

**Gulf of Mexico Alliance  
Ecosystem Integration and Assessment (EIA) Breakout Meeting  
GOMA All Hands Meeting  
August 4-6<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Mobile, AL**

**Meeting Notes & Action Items**

**Overall Notes of Interest**

All 5 Gulf States were in attendance. State agency reps from: Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Marine Resources Division, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Total attendance for Tuesday Meeting - 51, Wednesday Meeting- 32, Thursday Meeting- 29

**Announcements**

1) EIA Team Meeting January 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in Key West Florida

**Tuesday August 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Welcome and Introductions**

Larry McKinney, state lead for the PIT, welcomed the attendees.

**Meeting overview and objectives**

Team coordinator Seneca Holland (HRI) and Federal Co-lead Becky Allee reviewed the goals and agenda for the meeting.

**Ecological Services Valuation of Mustang Island**

David Yoskowitz from the Harte Research Institute presented on ecosystem services. This work is being funded through EPA and NOAA grants. The goal of this project is to produce tools and procedures to evaluate ecosystem services for the Gulf of Mexico using Mustang Island as a pilot. In terms of the process (methodology), this work should be transferable to entire Gulf of Mexico resulting in better understanding of ecosystem services which then leads to better management, support, and regulation of these resources. There were considerable comments and questions on this presentation many concerning overlap between ecosystem services and the level of transferability that this study will have. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/> (please check your email for the user id and password for this ftp site).

**Announcement: The Harte Research Institute (HRI) will be holding an Ecosystem Services Valuation Workshop in fall 2009 or spring 2010. Details will be released as they become available.**

### **Decision Support Tools for the Mission Aransas NERR**

**Sarah Carr** demonstrated the linkages of three Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) Tools, CommunityViz, NatureServe Vista, N-SPECT which were developed to assist Aransas county with land use change requests. Currently such requests must be petitioned through the state for authority to regulate use. The PIT had several questions and comments on this presentation. Particularly PIT members were interested in how predictions were made using these tools and when/where these tools are available. EBM tools are available through <http://www.smartgrowthtools.org/ebmtools/index.php> . This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

**Action Item: At the last EIA meeting in April it was determined that we need an inventory of available tools before we can set out to develop new tools. This inventory will begin with the EBM directory of tools in order to determine which tools are actually being used by managers and identify which tools are missing.**

### **Introduction to SARP**

Scott Robinson at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources gave a brief introduction to the Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership. Several members of the EIA PIT were excited to see SARP and NFHAP moving into estuaries and coastal zones and were interested in collaboration with SARP habitat assessment activities. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

### **GOMA PIT Data Management**

Eric Roby at NOAA's NCDDC presented the GOMA Ecowatch portal (REDM). Ecowatch can be accessed at <https://ecowatch.ncddc.noaa.gov/> . There were several questions about accessing data, firewall and security issues and how to create FGDC compliant data.

### **GOMA Spatial Presentation Viewer**

**Klay William** presented the USACE's spatial presentation viewer. This viewer will be complimentary to REDM and geospatial one stop. This viewer is intended to simplify storage, standardize data, etc. The goals of this viewer are to allow one to visualize online geographic data, promote geographic data among teams, support a variety of users, leverage existing components, and integrate with existing PIT websites. This view however will not replace desktop GIS software. There were several inquiries about the status (implementation) of this viewer and the degree to which this viewer will incorporate other PIT datasets. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/> .

## **Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem Based Assessment**

Tom Minello with the NOAA Fisheries Galveston Lab gave an overview presentation of a recently held 'inception workshop' for a bi-national (United States and Mexico) project to set the foundations for a Large Marine Ecosystem-wide ecosystem-based management approach for the rehabilitation of marine and coastal ecosystems, recovery of depleted fish stocks, and reduction of nutrient overloading. The inception workshop was conducted with the full project team and provided an opportunity for the project team to understand the project's goals and objectives and finalize preparation of the project's first annual work plan.

This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

## **Ecosystem Report Cards for the Gulf of Mexico**

Larry McKinney presented on ecosystem report cards for the Gulf of Mexico. HRI is planning a summit for 2011 to further develop and discuss the idea of a GOM report card. Larry McKinney plans to have report cards developed in time to this summit to encourage debate and discussion. HRI is in the process of establishing an expert panel to lay out the preliminary design for the report card. This effort will continue into this fall. After the design is established this will be presented to a larger group to flesh out and then finalize in 2010 for presentation at the 2011 summit. Several EIA PIT members were interested in the degree to which these report cards based on a scientific foundation. Larry McKinney commented that if these report cards are effective they should be viewed with a lot of scrutiny and therefore a creditable and strong foundation is required. There was also significant inquiry into the scope of the report cards and the role of the Alliance in their development. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

**Action Item: Larry McKinney is currently seeking participation, comments, and suggestions in the development of ecosystem report cards for the Gulf of Mexico.**

## **Mobile Bay Project**

Roberta Swann, Director of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, gave a presentation on a visualization tool being developed to aid with prioritization of habitats for conservation purposes. The project has been the product of a partnership among the NEP, NOAA and The Nature Conservancy. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

## **GoMRCT Climate and Resiliency Engagement Council (C-REC)**

LaDon Swann, gave a presentation on the formation of a regional Climate and Resiliency Engagement Council (C-REC). This Council will seek to improve the relevance of NOAA's climate and resilience work in the Gulf of Mexico, serve as guidance for NOAA scientists on climate research and bring in local stakeholders to ensure NOAA work is relevant. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

**Action: NOAA is currently seeking members to this council preferably one representative from each GOMA PIT. Interested parties should contact LaDonn Swann by October.**

## **Master Mapping Plan**

Jennifer Wozencraft, Director of the Army Corp of Engineers Joint Airborne Lidar Bathymetry Technical Center of Expertise, gave an update on the Master Mapping Plan. Jennifer suggested a review of APII actions pertaining to the Master Mapping Plan step 1. Instead of holding workshops This presentation initiated quite a bit EIA and cross PIT discussion. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/> .

**Action: Send any shape files that reflect historic, current or planned habitat mapping efforts to Jennifer so they can be added to the 'master' map. Having this information will enable us to evaluate the gaps and determine priority areas for future efforts.**

## **Ocean and Coastal Mapping Law and Digital Coast Requirements**

Miki Schmidt with the NOAA Coastal Service Center gave a presentation on Ocean and Coastal Mapping Law and Digital Coast Requirements. In this presentation Miki discussed new legislation that will force federal cooperation and develop a plan for OCM. Within the OCM bill there are provisions for a digital coast pilot in the Gulf of Mexico. Within the OCM committee which is co-chaired by Department of Commerce and NOAA this plan will be developed in collaboration with Gulf States. There were several question from the PIT regarding how this work will feed into Jennifer Wozencraft's work on the Master Mapping Plan and what roles the states will have in their collaborative effort. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

**Action: Nominate EIA PIT members who will attend the OCM Charleston workshop Nov 3-5. EIA PIT decided on Jim Gibeaut and David Palandro (Harry Norris will be attending this meeting instead to David Palandro)**

**Action: State tool inventory from DC base**

## **Work on Tier 2 Document, Work on Annual Work Plan, Develop Performance Measures**

At this point the EIA PIT divided into teams according to Action Items Governors' Action Plan 2. Each group was responsible to completing a matrix from which performance measures and the year two work plan would be developed. Groups had several hours over two days to work on this and report back to the team. From these matrices, each team was asked to pull achievements from the last year, develop performance measures for the next year and discuss future work the EIA could accomplish is additional funds were to become available. As a team an EIA power point was develop for presentation at the GOMA All hands Report Out Thursday August 6<sup>th</sup>. Completed matrices can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/>.

**Wednesday August 5<sup>th</sup>**

## **Liaison with EEN Group**

Valerie Kleinschmidt, the team coordinator for the EEN gave a brief presentation and led the EIA PIT in activity which the EEN will use to identify educational audiences and messages that the EIA believe are important for meeting EIA PIT goals. This information will be used by the EEN to draft their strategy over the next three years.

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### **Thursday August 6<sup>th</sup>**

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### **Next Steps for the EIA PIT**

**Action Item: It was decided that the next EIA PIT meeting would be hosted by FWRI and take place in Key West, FL from**

### **EIA PIT Report Out**

Larry McKinney, State lead for the EIA PIT reported out to the Alliance on behalf of the EIA. This presentation can be accessed <ftp://hriftp.tamucc.edu/> (please check your email for the user id and password for this ftp site) and also on [http://www2.nos.noaa.gov/gomex/past\\_events/welcome.html](http://www2.nos.noaa.gov/gomex/past_events/welcome.html)