



COASTAL AMERICA UPDATE

FALL 2002

Principals Meeting and the New Memorandum of Understanding

The Coastal America Principals met on November 1, 2002 to sign the new Memorandum of Understanding that reaffirms the goals of the partnership and includes the Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center Network and the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership concepts. At the meeting, they also discussed a statement to the Ocean Commission and the Senator John H. Chafee Coastal Stewardship Award. The Principals were also updated on activities since their last meeting. At their

June 17, 2002 meeting the Principals selected the 2002 Partnership, Spirit and

Special Recognition Award winners and approved the budget for the 2003 fiscal year. Subsequently, several of the partnership awards have been presented and a management fund has been established at CEQ to handle the FY03 partnership contributions. It was also noted that during the summer and fall the CWRP continued to expand and it now includes over 100 corporations. The Principals expressed their support for the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership and encouraged staff to develop the model further.



Coastal America Principals and their representatives signed a new Memorandum of Understanding at their Fall 2002 meeting.

A Day of Water Research

On August 19, 20, 22, and 24, Coastal America sponsored four trips onboard the Environmental Protection Agency's *Ocean Survey Vessel Anderson*. More than 80 students and teachers had the opportunity to spend the day with federal and state scientists leading them

in research activities such as benthic grabs, fish trawls, and conductivity, temperature and dissolved oxygen samples. Nearly 20 Coastal America partners participated and gave talks to the different groups throughout the four-day period. The Maine and Massachusetts CWRP provided support for the trip on August 22, with The Gillette Company and Maritime & Northeast Pipeline serving as the sponsors. The Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration sponsored the trip on the 24th of August. Other partners included the U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service, the Coast Guard, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Connecticut Department of Parks, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Julianna Wyman of the US Fish and Wildlife Service teaches students about marine research on board the OSV Anderson.

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Regional Updates

Northeast

The Northeast Regional Team military project coordinator has recently identified over 30 military training exercises that will provide ecological benefits in the northeast. The team also initiated a significant project in Plymouth, Massachusetts to remove the Town Pond Dam and restore the Town Brook watershed. An Army Reserve unit removed the dam in late September as a training exercise with NOAA Restoration Center serving as the project coordinator. In addition, Smelt Hill Dam was removed on the Presumpscot River in Maine, reopening another major waterway for anadromous fisheries migration. The US Army Corps of Engineers, the Maine Department of Marine Fisheries, the Coastal Conservation Association, the Maine Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership (CWRP), NOAA and USFWS all collaborated to remove the dam.

The Northeast CWRP programs continue to expand. With the New Hampshire CWRP kickoff on November 18th the CWRP program is now underway in all the New England coastal states. Tim Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere represented the Coastal America Principals at the kickoff. The Jacques Whitford Company and Public Service New Hampshire are serving as the co-chairs of the NH CWRP. The Little River Salt Marsh Restoration Partnership Team also received a partnership award at the event.

Mid-Atlantic

On December 3, Public Service Electric and Gas Services Corporation (PSEG) held a CWRP kickoff. PSEG is the lead corporate sponsor for the Mid-Atlantic region and for the state of New Jersey.



The New Hampshire CWRP kicked off its program on November 18, 2002.

Lawler, Matusky and Skelly (LMS) is the lead for the state of New York CWRP. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Implementation Team has been working on several IRT projects in Jamaica Bay, New York. The US Environmental Protection Agency, US Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, New York City Parks, New York City Sanitation, and the Harbor Estuary Program have been involved in developing the proposed projects to remove derelict vessels, piers and fill, and to restore wetlands in shallows and marshes in the Bay. They are working hard to have these projects included in the military's 2004 funding cycle.



Southeast

The Southeast Regional Implementation Team met on November 19, 2002 to continue the discussion initiated at their July 23 meeting. The primary focus of the meeting was to develop and better define the

roles, responsibilities, and expectations of SERIT members as a step toward further strengthening the commitment of regional leaders to the Coastal America Partnership. Follow up actions will include such things as updating the Regional Action Strategy to include these updated role definitions and developing a "new member packet" with tools to help new SERIT members get engaged

more quickly in the process.

The SERIT continues to work closely with the St. Johns River American Heritage River Navigator on opportunities to leverage their efforts with the SERIT. The SERIT and River Navigator are currently seeking opportunities to assist with initiation of a Florida CWRP, capitalizing upon local interest in the St. Johns River as a catalyst.

Gulf of Mexico

The Gulf of Mexico Regional Implementation Team (GMRIT) met on Oct 8-9 in conjunction with the Gulf of Mexico Program Management Committee. During the meeting the group endorsed a project list for 2003 that includes projects that will collectively improve, restore, or enhance several hundred acres of Gulf coastal areas. Meanwhile, another round of project solicitation meetings in each of the five Gulf states will begin in January. The outcome will be a combined Gulf of Mexico Program and Coastal America project list for future years.

A partnership award ceremony was held for the Sanibel Island Restoration Team on October 16th with Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, serving as the awarding official. The team is also preparing for the Texas CWRP kick-off in January and has endorsed an initial CWRP project at the San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site.

Southwest

The Southwest Regional Implementation Team has been involved in planning several key events. A partnership award ceremony was held for the Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (SCWRP) in Ventura, CA on October 17. The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works served as the awarding official and provided keynote remarks for the SCWRP Annual Conference. A Student Ocean Conference was held at the Aquarium of the Pacific on November 14-15 with noted ocean explorer Sylvia Earle providing a keynote and team members providing technical support. The California CWRP kickoff was held November 19 with Governor Christine Todd Whitman, EPA Administrator, representing the partnership and The Dow Chemical Company serving as the state CWRP lead. The team met on November 18th to discuss their regional strategy and further develop their project list.

Northwest

The Northwest Regional Implementation Team convened on June 13th in Portland, Oregon. It has 17 projects in different stages of planning and implementation and has received inquiries on several potential projects with possible IRT participation. At this meeting, the team discussed several proposed Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership projects. In addition, the Hatfield Marine Science Center proposes to develop an exhibit depicting the impact of aquatic invasive species in coastal ecosystems.

Alaska

The second half of 2002 has seen measurable progress on several of the Alaska Team's projects. On urban Anchorage's Ship Creek, workers are now constructing the first phases of a multi-million dollar fish passage restoration project spearheaded by CA agencies and the Municipality of Anchorage. Several riparian restoration projects were completed last summer on Willow Creek, located just north of Anchorage; additional projects are in the queue for 2003. The Klawock Estuary Project, a major fish passage effort in Southeast Alaska, is now in the design stage, with a final engineering design under contract. Finally, the Alaska Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership is taking a leadership role in the Gulkana River Salmon Habitat Restoration Project. Surveys and engineering designs are underway for this project, which will rehabilitate a degraded stream reach along one of the state's major highways and construct a viewing platform and interpretive panels at a site where thousands of sockeye salmon spawn annually.

Pacific Islands

The Pacific Islands Regional Implementation Team met on August 29, October 10, and December 5 to develop and prioritize projects and initiatives. In the mix so far are: Northwestern Hawaiian Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve; Layson Duck Restoration; American Heritage River/Hanalei Heritage River; Coastal Erosion/Beach Loss/Coastal Improvements for Oahu; Sustainable Management of American Samoa Mangroves; Raising Capacity and Awareness through Local Planning, Management, Site Monitoring, and Outreach; Kauai Public Land Trust Hanalei River Restoration; Molokai-Harbor Sedimentation; Hawaii Coastal Construction Guidebook; Expansion of James Campbell Refuge; and Waikiki Beach Improvements. There is also interest in contributing to an

educational Website/Hawaiian Information Network; interactive GIS; and the University of Hawaii Hawaiian Internship Program (UH-HIP). The team addressed the North American Wetland Conservation Act grant and the National Strategy to Restore Coastal Estuarine Habitat. Over the next year PIRIT is interested in reaching out anew to the key leadership of the islands in order to heighten awareness of Coastal America. There is also interest in promoting corporate and state partnerships.

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First Spirit Award

Federal, state and other partners joined the Town of Plymouth on the banks of Town Brook on September 18, to witness the first coastal dam removal in Massachusetts. The US Army Reserves removed the earthen dam, restoring natural pools and riffles in the stream, and providing access to 269 acres of freshwater pond to the spawning habitat of alewives and other herring species. The project team was awarded the first Coastal America Spirit Award for their efforts.



Pilgrim Trail Restoration Partnership Team receives Spirit Award.



Students at the Aquarium of the Pacific's Student Ocean Conference learned about California's oceans and what they can do to protect, preserve and restore them.

Student Ocean Conferences

Aquarium of the Pacific and others

On November 14 and 15, the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, California hosted the ninth in a national series of Student Ocean Conferences. The two-day conference, "Here Today, Here Tomorrow: Ocean and Coastal Challenges," brought together 90 students and 15 teachers from Southern California to examine multiple uses of the oceans and coasts, and impacts of those uses. They focused on problems and solutions involving the open ocean, rocky shores, sandy beaches, tide pools and wetlands. Federal, state and local government experts, as well as citizen groups and private sector representatives participated in the field trips, and the panel and break-out group discussions. Finally, the students wrapped up the conference by making recommendations to policy makers on how to deal with the challenges facing our oceans and coasts.

Similar conferences were held at the Alaska SeaLife Center and at the Monterey Bay Aquarium earlier this year.

Partnership Award Ceremonies

Sanibel Island Restoration

Management Partnership Team

Sanibel Island is a subtropical barrier island on the southwest Gulf Coast of Florida. The island provides habitat for a variety of wildlife including endangered and threatened species. Over the years, it had lost much of its native habitat due to agriculture, invasive non-native plants, drainage, and development. A Cooperative Agreement was developed between the partners that allowed for the sharing of equipment and personnel to ensure the methodical eradication of invasive non-native plants. Another agreement addressed the need for a disposal site for the exotic vegetation. The project restored thousands of acres of wetlands and established a model for restoration work and cooperative alliances in the region.

The team included representatives from Interior's Fish & Wildlife Service, the City of Sanibel, the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation and private contractors. Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Secretary of the Interior presented the partnership award to the team at a ceremony held at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on October 16. Students involved in the restoration effort led a tour of the Pick Preserve, one of the restored sites, following the ceremony.

Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project

The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project is a unique partnership of 17 state and federal agencies, working in concert with scientists, local governments, and environmental organizations, as well as business leaders and educators, to increase the pace and effectiveness of wetlands recovery efforts in Southern California. The partnership has restored over 600 acres of wetlands and acquired some 2,500 acres for environmental protection of California's treasured aquatic resources. The team is continuing to implement an aggressive plan to restore and protect critical aquatic habitats. Dom Izzo, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works presented the team the 2002 partnership award at their annual conference on October 17.



Interior Assistant Secretary Lynn Scarlett heard from students how they were restoring the Pick Preserve.

Little River Salt Marsh Restoration Project

The Little River Salt Marsh Restoration Team united 16 federal, state, and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector in a joint effort to restore tidal flushing to 170 acres of degraded salt marsh in North Hampton, NH. The building of grid ditches and roads, placement of fill and an undersized culvert has reduced the marsh in size, deteriorated water quality and led to the closing of shellfish beds. Restoration of the marsh has decreased flooding and provided critical fish and

wildlife habitat. The federal partners included the Army Corps of Engineers, Natural Resource Conservation Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the state project lead was the New Hampshire Coastal Program. Timothy Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, presented the partnership award to the team at the New Hampshire Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership kick-off on November 18.



NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary Tim Keeney presented a partnership award to the Little River Salt Marsh Restoration Project.

Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership

Three New CWRP Programs

The CWRP now has over 100 partner companies and almost 50 endorsed projects, 12 of which broke ground this year. This fall has seen a surge in the CWRP as one region and three new state programs have gotten underway: the Mid-Atlantic, California, New Hampshire and Texas. Public Service Electric & Gas has agreed to facilitate the development of the CWRP in the Mid-Atlantic region. The New York and New Jersey kick off event was December 3 in Newark, New Jersey. The Dow Chemical Company has agreed to lead



Neponset Marsh Restoration, MA

The Neponset Marsh Restoration project, which will ultimately restore 20 acres of salt marsh, was officially kicked off on March 19, 2002 at The Captain R.B. Forbes House in Milton, Massachusetts.

The project involves enlarging a culvert beneath a road that crosses the marsh in order to restore tidal flow and fish access to the marsh. The project will also remove dredged spoils from former salt marshes in order to restore other areas of the marsh. The Gillette Company is providing support for the project. Royall Mack, Vice President of Civic Affairs for The Gillette Company,

attended the ceremony along with Bob Durand, the Secretary of the

Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

Boat Meadow Creek Restoration, MA

A dedication ceremony for the Boat Meadow Creek Restoration Project was held on Tuesday, July 16th, at the Orleans Waterfront Inn, Cape Cod. The salt marsh restoration will involve replacing the existing 36-inch culvert with a 6-foot wide by 6-foot high box culvert. This will allow full tidal flow into the up-gradient marsh and create a saline environment that will kill off the common reed and allow for the natural re-colonization of native salt marsh vegetation.

Smelt Hill Dam Removal

The Smelt Hill Dam, which lies on the Presumpscot River in Maine, was removed this fall as a CWRP sponsored project. The complete removal of the now inactive hydropower station allows unimpeded migration of anadromous fish into the Presumpscot River system in coastal Maine. Migration routes will be enhanced, especially for smelt, alewife and striped bass. A “dam-breaking” ceremony was held on September 27 with representatives from partner organizations.



EPA Administrator Christie Todd Whitman learns about wetlands restoration from students.

the program in California and a kick-off was held November 19. The company is not new to wetlands restoration; they created their own wetland in Sarina, Ontario, an area where wetlands were once prevalent. The New Hampshire CWRP was officially announced at a kick-off event on November 18. The Jacques Whitford Company with the assistance of Public Service New Hampshire will lead the effort. The program has expressed an interest in assisting with the removal of the Bearcamp River Dam and has identified seven more potential projects. In Texas, the lead company will be Duke Energy-Gas Transmission, a subsidiary of Duke Energy Inc. ENSR is also assisting in the Texas effort. Duke Energy has already supported a demonstration project for the Texas CWRP that involved the creation of marsh and oyster reef habitat along the eroding shorelines within the Galveston Bay system.



The Smelt Hill Dam in New Hampshire is breached during removal.

CELC Updates

National Aquarium in Baltimore

The National Aquarium in Baltimore has teamed up with the KidsGrow program, an environmentally oriented summer and after school program, to help restore tidal wetlands in the Chesapeake Bay. Students participating in the KidsGrow program will construct wetland plant nurseries and use them to grow *Spartina alterniflora* (smooth cordgrass). Then the students will travel to the Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge to replant the cordgrass as part of a long-term restoration effort. This project is an excellent experience for students because it allows them to directly impact the health of the bay through their actions. It teaches students about the life cycle of the plants and about their role in the estuarine ecosystem. The project also helps the students to develop horticultural skills through their work in maintaining the nurseries, testing the water quality, and replanting the cordgrass. The project's mission is to develop a model for long-term student involvement with restoration of Chesapeake Bay tidal wetlands. In this way students in the future will be able to enjoy this excellent experience.

New England Aquarium

The National Science Foundation has awarded funding to a partnership formed by the New England Aquarium, the University of Massachusetts, and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution to create a New England Regional Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE). One of a pilot group of Centers created to promote knowledge and awareness of the oceans, the New England Regional COSEE will strengthen New England's ocean science education capacity and effectiveness by facilitating collaboration between scientists and educators throughout the region. The Center will provide educators with multiple tools to create programs that convey current and evolving knowledge of the oceans and provide researchers with the means and training

to be effectively involved in formal and informal education. If you would like any further information, please contact Dr. Carolyn Levi, Director of the New England Regional COSEE, at clevi@neaq.org.

New York Aquarium

The New York Aquarium, in collaboration with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, has been conducting a city-wide distribution of tidal wetlands workshops. The workshops are geared towards violators of tidal wetlands laws, as well as towards the general community. Enforcement of tidal wetlands laws in New York City has increased dramatically since inception of the Marine Habitat Protection Unit in Region II. The increased enforcement has revealed a lack of knowledge of both wetland law and ecology on behalf of the general public. One way of reducing the number and magnitude of tidal wetlands violations is by providing the general public with an opportunity to learn about the ecology of the wetlands and the rules, regulations, and permit procedures that govern them. The wetlands workshops were an attempt to educate the public on these matters. In total, five workshops were held around the city at four Wildlife Conservation Society Zoos and Aquaria and the Staten Island Zoo. The audience at the workshops was extremely varied, including: concerned citizens, urban planners, environmental educators, environmental engineers, zoo-keepers, marine carpenters, contractors, and retired school teachers. The program was made possible through the generous support of the Environmental Protection Agency. For more information, contact Meryl Kafka at the New York Aquarium.

Hatfield Marine Science Center

The Hatfield Marine Science Center celebrated National Estuaries Day by participating in "Estuaries Live", an interactive field trip to national estuaries broadcast over the internet on

October 3rd and 4th. The program allowed viewers to email questions to a naturalist and have them answered during the live broadcast. The HMSC also hosted a day of activities to celebrate National Estuary Day/Salmon Saturday on October 5th. The day combined talks on Salmon conservation, hands-on activities to identify salmon, and an opportunity to view returning salmon.

International Game Fish Association (IGFA)

The IGFA had a fabulous summer camp season with 194 boys and girls joining as IGFA Jr. Anglers. While at camp this summer, kids learned exactly how important their ecosystem is through many different activities. A field trip to Birch State Park explained the hammock environment followed by a demonstration on the beach about Florida's dune systems and barrier reefs. The touch tank also provided information about the three ecosystems found in Florida waters: sea grass beds, mangrove swamps, and artificial reefs. By learning about these different ecosystems and how they all work together, these boys and girls are better able to understand the importance of conservation.

The IGFA's work with the regional team to create a network of local contacts from Coastal America partner agencies has paid off. The group met in September to designate responsibilities among the partner agencies according to the priority areas they have identified. One of the key areas that have been identified for the region is to increase fish populations by restoring fish habitat, replanting native species, enhancing the shoreline, and adding fish attractors in a number of lakes ranging in size from 50 acres to 120 acres. Another focus area is a potential mitigation project in Birch State Park. The project would restore 3-4 acres by removing exotic species, restoring mangroves, increasing tidal flushing through the use of culverts, and providing informational kiosks for visitors.

Annual Retreat

The Southwest Regional Implementation Team will host Coastal America's 2003 Annual Retreat in San Diego, California sometime in June. Plan on joining us to share ideas, to learn from the experience of others and to contribute to the direction of Coastal America. Stay tuned for more details.

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Attendees at the Coastal America 2002 Annual Retreat in Newport, Oregon, enjoyed learning about the coastal resources in the northwest region.

Coastal America is a partnership among federal, state and local governments and private alliances to address environmental problems along our nation's coasts. The federal partners are: Departments of Agriculture, Air Force, Army, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Navy, State, Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency and The Executive Office of the President.



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