



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Sea Grant College Program  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

10/14/2010

Dr. Jeffery Reutter  
1314 Kinner Road, Area 100  
Columbus, OH 43212-1156

Dear Dr. Reutter:

On behalf of the Site Review Team (SRT) for the Ohio Sea Grant Program, I am pleased to transmit to you the enclosed SRT report. The report documents the SRT's findings and recommendations on program management and organization, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative network activities from the site visit on May 26-27, 2010.

A *recommendation* is a formally prescribed course of action for which the Sea Grant Program is accountable. The Sea Grant Program is expected to respond to each recommendation, explaining how it has implemented, how it plans to implement, or why it chooses not to implement each course of action. A *suggestion* is an idea that is presented for consideration. The Sea Grant Program is not accountable for responding to suggestions, but is encouraged to consider implementing those deemed useful and appropriate by program leadership. In accordance with our site review policy, this report does not assign a grade or score to your program.

Our policy states that as the program director, you have the opportunity to prepare a response to the SRT report. Both the SRT report and your response will become part of the Program File in the National Sea Grant Office. I encourage you to keep our office informed of any activities that are undertaken to strengthen your program.

I wanted also to offer my thanks and to express the articulation of the Site Review Team for the effort you and your staff put forth to make this review productive and most informative. In addition, we also want to express our thanks to the university officials, administrators, staff, researchers and the program's stakeholders who ensured that our review was comprehensive and enjoyable.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Eigen  
Federal Program Officer  
National Sea Grant Office



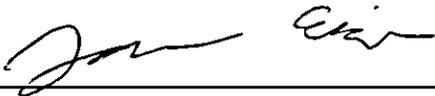


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Cc: Dr. Leon Cammen, Ms. Sami Grimes



**Site review team's  
Review of the  
Ohio Sea Grant College Program  
May 26, 2010 – May 27, 2010**



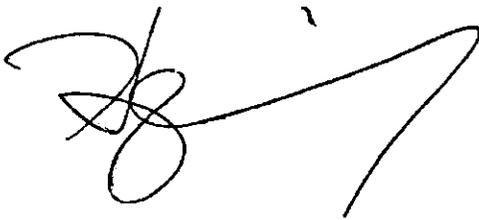
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**Jonathan Eigen, Chair, Federal Program Officer**

*10/8/2010*

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**Date**



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**Harry Simmons, Co-Chair, National Sea Grant Advisory Board Member**

**October 8, 2010**

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**Date**



## INTRODUCTION

The Site review team (SRT) review of the Ohio Sea Grant (OHSG) Program took place from May 26, 2010 – May 27, 2010.

The SRT members included:

Jonathan Eigen (Chair, NSGO Program Officer) National Sea Grant Office Silver Spring, MD	Mayor Harry Simmons (Co-Chair, Advisory Board Member) Caswell Beach, NC
Chryssostomos Chryssostomidis MIT Sea Grant College Program Director Cambridge, MA	Lori Boughton Great Lakes Program Director, Pennsylvania DEP Erie, PA
Dale Baker Program Leader & Associate Director of NY SG (retired) Ithaca, NY	Sami Grimes, Observer National Sea Grant Office Silver Spring, MD

Prior to the beginning of the SRT visit, and in conformance with National Sea Grant College Program guidelines, the OHSG issued a public notice of the upcoming SRT visit by inviting interested parties to send written comments to the SRT Chair. The public notice was posted on the Ohio Sea Grant's website. The SRT Chair did not receive any letters in response to the public notice.

The SRT review took place on The Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio.

During the review, the SRT met with stakeholders and partners, including Ken Alvey, President, Lake Erie Marine Trades Association, Ed Hammett, Executive Director, Lake Erie Commission, Frank Lopez, Manager, Old Woman Creek NERR, John Watkins, Chief, Ohio Coastal Management Program, Heather Elmer, Coastal Training Program Coordinator, Old Woman Creek NERR, John Conglose, OSU extension and many more. From the university, the SRT had the opportunity to talk to Bobby Moser, OSU Vice President for Agriculture, Carol Whitacre, OSU Vice President for Research, Jan Weisenburger, OSU Senior Associate Vice President for Research and OSU President E. Gordon Gee.

The report of the SRT follows the guidelines of the Site Review Team Procedures Manual. The SRT reviewed and discussed broad issues related to the OHSG Program's: 1) Organization and Management of the Program; 2) Stakeholder Engagement; and 3) Collaborative Network Activities. Within each of these areas, the SRT report presents the findings, recommendations and suggestions of the SRT.

### I. ORGANIZING AND MANAGING THE PROGRAM

Based on the criteria descriptions and considered questions, in this section, the Program addresses each of the following areas: leadership, organization, programmed team approach, and support. Each area is covered separately.

## **Leadership**

The OHSG program has benefited from outstanding leadership over many years under the director Dr. Jeffery Reutter. Dr. Reutter has also been very influential in promoting the National Sea Grant College Program agenda in regional collaborations to the benefit of the Great Lakes states and Nationally. It is evident that he is a great catalyst in forming collaborations among the key players within the region. A couple of examples include the Great lakes Regional Research Network (GLRRIN) and the Great Lakes Collaborative Science Monitoring Initiative, where all Great Lakes Sea Grant Directors and University Officials can receive funding from any source and distribute the funds among each of the Great Lakes Sea Grant Programs while minimizing administrative costs. This mechanism can serve as a model of cooperation in enhancing regional collaboration for the Sea Grant Network.

With Dr. Reutter's retirement from the University, he has restructured the management organization to accommodate a 25 percent reduction in his work schedule. In preparation for further personnel changes in the future senior leadership has demonstrated forethought with regard to the future of the program. The staff has been given more leadership and decision-making responsibilities and the delegation of responsibilities has added to the overall effectiveness of the program.

The program has been instrumental in receiving funding for Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE) program for the Great Lakes region. Further, the prestige and recognized leadership enjoyed externally is echoed within the university. A high regard for this program exists within the administration, as evidenced by university support received by the program.

OHSG is a leader in the Great Lakes basin starting with the Great Lakes Research Initiative Other Great Lakes programs and organizations look to Ohio Sea Grant as the critical link in coordinating the varied programs and interest groups involved in Lake Erie and other Great Lakes issues. This coordination has been very effective in limiting duplication of effort and as helped the programs develop a feeling of cooperation amongst each other. It is critical to the future of both OHSG and other ~~the~~ Great Lake programs that the vision and contacts that have made the program such a leader are maintained in order to efficiently carry out program goals at a state and regional level.

Finally, the program responded positively to the recommendations made in the 2005 program assessment seamlessly incorporating those recommendations into the program.

## **Communications**

The response of the SRT was overwhelmingly positive with regard to the communications area. The program exceeded all expectations, as set forth in the previous PAT, with regard to quality of materials and quantity of outreach.

Vast improvement was noted in the quality of communication materials. The SRT was impressed, collectively, by this effort. It was further noted that the OHSG had responded so proactively and forcefully to the 2005 PAT recommendation for improvement in communications area.

Further, the Communications Department had exceeded expectations in areas of innovation and imagination. The creativity shown in promoting the mission of Sea Grant among all constituents from K-12 students to University officials, students and faculty to the general public was received favorably. The program is making use of innovative communications vehicles of superior quality that are well suited to the targeted audience. In fact, on campus, OHSG has had a presence at the OSU football stadium, the recreational center, the new student union center, and the OSU library. A number of new products have been very favorably received by the users of the materials. These materials included but were not limited to: reports, publications, posters, displays, database, and website.

### **Organization**

The program is structured within a multi-disciplinary department, reporting directly to the Vice-President of Research and the Vice-President for Agriculture. The management of Stone Laboratory under Sea Grant has been an effective step to help with the name recognition for Sea Grant, which in turn allows the program to raise research funding, education funding and endowment to the benefit of OHSG's mission. Stone Laboratory has also been a great marketing tool for Sea Grant to use to create name recognition.

Within this structure, the panel was struck by the breadth of issues the program covered. These ranged from the development of the leadership academy to coastal tourism to clean marinas. Although the panel found the range of activity areas commendable, the site review team encouraged that care be exercised so that the program does not spread itself too thin.

### **Programmed team approach**

The program is to be commended for the high quality of advisory services and the clearly identifiable results. However, the review panel was unable to identify a clear path of transferring results from the more academic research to the applied research needs. Strengthening this link would yield a much stronger program.

The team suggests that the program consider developing a defined process in which the fruits of the academic research are translated to the applied needs of the extension/education service.

### **Support**

The program is acknowledged for their innovation in attracting funding. Some of these should serve as a model for other programs. The program is noted for its success in developing new sources of revenue, specifically innovation in bringing in endowments to support the program.

The decision to emphasize areas of joint interest to other state agencies within the RFP has resulted in additional collaborations as well as encouraging jointly funded projects further increasing the resources to the program as well as minimizing duplication of effort within the region.

## **II. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Based on the criteria descriptions and the considered questions, in this section, the Program addresses each of the following areas: extension/advisory service, relevance, and relationships. The areas will be considered collectively.

The program has a strong involvement in the regional networks that have been developed by the OHSG program. The program is clearly well connected within the region at the university state and local level. The program has developed valuable relationships with a broad variety of groups ranging from academia, state and local government.

Further, the program does an excellent job tying its research results to its communications. However, there could have been stronger interaction and program development between the extensions agents with the researchers. A possible solution is to involve a Sea Grant staff member/Extension at the beginning of each research project to help guide the extension component. This may help facilitate the link between the academic to the application of the research to the general public, as suggested in the previous section.

The OHSG Program is extremely active in all levels of coordination in the great lakes region their efforts in taking the lead with the Lake Erie phosphorus, clean marina and leadership development program. Dr. Reutter has been the leader in developing many Great Lakes projects. With this, encouragement is offered for efforts to reestablish an extension presence in Cleveland.

The Sea Grant Program has done a fine job of taking advantage of partnership opportunities as they have been identified. The program has done an excellent job of developing its ties with relevant agencies within the state and region. The close relationships that have been developed have certainly proved to be a boon to the state. However the review team is concerned that the program may be approaching a level of interdependency in its partnerships that could harm the perception of program as neutral party.

The communications program has developed an outstanding media campaign to disseminate Sea Grant and other research results to the community. Twine Line is a first rate newsletter and the OHSG Investment information technology.

Support for the program from its users has been tremendous. The number of letters of Congressional support generated by supporters of OHSG is testament to how highly regarded the

OHSG Program is in the community. The constituents that came out to speak with the team were knowledgeable and enthusiastic in their support of the program. From members of the State Senate to local fishing boat captains, the review team heard passionate stories about the impact the program has had on the community. It was apparent to the team that OHSG is a trusted and immediate point of contact for all issues regarding Lake Erie.

Through systematic partnering with entities, communications programs, and coordination between researcher and administrator, the program has burgeoned into a regional leader. Its leadership has cultivated these relationships, facilitating the research and its dissemination to the critical decision makers in the state.

### **III. COLLABORATIVE NETWORK/NOAA ACTIVITIES**

OHSG continues to provide leadership in Great Lakes activities. This includes coordinated planning and cooperative work with local, state, regional and Federal agencies, as well as other Sea Grant Programs and non-Sea Grant universities.

#### **Sea Grant Network – National and Regional Leadership**

The members of the leadership team participate and lead activities that support the overall Sea Grant Network. Dr. Jeffery Reutter is currently Co-Chair of the Great Lakes Regional Research Information Network (GLRRIN). Dr. Eugene Bragg is Research Coordinator Chair Elect of the Sea Grant Network, and Jill Jentes was chair of the Chair Great Lakes Sea Grant Network Communicators (2004-2006). Finally, Tory Gabriel was a member of the planning committee for the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network Conference (2009). OHSG's education coordinator, Rosanne Fortner, has been the principal investigator on the Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE) project since its inception. OHSG is now collaborating with COSEE to finalize Great Lakes Literacy Principles.

#### **State and Regional Partners**

The Great Lakes Regional Research and Information Network (GLRRIN) created under the leadership of Dr. Reutter has been a critical component in improving and identifying and coordinating research and extension needs throughout the Great Lakes. The program was instrumental in putting together the key players in each of the Great Lakes and has aided in better identifying the major issues and needs of each Great Lake.

#### **NOAA and other Federal Agency Cooperative Efforts**

OHSG maintains a strong partnership with Old Woman Creek NERR, the Ohio Coastal Management Program, and the Lake Erie Commission. In 2008 and 2009, OHSG collaborated with these partners on developing education and outreach plans and co-fund research projects. These partners serve on each other's review panels to evaluate and prioritize proposals in order to eliminate any possibilities of duplication and in order to enhance linkages between management and research. All four organizations make up Ohio's Coastal Training Program, which is intended to bring scientists, practitioners, and local decision-makers together to share challenges, innovative science and technologies, and success stories.

OHSG's work with Clean Marinas and the recent work collaborating with Mondo Polymer, Inc. in Marietta, Ohio, to recycle shrink-wrap from boats into plastic spacers on highway guardrails is another example of Sea Grant effective collaboration efforts.

#### **IV. FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS and SUGGESTIONS**

The recommendations are defined as those that the program must consider. The suggestions are defined as those that the program may wish to consider. The panel did not offer any elements under the findings rubric.

The panel recommended two actions for consideration:

1. When discussing the economic impact of tourism on the state and region, federal tax revenue should be included along with the state and local tax receipts.
2. The effective communication of the strategic agenda of the program would be strengthened with the development of an executive summary version of the strategic plan.

The panel made four suggestions for consideration of the program:

1. Stone Lab merchandise should include OHSG branding.
2. In order to further enhance institutional leadership capability, the director should qualitatively involve the leadership team in cultivating existing and future relationships, in support of continued success in the program.
3. OHSG program should consider develop a stronger system of involvement between the extension agents and the researchers.
4. OHSG should consider expanding their technical review panel to include more panelists who are independent of existing partnerships.

#### **V. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

A possible Best Management Practice would be Ohio Sea Grant's capability in seeking outside donations and establishing endowments to support the program's research, education, and outreach mission. This practice, if allowed to assist other Sea Grant Programs.

Another possible Best Management Practice would be OHSG's concept of the leadership academy that instructs incoming state and local officials on the issues facing the great lakes. This can be expanded nationwide.

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**SRT AGENDA**