

## **Action Items from Panel Meeting held March 6-7, 2006**

- The Program Evaluation Committee will distribute the NRC Report, following its release, to the entire Panel.
- Within 30 days after receiving the NRC Report, Panel members are asked to send their comments/recommendations to the Program Evaluation Committee.
- The Program Evaluation Committee will compile a draft response to the NRC report from the Panel's and SGA's comments/recommendations.
- The Program Evaluation Committee will submit the NRC Report draft response to the full Panel and SGA President for comment.
- The Program Evaluation Committee will create a draft final response to the NRC Report, which will be transmitted to the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee will take final action regarding the response to the NRC Report on behalf of the Panel and send that response to the Acting NSGO Director.
- Mr. Kudrna was charged to cull and format BMPs from the PAT reports, which will then be placed on the NSGO Website.
- The NSGO Director's letter concerning the NSGO program review should be sent to the PAT chair and vice chair with information regarding the quality of the PAT report.
- Dr. Cammen's "PAT Guidelines" should be included in the PAT Manual and added to the NSGO Website.
- The program review reply letter to the NSGO Director should be sent to the PAT chair.
- By the end of April, the Membership Committee will compile a suite of names of potential Panel members.
- Dr. Cammen will select three new Panel members in May.
- The Membership Committee, on an annual basis, will write a letter to identify areas of expertise and diversity needed for potential Panel members and will circulate that letter throughout the Sea Grant network.
- Dr. Cammen will provide the Panel with updated names of Theme Team Chairs.
- Panel members should let Mr. Robinson know when they will be available to participate in a teleconference between the spring and fall meetings.

**National Sea Grant Review Panel Meeting  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Washington, DC  
March 6, 2006**

**Panel Members Present:** Robin Alden, Peter Bell, Ross Heath, Manuel Hernandez-Avila, Frank Kudrna, Nathaniel Robinson (Chair), Jeffrey Stephan, William Stubblefield, Judith Weis, John Woeste (Vice Chair)

**Panel Members Absent:** John Byrne, Robert Duce, Geraldine Knatz, C. Barry Raleigh, Jerry Schubel

**Ex-Officio Panel Members:** (NSGO) Leon Cammen (designated Federal official)

**NSGO Staff:** Megan Agy, Susan Borda, Kola Garber, Jacques Oliver, Amy Painter, Melissa Pearson, Terry Smith

**Other Attendees:**

**NOAA:** Timothy Keeney, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere; Eric Webster, Director of NOAA Legislative Affairs Office

**Texas Sea Grant:** Ralph Rayburn, Deputy Director

**Call to Order (Mr. Robinson)**

- Roll was called
- A motion was made to approve the minutes from the November meeting, the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel
- A motion was made to approve the agenda as written, the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel
- The Executive Committee has improved in keeping Panel members informed
- Introductory Remarks (Vision for the Panel)
  - Involve Sea Grant with more strategic partners
  - Help Sea Grant reach a \$103M appropriation
  - Maximize participation of all Panel members in activities such as
    - Replying to the NRC Report
    - Selecting the next NSGO Director
  - Increase communication by experimenting with a full Panel teleconference between meetings
  - Collaborate and meet with entities such as
    - OAR Assistant and Deputy Administrators
    - OMB staff
    - Congressional staff
    - DOC officials

**Chairman's Report (Mr. Robinson)**

- Executive Committee Teleconferences
  - January 12 – Discussed organizational matters
  - January 27 - Discussed three TATs
    - Virginia – Agreed with the report, requested additional information to decertify, included that information and forwarded to the NSGO Director
    - New Jersey – Accepted the recommendations but separated into addressing the appeal and improving systemically
    - Ports and Harbors – Accepted as presented and forwarded to the NSGO Director
  - February 27 – Discussed the NJ Sea Grant appeal and today’s Panel meeting

**NSGO Acting Director’s Update (Dr. Cammen)**

- Replacing Dr. Baird might take time
- The Agency’s overriding approach is to work as one NOAA
- Sea Grant’s reauthorization legislation runs through 2008
- The SGA will start working on reauthorization in the fall, issues include
  - Raising the amount of funds not requiring match
  - Changing the role of the NSGO and staff (five percent administrative cap is a problem with funding decreasing and staff leaving)
  - Discussing within the network the direction of the international program
- A team approach is needed to implement the NRC Report recommendations
- Program review changes will have to wait for NRC Report recommendations
- NSGO strategic plan
  - New plan required by legislation every four years, due the fall of 2007
  - Next plan should be a unifying one for the entire network
    - NOAA priorities need to be addressed
    - A joint committee (SGA, Panel, NSGO) should be formed to decide the process of writing a new plan, *not the plan itself*
    - Program plans should be cycled with the NSGO plan so that their priorities will include national ones
    - Include a major focus area in the national plan with performance measures to allow states to contribute nationally and satisfy OMB
    - Program Officers should get involved in the process of program strategic planning, which would eliminate that category during the PAT review
    - The value of implementation plans needs to be revisited
    - Cutting edge research needs to be given an opportunity in Sea Grant
- NSGO staffing
  - Drs. Baird, Day, McVey, Schuler, and Ms. Carter have left or are leaving
  - Current funding only allows for Dr. Baird to be replaced, maybe Ms. Carter
  - Introduced two non-permanent staff members
    - Jacques Oliver – Knauss fellows, specialty biotechnology
    - Melissa Pearson - ballast water and Panel contact
- Panel contacts
  - Cathy Connors, travel, time and attendance
  - Leon Cammen, policy

- Melissa Person, other matters

### **NOAA Legislative Update (Eric Webster)**

- Worked on Sea Grant reauthorization legislation in 2002
- Important to educate Congress about program evaluation and the Panel's role
- Last minute budget cuts caused the DOC budget to be decreased, NOAA's extra-curricular programs were the easiest targets
- Sea Grant could maintain its FY06 \$55M funding in FY07
- NOAA is competing against other agencies (NIST, NSF) for budget increases
- The challenge is to
  - Organize constituents to support NOAA overall
  - Make DOC understand the good work of NOAA
  - Publicize the NOAA and Sea Grant response to Hurricane Katrina
  - Educate NOAA about Sea Grant's extension and communication abilities
- The new SGA lobbyist will be helpful
- OMB favors more competitive programs
- The Ocean Commission (OC) Report lost momentum due to timing of its release

### **Program and Evaluation Committee Report (Mr. Kudrna)**

- As a follow-up to Dr. Cammen's report, three Panel priorities are
  - NSGO Director selection
  - Effect of budget cuts on programs in FY07
  - NRC Report recommendations
- Discussion
  - Overlapping programs within NOAA need to be evaluated
  - NSGO strategic plan can be used to convince OMB that Sea Grant is a national program
  - A Sea Grant international program is not a priority
- The Executive Committee is working on number 6, category 3 of the "Program Evaluation Committee Report" and is recommending
  - Competition of all extension non-competed projects
  - Re-certification of programs
- Panel recommendations regarding the NRC Report
  - Following release of the NRC Report, it will be distributed to the entire Panel
  - Within 30 days, Panel members and the SGA are asked to send their comments/recommendations about the Report to the Program Evaluation Committee
  - The Program Evaluation Committee will compile those comments/recommendations into a draft response to the Report
  - This draft response to the Report will be submitted to the full Panel and SGA President and be used to create a draft final response which will be transmitted to the Executive Committee
- A motion was made to give authority to the Executive Committee to take final action regarding the response to the NRC Report on behalf of the Panel and to

send that response to the Acting NSGO Director, the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel

### **2005 Final Review Process (Dr. Cammen)**

#### *NSGO Perspective*

- The final review was for the third year of a four year cycle
- The NSGO reviewed seven programs that were evaluated in 2005: Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Oregon, Ohio, New York, Woods Hole
- A vote of 2/3s of the staff was needed to change a PAT score
- Seven ratings out of 98 were changed from those of the PAT (two up, five down)
- Most changes were in the Strategic Planning category
- NSGO PAT rating changes have decreased since 2003

#### *Panel Report (Dr. Heath and Mr. Robinson)*

- The level of preparation by the NSGO staff was impressive
- 2/3 vote requirement to change a grade is good, there were no marginal cases
- Questioned the value of rating excellent programs every four years
- Both Panel observers asked only for clarification, did not make comments
- All Program Officers used the same template for their presentations
- Templates could be provided to the PATs so they could use it in writing the report
- The final grade and the wording of the report should be consistent with rationale for the grade
- PAT deviations from the manual make the NSGO final review more difficult
- Grading philosophies need to be more consistent (bottom up vs. top down)
- A CD could be used to train new PAT members
- Duplicate benchmarks in the PAT Manual should be eliminated
- Time spent on rating strategic and implementation plans is unproductive
- BMPs need to be shared with the full Panel
- A motion was made to charge Mr. Kudrna to cull and format BMPs from the PAT reports, which will be placed on the NSGO Website; the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel
- PAT chairs should receive results of the NSGO program review
- A motion was made that the NSGO Director's letter to program directors should be sent to the PAT chair and vice chair with information regarding the quality of the PAT report, the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel
- Panel member oversight of the NSGO final review will be rotated

### **2006 PAT Process Overview (Dr. Cammen)**

- A vice chair is needed for the New Hampshire PAT, anyone who can fill this position should contact the chair Dr. Bell or the Program Officer Dr. Cammen
- Discussion of Dr. Cammen's "PAT Guidelines," a list distributed to the Panel
  - Grading/Justification (3)
    - Recommends starting at "Meets Benchmark"
    - Grading from the bottom will encourage excellence

- PAT Manual (4)
  - The PAT report should address all benchmarks
  - Benchmarks are criteria for determining a program's rank
- Explanation of Grades (5) and Less than "Highest Performance" Grade (6)
  - Clearly state the basis of the grade
  - Make suggestions on how to improve the grade
- Dr. Cammen's "PAT Guidelines" should be included in the PAT Manual and added to the NSGO Website
- The program reply letter to the NSGO Director should be sent to the PAT chair

**Open Discussion: Panel's 2006–2007 Priorities (led by Mr. Robinson)**

*FACA Responsibilities (Dr. Cammen)*

- Meetings of the full Panel and its sub-committees are under FACA rules
- Working groups are not under FACA rules
- Panel members are Federal employees and restricted from lobbying
- Panel visits to the Hill should be clearly educational or informational

*Reauthorization Committee (Dr. Woeste)*

- Members of the committee are Ms. Alden, Dr. Heath, Mr. Stephan, Dr. Stubblefield, Dr. Weis and Mr. Kudrna (unofficially) and Mr. Robinson has sat in on meetings
- The committee met last night to make changes to its charge, a paper was distributed with the changes
- Panel agreement on the those changes will allow the committee to proceed
- Panel can discuss the changes on Tuesday

**Reports/Updates**

*Membership Committee (Dr. Weis)*

- Dr. Knatz, Mr. Kudra, and Mr. Stephan are leaving the Panel
- All departing Panel members are from the private sector
- Six names of the best potential Panel members were submitted last December
- These candidates lack the geographic representation and expertise of departing Panel members
- Committee selections regarding diversity, region and expertise need to be addressed
- The final decision on selection of new Panel members is made by the NSGO Acting Director, NOAA, DOC and the White House
- Major categories with a void need to be identified to the NSGO Acting Director
- The scope of the committee's work can be discussed Tuesday

**Swearing-in Ceremony: New and Reappointed Panel Members (Mr. Keeney)**

*Comments by Mr. Keeney*

- Thinks highly of Sea Grant

- Sea Grant's components can be used by NOAA
  - Extension is spectacular in solving problems at the local level
  - Marine education network is very effective
  - Communications network is a tremendous strength
- Sea Grant is in a period of transition
  - Selection of a new NSGO Director expected within six to nine months
  - Reauthorization is before Congress again
  - FY06 appropriation was low
- Discussion
  - Consult with Scott Rayder on how to educate the Secretary of DOC and his Deputy about Sea Grant
  - Lessons learned by NOAA in the appropriation process
    - Competes with NASA and NSF in the science bill
    - Must work cooperatively with NASA and NSF
    - Programs were targeted for appropriation reductions
    - Has lost champions on the Hill
    - Message to Congress must be "to fund base programs"
  - Topics to discuss with Otto Wolfe
    - The extension service
    - How grants are competed and matching funds
    - Participation of Sea Grant in ecosystem management
    - Sea Grant as a stimulus of regional priorities
    - Re-competing of Sea Grant programs
- Mr. Keeney swore in the following Panel members
  - Ms. Alden (reappointed)
  - Mr. Robinson (reappointed)
  - Dr. Stubblefield (new)

**Panel Meeting Recessed until 8:30 on Tuesday Morning (Mr. Robinson)**

## **Tuesday, March 7**

**Panel Members Present:** Robin Alden, Peter Bell, Ross Heath, Manuel Hernandez-Avila, Frank Kudrna, Nathaniel Robinson (Chair), Jeffrey Stephan, William Stubblefield, Judith Weis, John Woeste (Vice Chair)

**Panel Members Absent:** John Byrne, Robert Duce, Geraldine Knatz, C. Barry Raleigh, Jerry Schubel

**Ex-Officio Panel Members:** (NSGO) Leon Cammen (designated Federal official)

**NSGO Staff:** Susan Borda, Kola Garber, Jamie Krauk, Melissa Pearson, Terry Smith

### **Other Attendees:**

**OAR:** Richard Spinrad, Assistant Administrator

**Texas Sea Grant:** Ralph Rayburn, Deputy Director

### **Call to Order (Mr. Robinson)**

- Roll was called
- Agenda changes
  - Review the Reauthorization Committee's "Draft Charge Statement"
  - Discuss the scope of the Membership Committee's work
  - Dr. Kramer is unable to attend

### **Reauthorization Committee's "Draft Charge Statement" (Dr. Woeste)**

- A motion was made to approve the committee's "Draft Charge Statement" and to incorporate it into the "Policies and Procedures Manual," the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel

### **Membership Committee's Scope of Work (Dr. Weis)**

- The committee needs more names of potential Panel members
  - Candidates with a private sector background
  - Candidates knowledgeable about HBCUs
- Dr. Cammen does not need ratings for diversity, region and expertise to select new Panel members, although these ratings could be made available to him
- A motion was made for the committee to submit names of vetted Panel candidates to Dr. Cammen without rating for diversity, region and expertise, the motion was seconded and passed by the Panel
- Discussion
  - By the end of April, the committee will compile a suite of names of potential Panel members



- The committee should send a discussion letter for basis of selection to Panel members along with the names of candidates
- Dr. Cammen will review these candidate's qualifications and select three new Panel members in May
- The posting in the *Federal Register* brings very little response
- A call to the network for candidates should be institutionalized
- A motion was made that the Membership Committee, on an annual basis, write a letter to identify areas of expertise and diversity needed for potential Panel members and to circulate that letter throughout the Sea Grant network; the motion was seconded and passed

### **Theme Team Reports/Updates**

- Panel members should be involved in the conference calls of their theme teams
- Panel members are only advisors to theme teams
- Dr. Cammen will provide the Panel with updated names of Theme Team Chairs

### **NSGO Staff Reports**

#### *Competitions (Ms. Pearson)*

- Sea Grant
  - National Strategic Investments
  - Regional Research
  - Sea Grant and Partners
  - Aquatic Nuisance Species
- NOAA/Sea Grant
  - Climate Extension Specialist (anticipated)
  - Ballast Water
  - Marine Aquaculture Program
  - Marine Debris Program

#### *Communications (Ms. Krauk)*

- Products
  - Review of Panel Website
  - Biennial Report (spring)
  - E-Newsletter (one or two weeks)
- Media Relations Office - no funding is available
- BRIDGE
  - Marine Science Website using NOAA data, hosted by VIMs
  - Non-match funding for the Website has been halved
- Sea Grant's Beltway Brownbag
  - Quarterly meetings are held at the NOAA Library
  - Next speaker, Ed Melvin on Seabird By-catch (Washington Sea Grant)
- Discussion
  - A Sea Grant one-pager is needed by the Panel to take to the Hill
  - Information about Sea Grant's response to Katrina is needed

#### *Fellowships (Drs. Garber and Smith)*

- Knauss Fellowship (Dr. Garber)
  - Class of 2006 met with Admiral Lautenbacher last week
  - Class of 2007 applications are due April 5
    - Selection panel will meet in May
    - Dr. Weis will serve on that panel
  - Class of 2008 notice will soon be posted in the *Federal Register*
- NOAA/NMFS Fellowship (Dr. Smith)
  - Fellowship has been in place for six years
  - 31 Fellowships have been awarded
    - Population Dynamics (20)
    - Marine Resources (11)
  - Class of 2006 has 18 applicants
- Sea Grant/AFS Fellowship
  - Fellowship lasts for 18 months
  - Fellow organizes a Sea Grant/AFS biennial symposium

*Budget (Mr. Eigen)*

- Sea Grant's FY06 appropriation (with rescissions of \$800,000) was \$54,736
- Regional and Partnership Programs were cancelled for lack of funding
- Core funding was kept whole by saving \$4M through budget manipulation
- Discussion
  - Dr. Cammen is optimistic about having FY05 funding restored
  - Panel meetings and PATs will not be affected by budget cuts

**Report: Assembly of Sea Grant Extension Program Leaders (Ralph Rayburn)**

- Distributed an Assembly briefing paper to the Panel
- Assembly bylaws call for its immediate past Chair to be liaison to the Panel
- The independent Assembly meeting is in Rincon, PR; May 23-25
  - Communicators will also attend
  - Panel members are invited to attend
- The Beltway Brownbag Program is a satellite meeting with other NOAA programs to increase their involvement with Sea Grant extension
- The Assembly is working on selecting candidates for the Wick Award (career of involvement) to be given at its May meeting
- Panel liaisons to the extension Ms. Alden, Drs. Hernandez and Woeste will participate in the selection process

**A Conversation with OAR's Assistant Administrator (Dr. Spinrad)**

- Activities since meeting with the Executive Committee in the fall
  - Named an interim NSGO Director
  - Published an NSGO Director position description at end of 2005
    - Many SES vacancies within NOAA
    - 10 applicants for the NSGO Director position, which is good
- NSGO Director selection process
  - As Federal employees, Panel members will be involved

- Human Resources Office makes the first cut
- Two weeks later, a screening Panel meets to select candidates
- In three or four weeks, candidates will be interviewed (April 30)
  - An SES selection could be in place by mid May
  - A non-SES selection could be in place in three to five months (Sept. 30)
- Dr. Cammen needs support for his matrix Ecosystem responsibilities
- OAR has tacit approval to hire an Assistant Director of Research
- Concerns
  - Sea Grant needs better connectivity to NOAA's
    - Coastal Management Program
    - Fisheries Centers
    - National Weather Service
  - Sea Grant's outreach and local connections need to be utilized by NOAA
  - Sea Grant is isolated, NOAA programs need to learn how to work with it
- Discussion
  - Sea Grant could be better utilized by NOAA through the five-year research plan which
    - Should include outreach components
    - Be framed around a common element such as hazards resiliency research
  - A national ocean research plan will result from the OC Report, its priorities must be addressed by NOAA and OAR
  - OAR will have a Communications Director in two weeks
  - Take away message to Dr. Spinrad: the Panel wants to be involved in phase two of the NSGO Director selection process
- Message for Panel visits to the Hill
  - NOAA, NSF, and NASA are not competitors, should align their research
  - Recommends recertification of Sea Grant programs to satisfy OMB's requirement for competition

### **Other Business (Mr. Robinson)**

- Panel members should let Mr. Robinson know when they can participate in a teleconference between the spring and fall meetings
- The Panel's meeting next spring should be coordinated with the SGA meeting if Sea Grant Week is not held
  - No host of Sea Grant week next spring has been identified
  - Instead, maybe Sea Grant components could gather for a retreat-like meeting

### **Adjournment (Mr. Robinson)**

- A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, seconded and passed by the Panel
- Panel members will participate in Administration and Hill information sessions during the afternoon
- Ms. Krauk provided the Panel with educational one-pagers to distribute