

## Summary of Program Manager's Interviews Regarding CPD Priorities

In the late fall of 2008, the Coastal Programs Division conducted informal interviews with a representative number of state CZM managers to ground-truth our Divisional priorities for FY09.

Managers were asked fairly open ended questions concerning CPD priorities related to: 1) program operations, 2) information sharing; 3) connecting state needs with appropriate expertise, products or services; and 4) divisional products. The managers were asked to identify activities that were working well, activities we could improve on, and activities that we might stop doing.

The following is a summary of the major areas of convergence:

- All of the States interviewed were comfortable with the NOAA Coastal Strategy Priority issues--Climate change and coastal hazards; competing uses and habitat loss; and coastal pollution and human health effects. Some noted that we might highlight energy/renewable energy issues more directly given that this is a high priority/visibility issue in the states and is definitely a high priority issue with the new administration.
- Most managers interviewed thought it made sense for CPD to return to a more regionally organized division--having specialists work exclusively with states in a single region. They indicated that it made sense from a logistical/fiscal perspective (it might help get specialists and team leads out to states more often); they would develop better understanding of regional issues and it would give the specialist a greater degree of satisfaction from a sense of "ownership in" the region rather than just "working with" several states. For the most part they believed that there could be some mechanism devised to insure cross-regional information sharing.
- Most managers interviewed would like to see their specialists more often in the state to conduct business, and for the specialist to develop a better understanding of these complex programs and issues. Many managers are interested in having a specialist located in the region or sub-region. Some managers were concerned that CPD regional staff not duplicate efforts of CSC regional persons or whatever the new NOAA Regional coordinators are doing.
- More than half of the managers interviewed felt that the grants process was a high priority task but is working very well – most have gotten become familiar/comfortable with Grants Online and are satisfied with their specialist's service.
- About half of the managers interviewed indicated that the regional meetings are very useful, and should be continued as a high priority.

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### Summary of Program Managers Interviews (Cont.)

- About half of the managers interviewed indicated that Federal consistency workshops are critical and requested that CPD please hold them regularly. Some managers recommended that the FC workshops include a partner's day—they would like to have one day of the workshop be just the NOAA/OCRM/state partners to discuss issues outside of other federal agencies.
- About half of the managers interviewed indicated that the program change process is in need of repair. They noted that the process is too time/labor intensive for all involved and states need to be able to incorporate changes with greater ease—especially in light of emerging issues to be addressed. Most were aware that CPD is taking steps to fix them, and hoped that this would be a priority.
- About one third of the managers interviewed noted that the 312 evaluations needed to be improved. They noted inconsistency in execution of the evaluations. They noted that sometimes OCRM/CPD needs to provide better State program context and issue identification to the evaluation lead; and the evaluation leads need to do a better job drafting meaningful recommendations.
- Several managers interviewed noted that, given that travel is likely to be a BIG issue for the next couple of years, they would like CPD to explore its ability to provide invitational travel or facilitate virtual meetings/ workshops either through teleconferences, webinars or simply conference calls.