

GOMA Federal Working Group Monthly Call  
July 25, 2013

Roll Call

BOEM and GCOOS Board of Directors

Pat Roscigno

EPA

Steve Jordan

William Cox

Troy Pierce

USFWS

Patrick Harper

Linda Walker

Navy

Camille Destafney

NOAA

Alan Lewitus

Kristen Laursen

Heather Young

Marian Hanisko

David Brown

Miles Croom

Dave Kidwell

Heidi Stiller

Dave Ruple

USGS:

Kate Spear

Larry Handley

**Hypoxia Task Force, 2013 modeling and hypoxia zone predictions in the Gulf**

(Alan Lewitus, NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science)

The presentation is attached, highpoints below. The Task Force which has been in place since 1998 and has actions plans in place for mitigating hypoxia.

Hypoxia Task Force original action plan came out in 2001, revised in 2008.

- Coastal goal is to reduce the extent to less than 5,000 square kilometers by 2015.
- Will not reach the coastal goal by 2015, progress is being made

Coastal Goal Committee within the Task Force to revisit the goal and the timeframe.

- Each State is also developing a nutrient reduction strategy.
- State nutrient reduction strategies on target for the end of 2013.
- MS led the way, and the other States are following suit.
- Minnesota is the one State that has established quantitative goals.

GOMA Nutrient Priority Issue Team (PIT)

- Characterizing hypoxia
- Outreach about hypoxia

- Engaging with upper basin States such as Iowa
- Gulf hypoxia “primer” increased awareness

Workshops addressing Hypoxia:

- An annual Gulf workshop to inform the Task Force.
- A monitoring action plan has improved the monitoring program.
- Three workshops focused on the use of gliders for monitoring, and modeling.

NWS is working to predict long term hypoxic zone.

Forecast in June of this year was based on multiple models. The upper end of the prediction would be a record; definitely expect a large zone this year.

#### Questions

Q: Was the target size goal based on some sort of ecological criteria? Is that a size we don't need to worry about from an ecological perspective?

A: This goal is from early on in the Task Force's history. They knew they couldn't go zero. But the 5,000 goal was before the onset of a greater-magnitude hypoxic zone. Was a progressive goal, but wasn't based on strong modeling at that point.

**Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) (Dave Ruple, GBNERR Manager).** Placed based locations around the Gulf provide somewhere for research to take place. We will hear about one place each month if there is interest. Today it is a NOAA/Mississippi partnership.

The mission of the Reserve Program is to practice and promote stewardship of our coastline through innovative research, education, and training programs.

- The NERR is part of a national system of 28 Reserves.
- All the Reserves are partnership programs where NOAA partners with a State entity; GBNERR is led by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.
- Grand Bay is a little over 18k acres in size.
- facilitate the work of others, and to
- encourage other researchers and educators to come to work in the Reserve, and to
- Use the Reserves for demonstration sites.
- Water quality and habitat protection are core goals
- Recently begun to focus on climate change; infrastructure and programs to monitor change
- Education, training, stewardship, and research are programs/focus areas at all of the Reserves.
- The GBNERR shares a facility and land boundary with the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge.
- One of the unique features of the Grand Bay area is about a 10 mile north-south continuum of wetlands;
- GBNERR has one of the first LEED-certified facilities in MS State government.
- One of most comprehensive monitoring systems in the country -- System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) data are available to management agencies.
- Disaster Response Plan – a Gulf-wide effort to develop plans for all five Reserves in the Gulf
- Site profile (ecological characterization) was done about 5 years ago.
- Facilitate research with our own department, universities, NOAA, other Reserves, etc. Convened a workshop to share research results recently.
- Part of a Reserve System sentinel site monitoring effort to study climate change effects
- There are 15 SETs established at the Reserve. We are doing some digital elevation modeling using the results from this monitoring infrastructure; incorporating accretion, subsidence, and SLR predictions allows some prediction of future marsh community.
- Education programs include K-12, professional teacher workshops, and training for coastal professionals.

- The Coastal Training Program (CTP) shares relevant research information from partners and from Reserve efforts with managers.
- Reserves provide a site-based location to better understand and manage our coastal resources.

From the Q&A White Board:

**Linda Walker - DOI:** I am fairly new to this group, taking over from Linda Kelsey. I was wondering if your group has had discussions about the Gulf LCCs. Did Laurie Rounds ever do a presentation?

**Ann Weaver:** Laurie has briefly discussed LCC's but some specifics would be of interest, especially a place based example

**Ann Weaver:** Are there any other places you know of that this group might like to hear about?

**Heather Young:** Should we invite Justin E as the GERC's new executive director to talk to the GOMA feds about the establishment of GERC, its staffing plans, establish of Council interagency workgroups since they are a new federal entity

**Kristen Laursen:** Presentation from the National Estuary Programs may be good too.