystem Evaluation; the SOW is due in June and maybe they should be at our next meeting.
8. With the funds left after the June meeting, look into being a part of the FWC Wildlife conference.
9. Position papers under the banner of the Oceans' Council.

10. Should we be considering getting a contractor to do the writing or layout of papers (Climate 101 for now)?
 - a. Layout person
 - b. Content person
11. Add Council logo to the Coastal Cities Summit?

For Monday's Call:

1. Where to have the Economics Forum
 - a. Miami
 - b. Tampa
2. Name of the event
 - a. Florida Coastal and Ocean Economics Forum
3. Janice Fleischer, Facilitator: design like Energy, Lake O and Water Summits.

NOTE: Members expressed displeasure at the fact that before this meeting, enough members said they would be in attendance so that a quorum would be present and then members did not show and a quorum was not met.

Future Council meeting:

1. The Council should consider sponsoring a meeting on Ocean Governance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was invited:

Joytika Virmani, FLCOOS

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ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned early as all business was completed.
