

Notes from Virtual Northeast Regional Meeting Nov-Dec 2009

November 12, 2009

NOAA Updates

- COMIA (CZMA Reauthorization bill) stalled, might have more interest in 2010 with changes in subcommittee
 - NOAA Admin. has not signed off on NOAA version yet
- Staffing Changes:
 - Kennedy is filling in as Deputy AA for NOS, they hope to fill that position by January
 - CPD will replace Elisabeth Morgan as CELCP coordination but no timeline right now
 - CPD NE regional position is still at HR, not sure when it will be publicized
- Budget:
 - OCRM might get new funding for Energy Licensing activities
 - Other OCRM funding is similar to last year—non-point is zeroed out
- Program Change Regulations: Hope to have draft out 4th quarter 2010
- Performance Measures: Forming OCRM/CSO Performance Measures Communications group (chaired by Ted Diers) to develop comms strategy for performance measures.
- Draft 309 Assessments and Strategy due to CPD 7/2010 (10/2010 for October 1 starts)
- CELCP:
 - Staff now regionally organized – Rina Aviram is contact for the NE
 - Winners should be announced for 2010 CELCP by end of December
 - Submission deadline for 2011 CELCP: late March

Regional Ocean Governance Session

Darlene Finch: Overview of Regional Ocean Governance and NOAA Involvement

Darlene provided an overview of 6 Regional Ocean Governance (ROG) efforts. The Pacific Islands are not covered by ROG, but everyone else is included within one of the ROG plans.

Q&A – Are there any plans for newer regional councils to interact with older councils? Yes – they are trying to take advantage of available venues, such as CZ09. Also, CSO is working to start a dialogue between the different regional councils. They're now working on developing a joint appropriations proposal to provide support for regional ocean councils.

Kathleen Leyden: Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC)

NROC was developed in response to U.S. Ocean Commission, Pew Commission, and Oceans 21 legislation. The original partnership was primarily between state and federal agencies. Now NGO's can also be partners within NROC.

Some challenges due to who is NOT within NROC – for example, CT has a need to collaborate with NY, but NY is not a part of NROC.

Some benefits from the NROC partnership:

- Helps federal agencies plan better
- Face-to-face meetings are very useful
- Increased visibility to Congress
- Partnerships help to leverage resources

NROC has had numerous workshops on topics such as Marine Spatial Planning, Hazards, and LIDAR needs.

Challenges faced by NROC partners:

- It's difficult to obtain data for regional level assessments. Problems coordinating LIDAR data collection efforts – would love to have a regional LIDAR 'portal', where all feds can coordinate data collection efforts between federal agencies and with states.
- Appropriations requests: Congress wants to know what specific states/districts will benefit from the request, and has a preference for funding projects rather than general support.

Advice to new Regional Ocean Councils -Develop good presentation and 'elevator speech'

As NROC has matured, lots of groups are looking for NROC support (for grant proposals and such). NROC has to decide who to support, or how to express support. For example, in a recent climate grant solicitation, many groups wanted NROC support for their proposals. NROC wrote a memo describing regional needs and sent it to the funding organization (NOAA).

Mike Snyder: Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO)

MARCO is a much newer Council than the others mentioned. MARCO has benefitted from having other regional groups to build upon, as well as the new administration's emphasis on Regional Ocean Governance.

Issues – Offshore energy, water quality (looking for increased federal investment)

MARCO has developed an actions, timeline, and leadership document – it's the beginning of a workplan, but currently all the identified activities are fairly short-term (within a year). Next steps – increase conversations with federal agencies.

Challenge – Organization of Federal Agencies doesn't line up exactly with ROG boundaries - sometimes MARCO has to deal with 2 different regional offices of the same federal agency.

Dr. Bill Walker: Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA)

GOMA's first action plan addressed the "low hanging fruit." GOMA currently working off of 2nd 5 year action plan.

They've begun partnering with the northern Midwest states on Mississippi River Nutrient reduction.

Q & A's

Q: How have states dealt with changes to state leadership? How has this impacted Regional Ocean governance?

A: In some cases, other states pick up the lead when one state loses momentum due to political changes. In other cases, leadership changes haven't impacted ROG. ROG staff should be aware that political changes will cause delays in getting Governor level approval on various items, so they should time their initiatives accordingly.

Also, sometimes federal level support helps maintain a constant level of operations, despite changes in state political structures.

Q: What has been the federal role in ROG?

A: NROC has found federal staffing support to be crucial. For example, the federal agencies developed a matrix showing exactly which agencies (and programs within the agencies) are most active within the region.

November 18, 2009: Planning for Climate Change

Julia Wyman: CSO Climate Change Planning Summary of Northeast States

CSO worked with OCRM to update some of the NE responses from the 2008 Climate Change Survey.

Summary table that notes if states are undertaking climate change adaptation planning and what sea level rise predictions they are using for planning purposes was sent to all state czm program managers and climate/hazards leads. If you did not receive a copy and would like one, please send email to allison.castellan@noaa.gov.

Ray Najjar: Projecting Sea-level Change in the Northeast U.S.

Najjar is working with NJ CZM, DE NEP and others on climate adaptation plan for Delaware Estuary. Funding from EPA's Climate Ready Estuaries Program. Will be looking at sea level rise (SLR), changes in salinity

Regionality in SLR caused by several factors:

- Ice sheet melting: when ice sheet melts, sea level nearest it declines because there is less gravity
- Ocean currents: Gulf stream current involves pressure gradient. West side of Gulf Stream is 1 m lower than E side. Climate models (AMOC) predict N. Atlantic water will sink which would decrease the Gulf Stream, increasing sea level in NE (approx. north of DE). Therefore, could see 20-30cm of SLR in NE by 2100 from this effect alone.
- Subsidence: Already SLR in NE is more rapid than eustatic rate due to subsidence. Since 1950-1999, mostly 2-4.4 mm/yr so subsidence seems to be ~ -0.6 to 2.7 mm/yr. However, subsidence not much of an issue in northern NE (RI-ME)

Climate change also impacts:

- Changes in tidal range: Ming Li, et. al. (Zhong et al, 2008) study in Chesapeake Bay found that tide range could increase 15-20% for Baltimore with 1 m SLR. Changes in tides are very regionally specific. As sea level rises, waves travel faster in estuary but this depends on water depth. Only other study on changes in tidal range was in DE Estuary with similar findings.
- Changes in Storminess: Storms less frequent but more severe on global scale but not enough research to determine what regional changes will be observed for NE.

Q&As/Discussion:

Had discussion on what states used to determine their SLR predictions. MD used AR4+subsidence. ME used TAR+subsidence (ME is following global trend so using global predictions). RI used Rahmstorf + local subsidence but may need to recalculate subsidence. NH used 2 ft for planning because that was the level of contours they had.

Najjar: Noted that for planning purposes, you can assume subsidence rate will be constant. Also recommended using Rahmstorf #s for global SLR estimate rather than IPCC which are more conservative and most scientists feel underestimate SLR. Can add in local subsidence rate to arrive at local sea level rise projection.

RI: Was interested in where to get good subsidence estimates.

Najjar: Suggested Wu et. al. paper. (See bar graph slide in presentation)

ME: Noted that that dataset only went to 1950. ME which used tide gauges with data points back to early 1900s, arrived at different subsidence rate. May want to use larger dataset if available.

MD (Chat): Tom Cronin with USGS in Reston VA has some good resources for subsidence rates in the region.

MD (Chat): Maryland factored in a subsidence rate of 1.7 mm/year to project future SLR.

DE: Was interested if any states have used Rahmstorf+ subsidence and would be interested in feedback on the process/protocol they used. No one else responded during session but if have additional info, share with Susan Love at DE.

Dorina Frizzera/Leigh Wood (NJ CZM): Defining Coastal Vulnerability Along the Delaware Bay: A Protocol for Determining Resilience

Working with Partnership for DE Estuary, Barnegat Bay NEP—establishing monitoring stations in different marsh types to look at SLR, salinity, change in vegetation and SET Tables.

Also geologic risk and social vulnerability to help communities identify areas at highest risk to plan accordingly.

SLAMM Model is being updated to handle LIDAR data so will have additional info on ecological risk and cost of sea level rise.

Planning outreach for communities to help provide them with adaptation tools to become more resilient.

Q&A/Discussion:

Ruth Kelly (Chat): Does anyone know if [Delaware Bay Study] has been done for the other side of the Bay as well?

DE: Some stuff has been done, but not on a county or regional scale. We definitely have not done any social stuff yet. We are working with 2 towns right now. Demographics are incorporated into the town vulnerability assessments

Julia Knisel: Advancing Adaptation Through State Strategies and Local Action

MA passed Global Warming Solutions Act in 2008 which called for analysis of adaptation strategies by Dec. 2009. State formed advisory committee and 6 subgroups to focus on different sectors, including ocean and coasts.

Climate Change vulnerabilities examined included: sea level rise, extreme weather events, water quality, impacts of increased precipitation, changes in habitat, range/distribution of species, fisheries impacts and HABs

Findings:

- We have enough info to act now but also need additional info
- Prioritize protection requirements and identify opportunities for managed retreat
- Reduce stress to natural resources
- Integrate flexible practices so fisheries mgmt can adapt to climate change.

Through StormSmart Coasts Program have had success with communities implementing voluntary incentives.

- Hull, MA—Most of community is in A or V zone; many repetitive losses. MA only has state standard for freeboard in V zones but would like communities to require freeboard in A zones as well. Hull providing \$500 off permit fee if go 2 ft above BFE in A zones.

Q&A/Discussions

Q: In Hull example, incentive helps for new construction but how would existing structures adapt?

A: It would be more difficult but if they are aware of their risk, they can at least prepare for potential flooding—relocate utilities to higher floors, move essential files from bottom floor, etc.

NY: We can do a lot to promote good planning at the local level but as long as Corps and FEMA are providing funding for shoreline protection and rebuilding after floods, etc., its hard for planning to compete when Federal funding favors other behaviors.

RI (Chat): July 2009 Army Corps directive now requires evaluation of historic SLR along with intermediate and high SLR scenarios for ALL corps projects to assess potential impacts.

MA: Exploring barriers to landward migration of wetlands—systematic approach to protect adjacent areas to allow wetlands to move inland.

Gwen Shaughnessy: Adapting to Climate Change in Maryland: Coast Smart Communities

MD's Eastern Shore already experiencing problems from SLR—failing foundations, permanent water in drainage ditches, stretches of roads that flood during high tide.

State Climate Action Plan: 19 policy recommendations for SLR adaptation (build env, health/safety, natural resources and associated economies, etc). Many recommendations involve implementation at local level.

To promote local changes, developed Coast Smart Communities Program (as Sect. 309 Strategy)—provide technical assist. and \$ to local gov'n't. Assisting with SLR vulnerability mapping, visualization studies, etc. Held interactive workshop in spring which included role-play scenario to figure out how to develop an action plan. Also introduced self-assessment score card for local gov'n't. Funding 4 communities this year to work on adaptation planning efforts. Plan to put our RFP for additional local projects.

Q&A/Discussion

Q: Can other states get a copy of the score card?

A: The role play materials can be found at <http://maryland.coastsmart.org/> -- this includes the scorecard. I'm happy to send them along if you can't access them there.

MA: Its impressive that the state has funding to provide to local gov'n't.

A: MD doesn't have outside funding for this. We're funding these local gov'n't projects with Sect. 309 \$ as part of our 309 Strategy.

John Kuriawa (Chat): All, coincidentally I just found out that Virginia will be adapting the Coast-Smart communities approach via a foundation grant to an NGO (Skip Stiles at Wetlands Watch).

Jim Boyd: Rhode Island Efforts toward Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change

RI CRMC passed policy to plan for 3-5' SLR by 2100 in Jan. 2008. They are continuing to reassess this prediction as new data becomes available.

Have RI Flood Awareness Climate change Task Force that is making freeboard recommendations to change state building standards. Currently RI has 1ft freeboard and coastal A zones have to build to V zone standard. Considering recommending 3 ft freeboard for residential structures and 4 ft for high occupancy buildings and essential facilities. Freeboard provides significant savings to homeowners because can save on flood insurance premiums. Typical recoup cost in 3-5 yrs.

Kicking off habitat planning group to incorporate SLR into habitat acquisition/restoration efforts. Through New England Governor's Conference, also looking at CELCP to preserve land. Also looking into establishing living shorelines program.

Q&A/Discussion

NJ (Chat): In addition to raising structures are you also suggesting retreat? Specifically with regard to classification IV - emergency infrastructure.

RI (Chat): We have setback requirements in our program for all new structures. If an existing structure is damaged >50%, then it must be relocated landward to meet the minimum setback standard. Our policies also encourage construction as far landward as feasible.

Overall Discussion/Comments

MA: We need to capture gaps that we've talked about here—what can we partner on to maximize resources (developing planning tools, data collection, etc)? What are commonalities that we can work on together? OCRM needs to take this message to NOAA for additional assistance.

OCRM: We are capturing notes and issues raised and will work with NOAA groups—regional teams, coastal strategy efforts, and others to ensure they are aware of state needs/gaps so can direct services to address them.

VA: Ocean acidification is a major gap which was not addressed; acidity is causing their clam farming to crash. There is a great need for public awareness of climate change efforts and impacts of increased carbon dioxide. Shellfish beds are affected. The coastal management community needs to make the public aware and (partner with Sea Grant).

NY: There's a lack of temporal and aerial information needed from Nor'easters. We need to advocate for better regional info on Nor'easters. Could benefit from center like National Hurricane Center. Randy had idea of who to partner with at NOAA.

December 1, 2009: Energy and Marine Spatial Planning

David Kennedy: Update on Ocean Policy Task Force and Marine Spatial Planning Efforts at the Federal Government

- Within OCRM, Charlie Wahle and David Kaiser are heavily involved with the OPTF.
- The second mandate of the OPTF on MSP is still being constructed—there will be a 30 day public comment period.
- The OPTF has taken a lot of public comment and it has changed their course from a more top down to a bottom up approach to crafting these policies.
- The proposed National Ocean Council will implement the policies, folks involved are pushing for funding for the NOC.
- The NOC will collaborate with regions to create regional plans and certify that the plans are consistent with national goals.
- The NOC will not enforce the plans, the regional agencies that have jurisdiction for plan activities will sign onto the plans. NOC would periodically evaluate compliance with goals of regional group—more of an adaptive management approach. Plans will include state and federal waters.
- Plans will recommend use of certain data sources to create tools to implement MSP, including data portal.

Charlie Wahle: The Ocean Use Atlas

- Next step in this process is uncovering the interactions between uses, which are compatible, which are not, etc.
- Experts were found through a snowball process. Some gaps in knowledge were encountered and they are working to fill those now.
- Currently trying to ground truth data, especially commercial fishing data.
- NH project will probably use existing data, will need to reconcile that with data collected at workshops though. Boundary will be 0-200 miles offshore, same as CA.
- E Beam is ~\$1000, Symposium ~\$2500, can run 4 groups of experts for under 10K. If only have funding for one technology, E Beam is probably sufficient.

Chris Caldow: Biogeographic Assessments to Meet Regional Marine Spatial Planning Needs

- Worked with NMFS on Stellwagen project, see their website for more information.
- Support from NCCOS is available if you have funding for their staff to travel, other expenses.
- Talk to Andy Armstrong at UNH about using backscatter data from multi-beam data for benthic mapping purposes. Alison Castellan will also contact NOAA Coast Survey about

the idea. Problem: Not all backscatter data is appropriate. It has to be collected at a certain resolution.

- MA used info from container ship transponders to map shipping lanes—not just chart information. They also used information from NCCOS. USCG also has automated information system on ship tracks but may take a while to get that data.
- NCCOS also involved with IOCM effort.

Winston de Monsabert: New MMS Rule and Implications for State CZM Programs

- MMS will only produce a consistency determination for competitive leases.
- CZMA Interstate consistency does not apply to activities in federal waters.