



## **Joint University Advisory Committee/Senior Advisory Council Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 22 2006  
URI Coastal Institute Large Conference Room  
URI Narragansett Bay Campus**

***Present:*** Brent Haglund, Dave Bengtson, Pete August, John Boreman, John Farrell, Grover Fugate, Cleveland Kurtz, Ambrose Jearld, Chris Mantazaris, Dennis Nixon, Stephen Olsen, Rick Rhodes, Bob Smith, Bob Ballou, Bob Weygand

***RISG Staff:*** Barry Costa-Pierce, Ames Colt, Alan Desbonnet, Malia Schwartz, Kathy Castro, Laura Skrobe, Jen McCann, Kristen Fletcher

### **Director's Report – Barry Costa-Pierce**

#### **National**

To open the meeting Costa-Pierce provided an overview of Rhode Island Sea Grant's funding situation. He reviewed the federal FY 2006 appropriation for National Sea Grant—National Sea Grant was cut from \$62.75 million in FY05 to \$55.5 million in FY06—which resulted in a 5% cut to RI Sea Grant's federal funding. Mentioned briefly were overall concerns about directions and trends in NOAA's funding of all external programs such as Sea Grant.

Costa-Pierce also discussed the Sea Grant Association's assessment of situation and actions being taking to improve federal support in FY 2007. Unfortunately the Administration is requesting for FY 2007 only a slight increase of \$0.70 million for Sea Grant nationally. A key concern for Sea Grant nationally is the loss of SG Congressional champions such as Senator F. Hollings. He announced the hiring of LB Associates Lobbying Firm by the Sea Grant Association to boost support from Congress in 2007. Strategies For FY 2007 being pursued, with oversight provided by LB Associates, are moving away from the traditional circulation of "Dear Colleagues letter" and are emphasizing contacts directly with Appropriations Committee members to generate support for two initiatives highlighted in FY 2007:

- Sustainable Seafood
- Resistant Coastal Communities

The SGA is asking Sea Grant's stakeholders nationally to contact Appropriations Committee members (such as Rep P. Kennedy, D-RI, who sits on the House Appropriations Committee) to voice their support for the National Sea Grant College Program. Sea Grant Directors nationally will continue to communicate with their respective State Congressional Delegations.

### **Regional**

Governor Carcieri's is playing a leading role in promoting in New England a regional governance initiative for oceans that RI Sea Grant has and will continue to support. A regional governance workshop held recently at R. Williams Univ. highlighted this effort by New England's Governors to begin developing a regional ocean governance framework. In addition, New England's Sea Grant Directors has proposed to NOAA and National Sea Grant's Request for Proposals for regional ocean research priority setting. They propose to form and operate a New England regional Ocean Science Advisory Council. An executive summary of this proposal was distributed.

### **Rhode Island**

Cuts to RI Sea Grant's federal funding resulted in about a 5% decrease in FY 06 from the previous year. To deal with these cuts, RI Sea Grant has not filled three core staff positions and has sought alternative funding for both research and extension projects.

#### *Recent Strategic decisions*

A number of strategic decisions were made via a fourteen month strategic plan development process in 2004/05 followed up by development of the 2006-2008 Omnibus in 2005 and a companion Implementation Plan in late 2005/early 2006.

For example, RI Sea Grant will still focus its educational investments on undergraduate and graduate education in recognition that K-12 marine science programming is pursued by a number of RI entities including GSO's own Office of Marine Programs and Save the Bay.

Second, RI Sea Grant will still emphasize the development of partnerships that best meet the partnership principles it has established. (copies of RI Sea Grant's partnership principles statement were distributed.)

#### *Forthcoming issuance 2006-2008 Implementation Plan*

Identifies RI Sea Grant's priority programs and activities for the period of 3/1/06 to 1/31/08. We are left with the challenge of undertaking responsive activities when unanticipated opportunities arise over this time period; this is well-exemplified by the Lobster Disease Initiative which RI Sea Grant is to administer in conjunction with NMFS's Northeast Fisheries Science Center. Part of the challenge is determining how core staff who are already committed to other projects can reprioritize and take on new projects without jeopardizing projects already underway.

*Outcome Mapping: Developing a process for evaluating behavioral changes brought about by RI Sea Grant's programs and projects*

Work continues on development of the outcome mapping approach to self-evaluation at RI Sea Grant. Progress can be monitored on our outcome mapping web page:

[http://seagrantadm.gso.uri.edu/Outcome\\_Mapping/RISG\\_OM\\_Home\\_Page.htm](http://seagrantadm.gso.uri.edu/Outcome_Mapping/RISG_OM_Home_Page.htm)

*Science Symposium Series* (handout distributed)

RI Sea Grant will continue to organize an annual science symposium. Program Administration staff are currently working on book to be published by Springer-Verlag tentatively entitled: *Ecosystem-based Management: A Case Study of Narragansett Bay*. This publication stems directly from the presentations and discussions at RI Sea Grant's 2004 Science Symposium entitled: *State of Science Knowledge on Nutrients in Narragansett Bay*.

For 2006, RI Sea Grant will sponsor a symposium entitled: *Ecosystem-Based Management: Putting Principles into Practice*. It is hoped that this symposium will serve as the basis for development of additional academic publications.

*New Initiatives*

Bay Map/Map Coast: We continue to work with Drs. King, August, and Rhode Island's Natural Resource Conservation Service to further the mapping and analysis goals for Rhode Island's near-shore waters and marine coastlines. We are funding for a second Omnibus cycle the Bay Map program, which is developing comprehensive benthic habitat and resource maps for Narragansett Bay. And we are partnering with the URI Coastal Institute to further the goals of a related project Map Coast.

RI Sea Grant will continue to develop its newly formed *Urban Coasts Initiative* in conjunction with the SUCCESS Extension Program's work on the Metro Bay Special Area Management Plan (See below.). It has established a small office at URI's Providence campus and Costa-Pierce, with the RI Sea Grant Leadership Team, is working with a variety of state and federal entities to further the development nationally of a federal, state and local interagency work group focused upon "urban coasts". It is hoped that a national conference on Urban Coasts could be convened in Rhode Island within the next 24 months with funding from the National Council of Counties & National Mayor's Association, among others. Other efforts include developing US HUD funding for an urban coasts fellowship.

*Challenges*

Perhaps the single greatest current challenge program-wide is cultivating the URI Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program's visibility and future potential. Fisheries science and management must be a top URI educational and research priority given the University's history of outstanding accomplishment in this area and the future needs for enhanced fisheries management and science in the US and globally. There is an opportunity to be a national leader in this area especially as fisheries programs are being de-emphasized at other Universities such as University of Washington and Texas A & M.

Nevertheless RI Sea Grant has witnessed a long-term erosion of core URI support for the Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program and its home institution the URI Fisheries Center, and the future remains uncertain. It is hoped that working with URI and CELS, RI Sea Grant can secure core operating support for the Fisheries Center and related institutions.

### **Responses and Comments to Director's Report**

#### ***Haglund:***

- RISG has a national/international reputation and the Sand County Foundation hopes it can work with RI Sea Grant as a long-term partner.
- I am impressed by the opportunities RI Sea Grant offers for integrating fishing research with fishing practices and fisheries management and other opportunities such as providing education and training for legal experts and judges in fisheries management and related areas.

#### ***Bengston:***

- Research strategies: how should they be developed in relation to near-term priorities of stakeholders?
- How do we relate near-term research imperatives to long-term research priorities?
- How do we balance varying interests in research among RI Sea Grant's stakeholders?

#### ***Costa-Pierce :***

- RI Sea Grant's two year plans laid out in its omnibus proposals and related Implementation Plans help establish RI Sea Grant's near-term priorities, especially in relation to the long term orientation of RI Sea Grant's 5 year strategic plan. But it remains very challenging to maintain our ability to act responsively while trying to direct the program toward its long-term strategic goals. The capacity to respond to unanticipated priorities and needs is most seriously affected by cuts in our federal funding as for example in how our program development funds are the first to be cut to absorb federal funding cuts.

***Farrell:*** What are you hearing about FY 2007 in Congress?

***Costa-Pierce :*** Congress was unhappy about how Commission on Ocean Policy endorsed programs were treated in FY2006 budget. For Sea Grant to see its federal support grow, it is critical that Congress be lobbied by Sea Grant's stakeholders.

***Farrell :*** GSO is being bombarded by "piece-meal" requests to lobby Congress for particular programs via earmarks, or to restore FY 2006 costs to long-term programs.

**Break for lunch**

### **Fisheries Program – Kathy Castro**

The RI Sea Grant Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program faces a number of important challenges in the coming years. Its current top priorities are the refinement and pursuit of collaborative research and management and the science and technology of reducing bycatch. The program currently relies entirely upon soft money—it receives essentially no state support—with only 50-70% of staff salary and fringe covered by RI Sea Grant funds. Therefore, a key concern is to continue to stabilize core University and state support for the Program.

Overall The Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program staff devotes approximately 50% of its time to outreach, 20% to research, about 10% to proposal writing and “visibility enhancement”, with the balance consumed by responsive activities. RI Sea Grant dollars are critically important for leveraging additional grant funds from state, federal, and other sources.

Castro currently serves as the Northeast Region Coordinator for Sea Grant Fisheries Extension and as a national leader for SG Fisheries Extension.

At the state level the Program is working hard to cultivate leadership skills for Fishing Industry participants with a “Transformative Leadership” training workshop being organized for April 2006. Additionally, a national conference of Sea Grant Fish Extension staff is in planning for October 2006.

### **Bycatch**

A major recent accomplishment has been a new design for a haddock trawl net which was originally developed based on suggestions from commercial fishermen. The Fisheries Extension Program undertook prototype development and ground-truthing. This new net has generated tremendous interest in the fishing industry as well as enhanced the Program’s public visibility.

We are currently developing searchable database on federal funded projects and proposals covering all fish science topics. We recognize the continuing need to incorporate science into management and see this database and an important way to do that. One issue of concern with this database is ensuring that project reports listed in the database will be peer-reviewed—some sort of quality assurance process is necessary to enhance the validity and utility of the database

Finally, we continue to work on an industry-based scup survey.

### **Lobster Shell Disease Initiative**

In the fall of 2005 US Senator Jack Reed, D-RI, with strong support from Rhode Island’s Commercial Lobster Industry, succeeded in pushing through Congress an earmark of about \$3,000,000 to fund a Lobster Shell Disease Initiative to be administered by the Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program. The goal of this Initiative is to distribute

funding to support the monitoring and research on lobster shell disease. The specific objectives are:

- Provide spatial and temporal data on shell disease.
- Produce new information that can be used for understanding the outbreak of shell disease and the consequences of shell disease.
- Relay that information to other researchers, industry and the general public
- Develop a plan for continued funding beyond this initiative.

The Sustainable Fisheries Extension Program is leading this initiative with K. Castro serving as the lead PI. She has worked to:

1. Identify executive committee and develop full scope of work
2. Establish a vision and research priorities
3. Develop and distribution an RfP.
4. Review and select proposals
5. Oversee project implementation and reporting
6. Finalize project results
7. Engage in outreach to communicate research and monitoring results

In November 2005, an initial organizing committee was formed to determine how to move forward on this Initiative. There were several agreed upon principles from this meeting based on comments from the organizing committee:

- This funding can be highlighted as a continuation of the Long Island Sound Lobster Health Initiative.
- It should occur over at least two years (to accommodate the research).
- Use as much of the money as possible for research.
- Keep Congressional delegation informed.
- Identify potential financial partners and leverage funding.
- Create a vision and plan for follow-up.
- Restrict the Request for Proposals (RFP) scope of work to research related to epizootic shell disease.

The organizing committee recommended forming an executive committee of specific stakeholders that would provide input into the design of this new initiative and monitor progress, as well as develop a longer-term vision and plan of work. This committee met on January 23, 2006 to determine goals, objectives, and process. Several sub-committees were formed. The principal role of the executive committee will be to assist in the development of the research RFP and proposal selection, and assist in the outreach program. An equally important role will be their participation in the development of a long term funding plan and communication with congressional partners.

#### **Seafood quality/safety: the HAACP program**

The Fisheries Program, through the efforts of Lori Pivarnik, will continue to offer (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and sanitation educational training

to the seafood processors and to distribute the “Seafood Safety Savvy HACCP” Newsletter. Coordinating efforts with Connecticut Sea Grant, 3-day HACCP and one-day Sanitation Control Procedures courses will be offered. Industry demands will be met with the cooperative efforts of Connecticut Sea Grant Extension Leader Nancy Balcom. These courses meet the needs of industry personnel not only throughout the New England region but in other regions of the country since course offerings nationwide are sporadic (local and regional).

### **Educational Efforts**

The Program continues to arrange for commercial fishermen to work in K-12 classrooms and it is partnering with MIT Sea Grant on expanding their Adopt-a-Boat program into RI’s schools and fishing ports. We rely heavily on the willingness and ability of commercial fishermen to engage directly with K-12 students and teachers. We have also had good success in bringing together commercial fishermen and undergraduates and graduates at URI. In general we feel that academics do not do a great job of keeping track of innovations coming out of the commercial fishing industry, which is why we continue to try to bring together fishermen & faculty in a variety of forums.

### **Responses and Comments to Castro’s Report**

#### ***Boreman:***

Please consider training the organizations that actually run meetings (e.g. the NE Regional Fisheries Management Council)

Efforts to help fishing industry and management representatives with the “nuts and bolts” of leadership, or transformative leadership, would be welcome.

#### ***Smith:***

The inclination towards independence by fishermen makes the development of successful leadership in collaborative processes difficult.

In addition, the fishing industry’s disparaging views of government and a lack of trust of the current management regime make leadership development difficult as well. Therefore, I consider leadership training valuable and needed.

***Nixon:*** What will it take for URI to be a national leader in fisheries research and outreach?

***Castro:*** New faculty and better organization of current fisheries faculty at URI (a “virtual” department).

***Costa-Pierce :*** We could also build up International Fisheries Programs at URI, but there is a lack of capacity; however, there are many new opportunities.

## **Sustainable Coastal Communities and Ecosystems Extension Program – Jen McCann**

**Team Development and makeup:** Our core team includes well seasoned staff, like Virginia Lee, and undergraduate and graduate students from Marine Affairs, Community Planning, Environmental Sciences, and the Roger Williams University Legal Program. Our program provides hands-on experience to the next generation of coastal managers. This network of students who have become part of our team are now in powerful decision-making positions including General Assembly, development and environmental community, state, local and federal agencies.

### **The Rhode Island Marine Resources Development Plan:**

Two years ago the General Assembly required that CRMC develop the Marine Resources Development Plan (MRDP), as a mechanism to the growing response to the acceleration of coastal development in Rhode Island. The General Assembly stated the Rhode Island Sea Grant should assist in the development of this plan. Rhode Island Sea Grant played a leadership role in providing the necessary technical assistance as well as facilitating the entire process. The vision of the MRDP includes properly functioning bay and lagoon ecosystems; abundant and sustained fishing and fisheries resources; successful coastal places; and marine-based economic development. The plan outlines strategies for improving the health and functionality of the state's marine ecosystem, and for providing appropriate marine-based economic development.

The MRDP lists strategies for CRMC to promote the public's use and enjoyment of the state's marine resources, as well as Council program leadership and coordination roles, responsibilities and capabilities. The plan also outlines implementation activities for the next five years.

### **Metro Bay SAMP:**

On behalf of the CRMC, Rhode Island Sea Grant is facilitating the updating of the 20-year old Providence Harbor Special Area management Plan (SAMP). The Metro Bay SAMP involved the cities, community organization, and the private sector in identifying issues and developing and revision policies. Four major components of the SAMP include: 1) The Urban Coastal Greenways policy that offers a mechanism to redevelop the urban waterfront of the Metro Bay in a manner that integrates economic development, expanded public access *along* and *to* the shoreline, and the management, protection, and restoration of valuable coastal habitats; 2) Development of a mechanism to increase preparedness and reduce the impact of natural hazards (we are seeking FEMA funds to develop a Metro Bay multi-jurisdictional natural hazard strategy); 3) Ensure a balance of the uses on the Metro Bay watershed; and Developing a regional institutional framework to address regional issues.

**EPA Smart Growth Technical Assistance:** RISG facilitated securing the EPA Smart Growth Technical Assistance award for our partner, the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission (AIPC). The AIPC was only one of five awards granted national by EPA. The purpose of the grant is to provide the three Aquidneck Island municipalities with

assistance to ensure the recently completed West Side Master Plan is officially incorporated into their planning documents. This will ensure implementation of the West Side Master Plan.

### **Responses to McCann's Report:**

**Farrell:** How do Rhode Island Sea Grant and Coastal Resources Center link up with each other?

**McCann:** CRC's US Team functions simultaneously as the SUCCESS Extension Team. This setup has always worked programmatically however "complex" the relationship seems from the outside.

**Weygand:** How are RI Sea Grant's projects interfacing with undergrads at URI? For example, has RI Sea Grant gone to engineering college to develop better links for undergrads?

**McCann:** In addition to the students working directly on our projects, we have engaged several Community Planning and Landscape Architect Studios in our projects.

**August:** Rob Thompson's effort to map coastal flood zones using students is a good example of how students are interfacing with programs led by the SUCCESS Team.

### **RI Sea Grant Legal Program – Kristen Fletcher**

The Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program was created in 2003 as a result of a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Rhode Island Department of Marine Affairs, Roger Williams University School of Law, and Rhode Island Sea Grant. These institutions created this strategic partnership to advance legal research opportunities for law and graduate students and to provide legal information and analysis to Sea Grant constituents and represents one of only four Sea Grant law and policy efforts in the nation. In its third and fourth years, the Rhode Island Sea Grant Legal Program, housed in the Marine Affairs Institute at Roger Williams University School of Law, will continue to serve as a research and outreach entity focusing on analysis of legal and policy issues raised by the development and use of marine resources in the ocean and coastal zone.

The current focus of the Legal Program is on students: 33 alumni now have graduated from joint degree program, now considered one of the top programs of its kind nationally. Current law student projects include work with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and work on issues of legal standing with regard to cooperative fisheries research.

On the still nascent research and professional development components of the program, the Legal Program is seeking to provide law and marine affairs students hands-on experience in environmental law by promoting innovative career tracks and launching a

new summer program on ocean, coastal and maritime law Regional networks of law centers.

### **Responses to Fletcher's Report:**

*Fugate*: Another topic of interest would be US FEMA's development of toolkit for coastal hazard managers, particularly with regard to how regulations could incorporate current case law on takings.

### **Education – Alan Desbonnet:**

RI Sea Grant continues to develop a SG Graduate Fellowship Program that would focus on developing greater connections with graduate students Sea Grant funds via its core research grants, as well as with students who receive dedicated Sea Grant Fellowship awards. In addition, RI Sea Grant is seeking additional private and public funding to implement a Diversity Fellows Program.

Accordingly, RI Sea Grant will continue to support and implement a variety of fellowship programs such as the URI Coastal Fellows Program, the Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship, and the National Marine Fisheries/National Sea Grant Graduate Fellowship.

The annual Science Symposia will serve a major focal point for future adult free choice education efforts. Part of this effort will entail the production of peer-reviewed science synthesis reports and texts.

RI Sea Grant is currently negotiating to continue its partnership with GSO's Partnership for Oceanographic Instrumentation centered around web-site support and other communications and education services.

Finally, in 2006-2008, RI Sea Grant is funding a special extension project to collaborate with Drs. Smayda and Borkmann of GSO to launch a web site to provide access to Smayda et al.'s long-term plankton database for Narragansett Bay.

### **Responses to Desbonnet's Report**

*Bengtson*: Would there be a future effort to make available other long-term databases? For example Jeffries fish trawl or Oviatt water quality database? One could also partner with the state's Environmental Monitoring Collaboration in its monitoring program cataloguing effort.

### **General Discussion and Comments:**

*Nixon*: There are real hazard to RI Sea Grant starting to function primarily as a soft money center in that RI Sea Grant could become a competitor with centers it partners amicably with now. Plus, faculty time is a "real" match provided by the state. That should not be discounted. In order to garner the state's attention, RI Sea Grant has to

show how federal monies would be threatened if the state doesn't pony up additional match. The RI Endeavor Project is a good example of how state funds can be acquired.

**Haglund:** RI Sea Grant should continue to cultivate private philanthropy as a means to garner additional sources of funding other than state and federal government.

**Olsen:** It looks like coastal and marine science and education is in for a "long storm" over the next 2-3 years with regard to government funding.

**Weygand:** We still have an identity problem at URI. What is Sea Grant's unique niche? URI is facing a \$6 million deficit in state FY 2007 and is enduring in a five-six year federal funding drought. Is Rhode Island Sea Grant synonymous with URI for our external constituents? Similar efforts to define identity, mission, and alternative sources of support are taking place across URI as it seeks to prepare for future budget challenges. We need to develop a coherent up-to-date ten-minute message on RI Sea Grant's identity and mission that is tightly linked to URI's identity and mission.

**Ballou:** Don't forget the state's Bay and Watershed Coordination Team and supporting legislation. Agencies can't do their work without support from URI. The Coordination Team could help develop the project proposals and budgets that URI could pursue state support for. Should URI step up to help Coordination Team as a way of branding itself in the state?

**Olsen:** What is our unique capability defined precisely and clearly? What do we have and what we could lose?

**Weygand:** You need to work harder to learn about how URI is perceived externally. How should we tie specific RI Sea Grant initiatives to URI's overall mission and capabilities as a State University and as a Land Grant/Sea Grant Institute?