



National Sea Grant Law Center
University of Mississippi
Kinard Hall, Wing E – Room 256
University, MS 38677
(662) 915-7775
sealaw@olemiss.edu



National Sea Grant Law Center

2008 – 2013 Strategic Plan

Finalized November 20, 2007
Updated May 8, 2009

In the summer of 2007, the National Sea Grant Law Center (NSGLC) embarked on a strategic planning process to help us focus our work and resources over the next five years (2008 – 2012). During the month of September, two internal staff retreats were held, constituent phone interviews were conducted, and input was sought from the NSGLC's Advisory Committee via email and conference calls. Throughout this process, the NSGLC staff received very positive feedback from individuals and organizations that have used NSGLC's services in the past and hope to continue working with the Center. This document originally charted the course the NSGLC planned to follow over the next five years to continue providing essential services to the Sea Grant network and take advantage of emerging marine policy issues to increase our presence and reputation.

As part of the National Sea Grant College Program's strategic plan alignment process in 2009, the NSGLC staff revisited the Center's strategic plan. Due to the cross-cutting nature of the NSGLC publications and advisory service, many of the NSGLC activities align with the national goals and strategies outlined in the National Sea Grant College Program's 2009 – 2013 strategic plan. Additional planning was needed, however, to develop outcomes, objectives, and performance measures for the entire four-year period (2010 – 2013) addressed by the national plan.

The amended NSGLC 2008 – 2013 Strategic Plan sets forth an ambitious agenda for the NSGLC that will build our reputation for timely, high-quality legal research and analysis and increase the capacity of the Sea Grant network to address legal issues in their research, education, and outreach programs. This increased capacity will ultimately help the National Sea Grant College Program achieve its goals of healthy coastal ecosystems, sustainable coastal development, a safe and sustainable seafood supply, and hazard resilience in coastal communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

In 2001, the National Sea Grant Office issued a Request for Proposals for “the creation of a law center to coordinate and enhance Sea Grant’s activities in legal scholarship and outreach related to coastal and ocean law issues.” Founded in 2002 to provide legal research to the Sea Grant community and its constituents, the NSGLC at the University of Mississippi conducts research on coastal and ocean laws and policies and provides legal advisory and outreach services to agencies, local governments, coastal users, and the general public.

The NSGLC currently provides a number of services, which are in great demand and utilized by a wide range of organizations inside and outside of the Sea Grant community. The Center’s attorneys conduct scholarly research on a variety of developing ocean and coastal policy issues including aquaculture, access to public beaches, and invasive species, and research findings are frequently published in leading legal publications. The NSGLC’s quarterly newsletter, *The SandBar*, informs over 1,000 subscribers about new court cases and legislation affecting coastal resource management. The NSGLC website is a source of critical information about marine law and is a tool for the integration of marine law and policy into the National Sea Grant network.

MISSION

To encourage a well-informed constituency by providing legal information and analysis to the Sea Grant Community; federal, state, and local agencies; policy-makers; non-governmental organizations; and the general public through a variety of products and services.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The National Sea Grant Law Center excels at providing focused legal research and analysis because it is neutral, responsive, and flexible.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis was performed as part of the NSGLC planning process. Staff members, constituents, and members of the NSGLC Advisory Committee provided input.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Strengths</u></p> <p>Responsive Flexible Non-biased (neutral analysis) National Scope</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Opportunities</u></p> <p>Growth of Alternative Energy and Technology Attention to Coastal Resiliency University of Mississippi Hiring Env. Law Professor</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <p>Campus Visibility Lack of Law Student Interest Website Usability</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Threats</u></p> <p>Funding SGA/ NSGO Support Lack of Knowledge about NSGLC</p>

Several issues and themes emerged from the SWOT analysis, which were considered during the development of the strategic goals and objectives.

- Evolution of the website from a publication-focused site to a topic-focused site using tools such as searchable databases, blogs, and discussion boards.
- Improving relations with National Sea Grant Office and Sea Grant Association to garner lasting support for the NSGLC's efforts.
- Addressing emerging issues (i.e., coastal resiliency, offshore alternative energy) through existing programs and by developing new projects/skills.
- Improving University of Mississippi Law School relations by increasing visibility, pool of high-quality students, and ocean/coastal law coursework, and working towards an environmental law certificate program.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT LAW CENTER STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems

National Goal: Widespread use of ecosystem-based approaches to managing land, water, and living resources in coastal areas.

1. Sea Grant programs and constituents have access to timely, non-biased legal research information to improve ecosystem-based management of coastal ecosystems. (*Outcome*)
 - a. From 2010 through 2013, a minimum of 12 Sea Grant extension agents or constituents utilize the National Sea Grant Law Center's Advisory Service as the primary resource to gain knowledge of relevant laws, regulations, and policies related to ecosystem-based management and to inform them of these laws, regulations and policies. (*Objective*)

National Goal: Restored function and productivity of degraded ecosystems.

2. The shipping industry, federal and state regulators, and other organizations understand the complex regulatory framework governing ballast water discharges and how proposed policy changes impact that framework.
 - a. By 2011, a minimum of 100 subscribers receive updates and analysis of ballast water legal developments through the Law Center's ballast water list serve and 10% of those subscribers report using the information provided to improve their ballast water management programs.
 - b. By 2013, 50 individuals involved in ballast water management (i.e., representatives from federal and state government agencies, shipping industry groups, environmental non-profit organizations, general public, etc.) are actively engaged in web-based dialogue and collaborative problem-solving on the legal and public policy ramifications of developing and mandating ballast water treatment through a virtual collaboration space hosted and maintained by the NSGLC.

Sustainable Coastal Development

National Goal: Healthy coastal economies that include working waterfronts, an abundance of recreation and tourism opportunities, and coastal access for all citizens.

3. Coastal landowners and the general public understand their rights with respect to coastal access and local governments implement innovative policies to protect coastal access.
 - a. By 2011, a minimum of five Sea Grant programs have developed and continue to maintain a coastal access website to disseminate information on the coastal access legal rights and responsibilities of coastal landowners, coastal users, and local governments.
 - b. By 2012, a minimum of one staff member from at least 60% of the Sea Grant programs will have completed an on-line training module on the public trust doctrine, thereby increasing their understanding of the legal doctrine guaranteeing the public access to the nation's waters, and 60% of participants report using the knowledge gained to assist communities in enhancing or securing additional public access.

***National Goal:** Coastal citizens, community leaders, and industries that recognize the complex inter-relationships between social, economic and environmental values in coastal areas and work together to balance multiple uses and optimize environmental sustainability.*

4. Sea Grant programs and constituents have access to timely, non-biased legal research information to improve community implementation of sustainable coastal development policies, plans, and strategies.
 - a. From 2010 through 2013, a minimum of 12 Sea Grant extension agents or constituents utilize the National Sea Grant Law Center's Advisory Service as the primary resource to gain knowledge of relevant laws, regulations, and policies related to sustainable coastal development and to inform them of these laws, regulations and policies.
 - b. By 2013, a minimum of one staff member from at least 60% of the Sea Grant programs will have completed an on-line training module on local governments' zoning authority, thereby increasing the capacity of those programs to assist communities with implementation of growth plans and policies, and 60% of participants report using the knowledge gained to assist such communities.
5. Sea Grant extension agents and other program staff actively participate in planning processes for offshore alternative energy development projects.
 - a. By 2013, 85% of Sea Grant coastal development extension specialists understand the regulatory regime for offshore alternative energy projects and

share this information with constituents, improving Sea Grant's alternative energy outreach programs.

A Safe and Sustainable Seafood Supply

***National Goal:** A healthy domestic seafood industry that harvests, produces, processes, and markets seafood responsibly and efficiently.*

6. Sea Grant programs, NOAA, NMFS, and their constituents have access to timely, non-biased legal research information to improve understanding of fisheries management.
 - a. From 2010 through 2013, a minimum of 12 Sea Grant extension agents or constituents utilize the National Sea Grant Law Center's Advisory Service as the primary resource to gain knowledge of relevant laws, regulations, and policies related to fisheries management and to inform them of these laws, regulations and policies.
7. Fishermen understand how fisheries are managed in the United States.
 - a. By 2013, the third edition of *Understanding Fisheries Management* will be incorporated into NMFS annual training for new Regional Fishery Management Council members.
 - b. By 2013, 80% of Sea Grant extension agents working with fishermen will use *Understanding Fisheries Management* in their outreach programs.

Hazard Resilience in Coastal Communities

***National Goal:** Community capacity to prepare for and respond to hazardous events.*

8. Sea Grant programs and constituents have access to timely, non-biased legal research information to improve community resiliency to natural hazards.
 - a. From 2010 through 2013, a minimum of 12 Sea Grant programs or constituents utilize the National Sea Grant Law Center's Advisory Service as the primary resource to gain knowledge of relevant laws, regulations, and policies related to coastal resiliency and inform them of these laws, regulations and policies.
9. Local and state governments adopt policies and regulations to increase resiliency.

- a. By 2013, a minimum of one staff member from at least 60% of Sea Grant programs and 10 local governmental officials will have completed an online training module on Fifth Amendment takings, thereby increasing their understanding of a legal doctrine that often arises during federal, state, and local government land use decisions, and 60% of participants report using the knowledge gain to assist coastal communities in adopting policies and regulations to improve resiliency.

Cross-Cutting Activities

National Goal: An informed public that understands the value and vulnerability of coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes resources, and demands informed science-based decisions about the conservation, use, and management of these resources, and a well-trained workforce that will make this a reality.

10. The National Sea Grant Law Center and its website is a leading resource for objective ocean and coastal law research and information.
 - a. During the 2010 – 2013 time period, the number of publication downloads from the NSGLC website will increase by 20% annually.
 - b. By 2013, the NSGLC website ranks in the top 10 Google search results when certain keywords related to ocean and coastal law, including, but not limited to, fisheries management, coastal access, public trust doctrine, regulatory takings, are entered.
 - c. During the 2010 – 2013 time period, the ratio of unique visitors to repeat visitors increased by 10% annually.
11. Sea Grant constituents are well-informed of the laws, regulations, and policies affecting ocean and coastal resources through the NSGLC's provision of legal information and analysis to the Sea Grant community, policy-makers, and the general public.
 - a. By 2013, 1,250 individuals and organizations stay informed of court decisions and other legal developments affecting ocean and coastal resource management by subscribing to the NSGLC's quarterly newsletter, *The SandBar*.
 - i. Following a 10-year evaluation of *The SandBar* in 2011, 70% of subscribers report an increased understanding of the legal framework governing ocean and coastal resources.

- b. By 2013, 250 individuals and organizations receive monthly updates on recent court decisions through email subscriptions the *Ocean and Coastal Case Alert*.

12. Law students across the country enhance their education by taking advantage of the NSGLC's student programs, thereby gaining valuable practical experience and training in legal writing, research, and analysis.

- a. During the 2010 – 2013 time period, twelve law students at the University of Mississippi gain valuable practical experience and training in legal research and analysis working on “real world” coastal management legal issues and disputes through the NSGLC's Research Associate Program.
- b. During the 2010 – 2013 time period, sixteen law students from around the country contributed articles to *The SandBar* and the *Sea Grant Law and Policy Journal*.

National Goal: *Sound scientific information to advance understanding of the nature and value of our coastal ocean, and Great Lakes resources; to identify new ways to conserve and use these resources; and to support evaluation of the environmental impacts and socio-economic trade-offs involved in coastal decision-making.*

13. The *Sea Grant Law and Policy Journal* provides a forum for the timely exploration of and dissemination of information on legal topics of relevance to the Sea Grant network of extension agents, researchers, coastal managers and users, and local decision-makers.

- a. During the 2010 – 2013 time period, a minimum of 140 legal scholars, practicing attorneys, coastal managers, and Sea Grant extension agents will participate in four *Sea Grant Law and Policy Journal* symposiums addressing the legal aspects of emerging coastal management issues, such as climate change.
- b. By 2010, *the Sea Grant Law and Policy Journal* is available in the leading legal databases, including Hein Online, Westlaw, and Lexis.

14. Federal, state, and local governments and coastal communities take action to reduce legal barriers to the sustainable use of coastal resources.

- a. During the 2010 – 2013 time period, the NSLGC will fund \$1 million in extramural research and outreach projects to address legal issues associated with healthy coastal ecosystem, sustainable coastal development, sustainable seafood, and hazard resilience.