

MINUTES

Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Coast CESU

June 30 – July 1, 2009

College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, Maine

Attendees

University of Rhode Island

Peter August

Judith Swift

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Joseph Pitula

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Mitch Mulholland

Stony Brook University

Lawrence Swanson

University of Maine-Orono

Alice Kelley

College of the Atlantic

John Anderson

City University of New York

John Waldman

SUNY – Environmental Science and Forestry

Neil Ringler

Columbia University

Rita Ricobelli

Kate McFadden

University of Massachusetts Boston

Jack Wiggin

Amy Den Ouden

Allen Gontz

University of New Brunswick

Shawn Dalton

Acadia Partners for Science and Learning

Bill Zoellick

US Army Corps of Engineers

Robert Kennedy

National Park Service

Mary Foley

David Manski

Charles Roman

CESU National Office

Thomas Fish

June 30, 2009 (meeting agenda attached)

- **Welcome and Introductions**

- Peter August (URI, CESU Host University) called the meeting to order at 9am

- John Anderson (College of the Atlantic) was gratefully acknowledged for hosting this annual meeting. He provided an overview of College of the Atlantic.

- Judith Swift, newly appointed Director of the Coastal Institute at URI, was introduced and will now assume the role as host university coordinator for the North Atlantic Coast CESU.

-- Peter August was thanked for the leadership he provided to the North Atlantic Coast CESU, serving as host university coordinator from 2000-2009. His dedication to the CESU program has been outstanding and is much appreciated.

- **New Academic Partners**

-- *Columbia University* is a new academic partner to the North Atlantic CESU. Kate McFadden and Rita Ricobelli provided an overview of the research and education mission of Columbia's Earth Institute. Several programs of the Earth Institute were highlighted, including the Center for Environmental Research and Conservation, Department of Ecology Evolution and Environmental Biology, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, Columbia Climate Change Center, Columbia Water Center, and others. The natural and social science programs of the Earth Institute have a strong interdisciplinary focus. <http://www.earth.columbia.edu/sections/view/9>

-- *University of Massachusetts Boston* has been unanimously approved (see 3/24/2009 email from Peter August to Tom Fish) by all North Atlantic CESU federal and non-federal partners to become a member. UMass Boston will formally become a member via amendment to the recently renewed master North Atlantic Coast CESU cooperative agreement.

Jack Wiggin provided an overview of the Urban Harbors Institute at UMass Boston (<http://www.uhi.umb.edu/>), a public policy and applied-science center offering expertise in coastal/ocean policy, planning and management, socio-economic analyses, GIS, sustainable development, and other topics. Allen Gontz offered comments on the Dept of Environmental, Earth and Ocean Sciences (<http://www.es.umb.edu/>), a department with strong natural and social science interdisciplinary interactions and a focus on understanding ecosystem processes and managing urbanization impacts on linked watersheds and coastal systems. Amy Den Ouden (Dept of Anthropology, <http://www.umb.edu/academics/cla/dept/anthropology/index.html>) commented on UMass Boston's expertise in cultural anthropology, study of indigenous landscapes and focus of the Fiske Center for Archeological Research at UMass Boston.

-- Neil Ringler provided an overview of expertise at the *SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry*, Department of Landscape Architecture, and discussed some projects related to the Department's long-standing partnership with the National Park Service Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation. SUNY-ESF is a new partner to the North Atlantic CESU, but has been a partner of the Great Lakes-Northern Forest CESU for many years. In addition to studies of cultural landscapes, SUNY-ESF has a strong expertise in wildlife ecology, environmental studies, forest management, engineering, and other disciplines. <http://www.esf.edu/>

- **New Federal Partners**

-- Bob Kennedy, *US Army Corps of Engineers*, US Army Engineer Research and Development Center, provided an overview on organization of the Corps into eight Divisions in the US, 38 District offices in the US, and Laboratories associated with the Research and Development Center (e.g., Cold Regions Research and Engineering

Lab, Coastal and Hydraulics Lab). Some focus areas include navigation and water resources, flooding and coastal zone management, environmental remediation, ecosystem restoration, and rare and invasive species management. The Corps currently a federal partner is 11 of the 17 CESUs. To seek qualified non-federal partner investigators, the Corps will request Statements of Interest distributed to a particular biogeographic CESU or CESUs.

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/partners/cesu/cesu.html>

<http://erdc.usace.army.mil/>

- **North Atlantic Coast CESU Accomplishments and Comments on Administration**

-- Peter August highlighted some of the North Atlantic Coast CESU accomplishments that are presented in the 5-year (2004-2009) self-assessment report prepared for the recent cooperative agreement renewal (report soon to be posted on the North Atlantic CESU website). Student support, professional publications, presentations at professional meetings, and support of over 100 projects over the 5-year period demonstrate excellent productivity. Peter also commented that the North Atlantic Coast CESU was recipient of the 2008 National CESU Research Award.

-- Peter August provided some background on day-to-day administration of the North Atlantic CESU, stating that each federal partner provides an initial \$10,000 fee for joining the CESU. The host university uses these funds to provide travel grants to non-federal partners attending the annual meetings, support website maintenance, and compile information on professional activities of the CESU (projects, student involvement, reports, publications, etc.). The host university (URI Coastal Institute) provides clerical support for the CESU, commits time of the host university CESU coordinator, and supports attendance of the host university at the CESU National meeting in Washington.

- **Report from the CESU National Office**

-- Tom Fish announced that NOAA has applied to become a member of the North Atlantic Coast CESU, and 8 other CESUs. This will enhance opportunities to collaborate with NOAA-NMFS, NOAA-Estuarine Research Reserves, NOAA-Sanctuaries, and other programs within NOAA.

-- There is growing interest among USDA-APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) and US EPA to become federal partners in the CESU Network.

-- To enhance national awareness of the CESU Network, the CESU National Office is working with a collaborator on branding, logo, consistent messaging, posters, brochures, and other communication techniques.

-- The CESU National Office is working with a collaborator on development of a 10-yr project evaluation and inventory database for the entire Network. Nationwide, the CESU program has supported over 5,000 projects and the intent of this effort is to provide some basic synthesis and a searchable website.

-- Canada is moving forward with a CESU program, to be piloted in Atlantic Canada. Modeled somewhat after our CESU program, there are expected to be 10 CESU units throughout Canada. Parks Canada and Environment Canada are supporting this new effort. Mexico may also be considering a CESU program.

- **Federal Agency Research Opportunities**

-- From the National Park Service perspective, Charles Roman stated that the NPS has established a new Oceans Branch, charged with enhancing the NPS role in stewardship of marine resources within park boundaries. It is expected that efforts to map and inventory submerged natural and cultural resources will be an initial focus of this new program. In addition, NPS continues to support numerous research and technical assistance projects that are focused on specific issues at parks. Charles Roman encouraged non-federal partners to visit with local park scientists and managers, learn about the park resources, management issues, and research needs.

-- Mary Foley, National Park Service, commented on the emerging Department of the Interior climate change initiative. Department of the Interior agencies will be asked to work collaboratively and this appears to be an excellent opportunity for the CESU Network. For park units to be competitive in seeking climate change funds, they must have an understanding of climate change issues and possible responses, if any. Some questions to ask may be;

“What resources are at the highest risk from climate change factors? “

“What management actions may be appropriate to consider? “

“What are the salient research questions regarding our understanding of system responses to climate change or system responses to management actions? “

ACTION ITEM: North Atlantic Coast CESU partners can help guide park staffs on issues and consequences of climate change, specific to individual parks or groups of parks. In Fall 2009, it is was recommended that the North Atlantic CESU support some workshops (with CESU scientists and park/refuge managers) aimed at addressing the above questions and others. Perhaps one workshop could focus on coastal Parks and USFWS Refuges of the rocky Gulf of Maine region (e.g., Acadia NP, Petit Manan NWR, Boston Harbor Islands), while another could focus on barrier island parks and refuges (e.g., Cape Cod NS, Parker River NWR, Fire Island NS).

-- Regarding US Army Corps of Engineers research opportunities, please refer to the summary of comments provided by Robert Kennedy (see above). Bob also mentioned that research opportunities will be generated from Division and District offices. These would relate to specific project needs and be announced by Requests for Statements of Interest.

- **Open Discussion**

How can we encourage more federal partners to attend the annual North Atlantic Coast CESU meeting?

ACTION ITEM – Tom Fish will discuss this issue at the next CESU National Council meeting. Some agencies, like the National Park Service and USGS have regional or local representatives assigned to each CESU so attendance at meetings is generally good, but other agencies have just one agency representative making attendance at all annual meetings of the 17 CESUs difficult. Non-federal partners will look forward to hearing from the participating federal agencies to learn of research needs, opportunities, and emerging programs.

Student Internships with federal agencies

-- The National Park Service, through the North Atlantic Coast CESU, has initiated a student internship program with the intent of supporting students to work collaboratively with a park mentor and university mentor. A project was supported in federal FY09 to match College of the Atlantic students with Acadia National Park. In FY10 it is expected that this program will include another park-academic institution pair.

Issue-specific Science Symposia and Training Opportunities

-- As noted above for the climate change topic, CESU academic partners can serve an important role in planning and organizing issue-specific workshops, symposia or training aimed at providing land managers with state-of-the-art information on specific topics.

Announcing student seasonal job opportunities

-- The National Park Service and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and other agencies, have many seasonal job opportunities available for college students. **ACTION ITEM** -- The NPS will endeavor to take full advantage of the North Atlantic Coast CESU network of academic institutions to advertise these opportunities.

- **Adjourn**

-- The meeting was adjourned at 3 pm.

- **Field Trip**

-- David Manski (Chief, Division of Resource Management, Acadia NP) and Sheridan Steele (Superintendent, Acadia NP) led the group on a 3-4 mile walk along the carriage roads of the park (Upper Hadlock Pond area). Discussion among partners continued.

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- **Field Trip**

-- John Anderson (College of the Atlantic) led a field trip aboard the College of the Atlantic vessel, RV *Indigo*, a 40-ft downeast-design vessel. The trip was throughout Frenchman Bay, with nice (although foggy) views of Mount Desert Island.

Respectively Submitted,
Charles Roman
July 13, 2009



ANNUAL MEETING

June 30 – July 1, 2009

Host: *College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, ME*

Tuesday, June 30

9am – 3pm: Annual Meeting
12 noon: Lunch
3pm – 5pm: Field Trip, Acadia National Park (carriage trail walk)

- Welcome and Introductions
- New academic and federal agency partners; brief overviews
 - Columbia University
 - University of Massachusetts Boston
 - SUNY-ESF
 - US Army Corps of Engineers
- Review of CESU accomplishments: Overview of the recent 5-yr self-assessment report for the CESU renewal (Peter August)
- Report from the CESU National Office (Tom Fish)
- Federal agency research opportunities, new initiatives (Charles Roman and others)
- Federal agency procedures/processes for initiating research projects
 - National Park Service (Charles Roman)
 - Other Agencies
- Roundtable Discussion
 - How can the CESU better serve the agency and academic partners, advance science, and support students?
 - Identify several efforts to be pursued over the next 5 years
- Other topics
- Adjourn

Wednesday, July 1

9am – Noon Boat tour aboard the College of the Atlantic research vessel

June 27, 2009