

NERACOOS Board of Directors May 10, 2011 Minutes

Approved by the Board August 16, 2011

Welcome and Introductions- Malcolm Spaulding called the meeting to order at 9:40am.

In attendance: Malcolm Spaulding, Linda Mercer, Christine Tilburg, Betsy Nicholson, Michael Szemerda, Al Hanson, John Trowbridge, Paul Currier, Mel Cote, Ru Morrison, Tom Shyka, Cassie Durette, John Kocik, David Keeley; Kevin O'Brien, James O'Donnell, Jack Ringelberg, Jon Hare, Ron Rozsa, Todd Fake; Peter Smith; Gabrielle Canonico (Phone, IOOS), Josie Quintrell (Phone, NFRA)

Jim O'Donnell motioned to approve the **February 24, 2011 Board Meeting Minutes**, second by John Trowbridge and unanimously approved.

There are no outstanding **Conflict of Interest** forms for 2011.

Linda Mercer presented the **Finance Committee Report**. Financial statements now include cash flow. The bottom line did not print out and will be re-sent to the board [ACTION].

- **Discussion: Non-federal funds.** A draft letter and invoice was distributed to the board for approval. The goal is to raise \$30-40K in annual contributions from business partners and states. [ACTION] Comments are due in one week and office staff will distribute a list of potential contributors and ask the board for additions. Contributors should indicate restrictions of funds when submitting the invoice.
- **Discussion: Cost sharing.** Points include: There is currently no national requirement. It is important for vice provosts to see that the policy is not institution specific. GMRI's general policy is not to waive overhead, it is up to the program manager or PI. VOTE: Effective for next subcontracts, subcontractors will be required to cost share half of their overhead. Jim O'Donnell motioned to approve, second by Jack Ringelberg and unanimously approved. [ACTION] Malcolm, Ru, and Linda will draft this statement.

Jack Ringelberg presented the **Nominating Committee Report**. [ACTION] John Trowbridge will follow up with NEAC to recommend Steve Lohrenz to the nominating committee as a replacement for John Farrington (UMASSD); NROC will assist Bruce and Chris with finding new Alternates for Paul Currier (NH) and John Weber (MA).

- **Discussion: President Elect Position.** The Nominating Committee does not recommend creating this position, since office staff provides continuity. The board decided to reevaluate the bylaws and discuss officer staggered terms and the President Elect position. [ACTION] Office staff will schedule a conference call for the board to review the bylaws and make recommendations by the next meeting for any changes.

Ron provided an overview of the final **NERACOOS 5 Year Strategic Plan**. The final draft was distributed to the board in April and comments have been incorporated. The board discussed the role of academic institutions. [ACTION] The SP will be edited to include the text of cost sharing to include the interests of universities. The plan will then be final.

NERACOOS in Action- Ocean and Coastal Ecosystem Health

- **John Kocik** from NOAA Fisheries presented "**Salmon Telemetry and OOS in the Northwest Atlantic**". John provided an overview of telemetry in the Northwest Atlantic, noted interesting findings and history, and provided an overview of outcomes of meetings of OTN and IOOS telemetry meeting. John also shared ideas on how NERACOOS can be involved. The Northwest Atlantic and Hawaii are leaders in telemetry efforts. Gliders and animal platforms provide a way for ocean observing and biotelemetry to work together.
- **Al Hanson** from URI summarized his NERACOOS activities for FY11, "**Region-Wide Facilitation of Time-Series Sensing of Nutrient Concentrations**," and "**Enhanced Real-Time Data Capability for the Narragansett Bay Fixed-Site Monitoring Network**." Al detailed how nitrate sensors with filter switching devices can stay out 6-13 months suitable for the NSF OOI program. Al noted that the sensors can be adapted to deep if needed (Northeast Channel).
- **Peter Smith**, BIO, presented his NERACOOS project and shared potential future benefits of the three components. (1) Monitoring and analysis of **Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) detection** in the lower Bay of Fundy using in situ observations and satellite remote sensing of ocean colour. Evidence of an inverse relationship between dinoflagellates and diatoms in surface layer has been discovered. Trevor Platt is working on an algorithm for detecting diatoms from ocean colour satellite data. Plan is to blind test this summer the algorithm to help the detection of HABs. Peter noted that water quality has little to do with the formation of HABs in the Bay. (2) Maintenance and development of **NERACOOS operational wave forecast system** for the Gulf of Maine- preoperational model incorporated into inundation models. New feature is two way coupling of

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nested grids which improves accuracy. (3) Semi-annual hydrographic and **nutrient sampling** in the Northeast Channel as part of Canada's Atlantic Zone Monitoring Program (AZMP). Northeast channel is known to be the primary nutrient source for Gulf. Buoy N would be good addition to make flux calculations to look at variability.

The board reviewed the **Regional Collaboration** one pager and David Keeley noted there are multiple organizations in the region with similar missions and that engage the same people. NERACOOS, NROC, and GOMC have meetings this month and will all discuss this one pager. There will be an independent facilitator to help discussions over the summer if organizations agree, and report in September. Some discussion points include: Some of the organizations in the grey box were not regional in nature. There is a gap in the bottom right for southern Atlantic representation but NROC's mission is to support the region and not just one sub-region. NERACOOS has a clear vision, mission statement, and source of funding. NERACOOS has important role with strong Board composition, represents US and Canada, and recognized nationally as a leader. Out of regional planning effort (see progress report in meeting materials) were about 18 projects, and 5-6 have generated interest, found funding, and coming together to support those. The Board consensus was that having project driven groups instead of separate committees would be most efficient. Mel and Bruce, as co-chairs of the NROC OCEH WG have recommended merging with the NERACOOS OCEH WG.

Gabrielle Canonico presented the **US IOOS Office Update**. Final funding levels for FY11 will be released in the next few days. There is no update from February on the FY12 budget, but recognition of IOOS value is positive. April Donnelly updated the board on the certification process. Data partners working group has completed a draft and had an early march meeting. The document will be revised and posted to federal register with additional comment period. Final publication will be Sept/Oct. Jessica shared IOOS and IOOC plans over the next 12-18 months. David Kennedy is stepping down from co-chair of the IOOC and nominated David Leitner from the Climate office. Major projects in the office include Independent Cost Estimates (ICE), federal contributions to the Blueprint, writing the National Ocean Policy Strategic Action Plan #9, and co-hosting Great Lakes Industry Workshop on June 21. The IOOS office is asking for nominations to the System Advisory Committee. RA members can apply. The NOAA Administrator will make nominations in July and the first meeting will be in 2012. Rob Ragsdale shared the major outcomes of IOOS DMAC meeting. The DMAC leads came together in April, topics included IOOS catalog update, progress on archiving progress, and activities over the next few months.

Josie Quintrell provided the **NFRA Update**. In April, a CR was passed for FY11 funds that gave two numbers to NOAA. NOAA is looking at a \$60M shortfall in the budget line where IOOS falls. Josie has been spending a lot of time in DC to show RA support. Congress usually increases the IOOS funds from the President's budget, but for FY12 there is nice support for IOOS that includes \$17.5M to the regions, \$5M for HF Radar related to oil spill areas, and \$8.5M in reprogramming from the NCOOS line for sensor technologies (will be open competitive process so not directly to RAs). Josie has met with OMB staff and the NOAA Budget Administrator. NOAA is thinking programmatically. The RAs are spending ~\$3M in radar currently, not including national work. The \$5m will offset some of that. Josie has had meetings to see if the Coast Guard would match funds for HF Radar.

- The NFRA Board agreed to support the FY12 President's budget and not increase the Ask. Josie is working with staff on a Dear Colleague letter for FY12. Josie recommends that NERACOOS members contact their delegation for support of the President's budget.
- NFRA's role for data certification is to provide feedback from the RAs. NFRA has provided comments. There are strong concerns for the direction of the process. NFRA is also working closely with IOOS on the Independent Cost Estimate.
- DC trip in April was focused on Maritime Industry- met with pilots, ports, shipping, Coast Guard.

NERACOOS Update

Staff are drafting a Personnel Handbook and Financial Policy that incorporates a check signing policy that has been implemented at the recommendation of the board and audit. These will be shared with the board once available. Ru has been working on the Gap Analysis process and was selected to be on a tiger team for asset inventory. Ru attended the DMAC workshop as he is on the IOOC DMAC Steering Team. Eric Bridger attended the DMAC workshop to represent the Northeast. Ru was in DC for the Maritime Industry meetings and met with Margaret Spring. NERACOOS provided comments with NROC and GOMC on the NOP SAC. Ru also worked with Kathleen

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Leyden (Northeast representative) on Topic 9. Ru has attended two indicators workshops- one in Boston hosted by MOP and COMPASS and the other in Rye. The Performance and Evaluation team is working on a questionnaire for partner and sub-regional program websites to help understand how people are using the information. NERACOOS has been involved in CMSP activities, helping with NeCODP annual meeting, and the SPI Team meeting.

NERACOOS received a no cost extension for the RA Planning grant and Ru thanked WHOI and John Trowbridge for their help. This will need a rebudget (under 10% so not official to NOAA) once FY11 funds are finalized. The first six month progress report was submitted for the FY10 Implementation grant and includes buoys turned around and repaired, damage in LIS, HF Radar operations, modeling efforts, Wavewatch, nutrient monitoring, HAB monitoring, dif/product development work, surface currents, and E&O. Have spent 16% of funds, need to do better at the spending. The FY11 descope was submitted to IOOS at \$1,756,500 unofficially, which is less than previous years. There is an overlap in funding times and therefore FY11 includes level funding and a prorated 8 month increase.

Ru has participated in: Maine Ocean Atlas, Ecosystem Valuation Workshop in RI, DC a couple times. Upcoming events include Capitol Hill Ocean Week, NeCODP annual meeting, ME/NH Port Safety Forum, and Coastal Zone 11. Christine noted that ESIP will be hosting a special session for the Gulf of Maine in November at the SEATAC meeting.

An Environmental Sample Processor was provided to Woods Hole through funding from EPA and IOOS. This sensor measures HABs and was put out last month on one buoy. The telemetry is on the SSC roof. The first *Alexandrium* was detected with the sensor and brings real time biology to the region. GMRI is also working to include the acoustic whale buoys. Cassie will be Program Coordinator June 1.

Tom provided an update on NERACOOS **Communications and Outreach**. Tom has been developing a communications strategy. Within the next 3-6 months, Tom will develop a Newsletter and NERACOOS will host a Press Event. This will be to recognize NERACOOS' first in five years of funding and will invite Senators and users. The office has an engagement spreadsheet that identifies potential opportunities, prioritizes participation, and notes representation at those meetings. Tom is working with GOMC to possibly collaborate in communication efforts as they develop their communication plan and hire expertise. The IOOS Office wants to identify unique exciting events/activities that RAs are doing instead of press releases. The most recent effort was on West Coast Animal Tracking. IOOS is interested in doing one in the Northeast. The March Maine Fishermen's Forum was a unique outreach event where state industries, NGOs, scientists, Maine congressional delegation, etc come together. Cassie coordinated visits from Senator Snowe, Representative Pingree and staff, and Representative Michaud's staff. Ru presented on NERACOOS at Jim Manning's five year celebration of eMOLT session. NERACOOS would like to host a session next year. Ecosystem Indicators Workshop hosted at the SSC was great outreach opportunity where participants tested tools including ESIP and NERACOOS. Tom presented to OLLI- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute about NERACOOS. Ron and Jim presented at Connecticut Natural Resources Conference. The office wants to hear about meetings/workshops that board members attend and how staff can help or provide materials.

Summary of **contract services** with David and Ron. Ron supports the SPI team and SP development, working groups and committees in NROC and NERACOOS, and the coastal hazards group. David has been facilitating the Regional Planning Initiative and will work on the regional build out plan. The SPI team needs to develop spending plan for funds in FY11.

GMRI has developed a work plan for migrating **GoMOOS** products this summer. The Products Team will prioritize products for migration. Once the products are migrated, the GoMOOS website will direct users to different pages.

The board discussed **standardization** of products. Malcolm noted that the national level could provide more direction. NERACOOS could do this and be a leader. Discussion points include: The DMAC teams are working on standardization between the regions, but not at the level of a national "app". When asking for support, we could request the language to be included in the requirements. Paul noted that protocols to standards have been developed and now have an international standard for metadata and therefore NeCODP has the building blocks in the partnership to coordinate and harvest metadata. Ru noted that we have been leading the way in implementing IOOS requests but would need more DMAC resources to stand up a more standardized approach, and would need a sound operating system first. Jim suggested that a small group of people could identify products for which a tool of

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the type would be developed. [ACTION] Ru will bring these talking points to the IOOC DMAC Steering Team meeting.

Cassie presented an update on **Education Efforts and NEOSEC**. The IOOS office has been taking inventory of RA educational resources. Tom and Cassie are working to do this for the Northeast by collecting sub-regional resources that could be enhanced. The office continues working with NFRA EOC, Families by the Seaside, COSEE OS, and attended a Broader Impacts meeting. Continue collaboration with NEOSEC to promote ocean literacy in the region by helping with strategic planning. Future opportunities include drifters, right whale monitoring, and reengaging the SPI E&O group as an advisory group. Overall goal is to make materials accessible online.

There was no update on the Data Portal Working Group but Betsy provided an update on NROC activities and how NERACOOS can support **CMSP**. Betsy thanked NERACOOS for its contributions to the data portal. The next NROC board meeting is May 19 and all are welcome. The meeting will include data portal update, smart from the start update, Climate items, New England Governors Coastal Conservation, social network analysis, and an enhanced regional partnership discussion.

- Betsy is working on a Seafloor Mapping workshop this summer which supports three NROC work plans, the NERACOOS Regional Planning Initiative, and GOMEA. The next Steering Committee call will include partners like NERACOOS. LIDAR is not the focus but could be part of discussion. Kevin is working on an exercise with CT and NY- Betsy wants to hear of these activities so there is no overlap.
- National Ocean Council Strategic Action Plans listening session will be June 27 in Portsmouth. [ACTION] Betsy will make sure NERACOOS is notified of this.
- NOPP Proposal submitted last fall depends of FY11 funds but no official word until June.
- National CMSP Meeting June 21-23 in DC- Ru is on the agenda. A public session will be held June 21. [ACTION] Betsy will share the details as there will be a Webex option.

Paul provided an update on **NeCODP**. They are organizing the annual meeting to be held June 8, with a Metadata workshop on the 9th at UNH with video conferencing. Keynote speaker is Ted Habberman (NOAA National Climate Center). Notify Riley Young Morse if interested in attending.

Jim O'Donnell presented a **Strategic Planning and Implementation Team Update**. The team met at URI on April 6. Goals for meeting included SP development, Products Team, briefing from URI group including Susan Kiernan who summarized her program of water quality measurements in Narragansett Bay in last decade, a summary of Pioneer Array efforts, and plans for future SPI team business. The team also discussed the regional build out plans and decided to wait for guidelines from the National office. Notes were circulated. Jim is looking for a new SPI Team Chair.

- **Discussion: Buoy operations and allocation.** The board started the discussion for buoy allocation and had the following points: To maintain capacity has been to support legacy systems of sub-regional programs. Most of our funds are for buoy operations. As NERACOOS matures, we need to think about the distribution of assets and develop a process for how they are determined. Economies of scale should also be considered. The current membership of the SPI team is those that receive funds and creates a conflict of interest. This process should be externalized. Although there are not enough financial resources, the distribution of locations should be consistent with regional needs. One example could be to allocate buoys to serve issues. Al recommended looking at the costs of buoys in this process and recommended forming a Buoy Committee to determine the economics of buoy operations, determine the economies of scale. If following a stakeholder driven system, then stakeholders need to provide input in this process. NERACOOS needs issue driven prioritization. Long term data series is also important to consider. Metrics can include geographic area, population density, cost sharing, matching funds, needs for science, development, industry, etc.
- Nationally, NFRA and IOOS are working on an issue driven build out plan. Ru has asked a colleague to do an independent review of our build out plan and will do one in return. The general consensus from the board is this is a great idea. SECOORA had a panel review their proposal and seemed to help them in the process. Jim suggested that final decisions be made at board level and not by the SPI Team. Need to make sure there is a state benefit to the regional program so we can gain state delegation support.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.