

Site Review Visit Guidance

(2014 – 2017 Cycle)

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Overview

The National Sea Grant College Program's Planning, Implementation and Evaluation (PIE) guidance memorandum for the 2014-2017 PIE cycle released in April 2014 can be found on the National Sea Grant website, [here](#). The PIE guidance includes an evaluation system of the individual Sea Grant programs that includes Annual Reports, Annual National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) Reviews, Site Review Visits, Program Review Panels, and a Quadrennial NSGO Review. The PIE evaluation system is used to assess eligibility for recertification and a determination of merit fund eligibility for each program.

Changes to PIE System

In 2016 the NSGAB established a PIE II Assessment Committee to assess the efficacy and implications of the PIE system and recommended revisions to improve and streamline the process where possible. The PIE II Assessment Committee found that the existing PIE evaluation system could be improved through better coordination, more transparency, incorporating greater efficiencies in work load, and integrating annual reviews, site visits, and an external evaluation process into the overall four-year evaluation. Based on the 2016 PIE II assessment and subsequent discussions with the NSGAB and the Sea Grant network, this document incorporates many of the 2016 PIE II assessment recommendations for improving the PIE process into the 2014 – 2017 evaluation cycle. Specifically, there are three changes that will be implemented during the 2014 – 2017 evaluation cycle that are incorporated into this guidance document:

- The Performance Review Panel (PRP) has been eliminated in the 2014-2017 four-year evaluation process. The Site Review Visit now includes those performance components that were previously reviewed during PRPs.
- There is now an Evaluation Committee under the leadership of the NSGAB. The Evaluation Committee will provide an external review of the findings of the Site Review Visits of the individual programs.
- There is also an Independent Review Panel (IRP) under the leadership of the NSGAB. The IRP will provide an overall review of the effectiveness of the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) and the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO).
- Funding sources used to determine allocation of merit funding will no longer include leveraged funds that are managed by the programs. Funding sources used to determine allocation of merit funding will still include appropriated funds (federal and match) and pass thru funds.

Summary of Evaluation Components

The 2014-2017 evaluation components began with annual reporting of progress through program Annual Reports and NSGO Annual Reviews. Information provided in Annual Reports is used by each program and the NSGO to evaluate progress relative to the State Program Strategic Plans and serve as a basis for the Site Review Visit evaluation.

A Program Site Review Visit is conducted once every four years to ensure each program meets the *Standards of Excellence* and includes an assessment of progress in relation to their State Programs Strategic Plan. A more detailed look of what a Site Review Visit entails is provided in sections I-VII of this document.

After all Site Review Visits have been completed an external evaluation will occur by the NSGAB. The NSGAB will convene an Evaluation Committee to ensure that the program's Site Review Visits were conducted in a consistent and equitable manner. In parallel an Independent Review Panel (IRP) will use the findings of the Site Review Visits and additional information from the NSGO to evaluate the effectiveness of the NSGO and the NSGCP overall.

Finally, a Quadrennial NSGO Review will serve as a complete program evaluation review that is based on the: (a) Site Review Team (SRT) report and ratings that have been approved by the NSGAB, (b) the Sea Grant programs Director's responses to the SRT recommendations, and (c) review by the NSGAB Evaluation Committee. Following the Quadrennial NSGO review, the NSGCP Director will make the final determination of whether or not each Sea Grant program meets the *Standards of Excellence* and thus if programs are: 1) recertified; and 2) eligible for merit funding. Once a program has been determined to meet the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence* per [Sea Grants Federal Regulations \(15 CFR 918.3\)](#) (Appendix A) the program will be recertified for the next four-year Omnibus cycle (2022-2025). Programs that meet the *Standards of Excellence* are then eligible for merit funding. The relative amount of merit funding a program may receive is determined by their overall Site Review Visit rating and the size of the merit pool. Since the actual merit funding amount depends on the size of the merit pool, merit funding cannot be finalized until Sea Grant's appropriation levels for that fiscal year has been determined.

A timeline for the Site Review Visits, the External Evaluation, and the expanded NSGO Review is found in Appendix B.

The sections below describe in more detail the Site Review Visit goals and process, the roles, responsibilities, and composition of the Site Review Team, and the evaluation criteria and materials used during the Site Review Visit.

I. Site Review Visit Overview

The Site Review Visit is the only in-person, on-site comprehensive review of the program. It gives the Federal Program Officer (FPO), members of the NSGAB and other reviewers the opportunity to meet with the Sea Grant program management, their Advisory Board members, stakeholders, and university officials. This four-year evaluation looks at the integrated impact of each Sea Grant program towards its strategic plan as well as assessing each program's success in

meeting the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence* per [Sea Grants Federal Regulations \(15 CFR 918.3\)](#) (Appendix A).

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Site Review Visit is to help the NSGO determine whether the programs included in the Sea Grant Network are meeting the primary drivers for planning and evaluation processes found in statutory requirements 33 USC § 1123 and whether programs are meeting the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence* per [Sea Grants Federal Regulations \(15 CFR 918\)](#).

Statutory drivers for planning, implementation, and evaluation reside in legislation requirements (33 USC § 1121 et seq):

- National Network must have a strategic plan (Legislation – § 1123(d)(2)(a))
- All programs must have a four year plan that establishes priorities for the National Sea Grant College Program (Legislation – § 1123(c)(1))
- All programs must implement their plans (Legislation – § 1126(d)(1))
- All programs must be evaluated (Legislation – § 1123 (d)(3)(a))
- Every two years – the NSGAB is to report to Congress on the progress made toward meeting the priorities identified in the National Network plan (Legislation – § 1128(b)(2))

Regulatory drivers according to the Federal Regulations on eligibility, qualifications, and responsibility of the Sea Grant College Program, [15 CFR 918.3 and 918.5](#), state that Sea Grant programs must meet the criteria encompassed by these categories. In addition, designation will be made on the basis of merit per Sea Grant Federal Regulation, [15 CFR 918.4 and 918.6](#) upon the ability to maintain a high quality of performance consistent with the requirement outlined.

Goals

Sea Grant's program evaluation processes are designed to ensure the greatest benefit for federal and state investment and support continued improvement and impact of Sea Grant activities. The goals of evaluation are to meet Congressional mandates for evaluation and merit; to evaluate overall effectiveness of Sea Grant Colleges and Institutions; and to improve program performance. The goals of reporting are to provide data on a routine basis to assess program progress towards common performance measures and metrics, impacts and accomplishments, and financial management.

Process

All programs are evaluated to the extent possible in a similar manner and against common national performance measure and metric benchmarks. The SRT uses the site review materials

and feedback during the Site Review Visit to determine program progress in the *Standards of Excellence* four areas:

- Program Management and Organization (organization, program team approach, and support)
- Stakeholder Engagement (relevance, advisory services, and education and training)
- Collaborative Network Activities (relationships and coordination)
- Performance (leadership and productivity)

All programs will also go through a more in depth review of the performance section of the *Standards of Excellence* to evaluate how effectively they performed with respect to leadership and productivity. This evaluation will look into the program's progress towards its own State Program Strategic Plan by the national focus areas. During this review, impacts, accomplishments and success reaching performance measures will be assessed. The national focus areas are:

- Healthy Coastal Ecosystems
- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Resilience Communities and Economies
- Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

At the conclusion of each Site Review Visit, the SRT produces a report that:

- Determines if the program meets the *Standards of Excellence*
- Provides numerical rating scores based on performance of the program's national focus areas
- Describes findings, recommendations, and suggestions to improve the Sea Grant program's management and organization, stakeholder engagement, networking activities, and performance
- Highlights best management practices or techniques that have shown results superior to those achieved with other means. The best management practices identified are shared with other Sea Grant programs

II. Elements of the Site Review Visit

Site Review Team Composition

Each Site Review Team is composed of the following members: a chair who is a FPO, a co-chair who is a member of the National Sea Grant Advisory Board, a Sea Grant Director from a different program from the program being evaluated, and two or three external non-Sea Grant members. External non-Sea Grant members are ideally from the program's region (as long as there are no conflicts of interest), who may include:

- Representatives of appropriate commercial and industrial entities
- Directors of institutes, centers, and laboratories

- Leaders of city/county, state and federal resource agencies and programs (including NOAA)
- Senior officials of other academic institutions of from the program being evaluated
- Directors of cooperative extension programs or experiment stations
- Other National Sea Grant Advisory Board members
- Recognized practitioners in appropriate fields (research, extension education, communications, etc.)

The Advisory Board member is selected by the NSGCP Director in consultation with the Chair of the NSGAB Evaluation Committee. The Federal Program Officer and the assigned Advisory Board member will select the external members of the SRT. Prior to inviting the proposed external members to be part of the SRT, the list of potential external non-Sea Grant SRT members will be reviewed by Sea Grant program to assure there are no conflicts of interest. SRTs may also include non-participating observers (such as other FPOs).

Team Chair

The FPO for the Sea Grant program being reviewed chairs the SRT. The duties and responsibilities of the SRT Chair are as follows:

- The role of each FPO serving as an SRT Chair is that of facilitator; facilitate and serve as primary spokesman for the SRT, communicating on the SRT's behalf to the Sea Grant program, NSGO, university officials of Sea Grant institutions, constituent organizations, and the general public.
- Work with the co-Chair (Advisory Board member) to select and recruit other SRT members.
- Plan the site review visit in consultation co-Chair and the Director of the Sea Grant program being reviewed:
 - Assist Sea Grant Program in formulating an agenda appropriate for the visit; and
 - Approve the public notice of the site visit, drafted and issued by the program Director.
- Brief the SRT concerning the conduct of the visit and supervise the conduct of the SRT during the review. Ensure that the review process conforms to the Federal Advisory Committee Act and to this guidance.
- Coordinate drafting findings, suggestions, and recommendations during the Site Review Visit.
- Conduct the exit briefing with the program Director and appropriate university officials.
 - Brief out findings, suggestions, and recommendations
 - Answer any questions
- Issue the final Site Review Visit report within 45 days of the review to the Program Director.

Team Co-Chair

An Advisory Board member will be appointed as the co-Chair. No Advisory Board member who serves on a Sea Grant program's advisory board or steering committee may be involved in that program's SRT. The duties and responsibilities of the co-Chair is as follows:

- Serve as the lead reviewer
- Work with the SRT Chair to select and recruit appropriate SRT members
- Plan the Site Review Visit in consultation with the SRT Chair and the program Sea Grant director
- Coordinate, with the support of the SRT Chair, drafting findings, suggestions, and recommendations from the team during the Site Review Visit
- Present, with the support of the SRT Chair, draft findings, suggestions and recommendations to university and Sea Grant program leadership during the Site Review Visit

III. Public Notice of the Site Review Visit

A minimum of thirty days prior to the Site Review Visit, the Director of the Sea Grant program under review shall issue a public notice that the program will be visited by a Site Review Team convened by the Director of the NSGCP on [X dates]. The notice invites any person to email comments on the program at least one week before the Site Review Visit date to oar.sg-feedback@noaa.gov. The notice will be sent to relevant partners and stakeholders, placed on the home page of the program's website, and included in relevant email newsletters or announcements, or stakeholder lists. An example of a public notice can be found in Appendix C.

IV. Schedule

The Site Review Visit is designed to be conducted up to three days. The first two to two and a half days (Tuesday –Thursday) should be dedicated to discussing content and the last one-half day on drafting report findings and briefing the program management team and appropriate university officials. A SRT logistics planning schedule to both provide overall information for programs and detailed information for the SRT Chair (FPO), co-Chair and SRTs is found in Appendix D. The logistics planning schedule for Site Review Visit preparation is to be used as a tool, if deemed useful, it is not required to use.

V. Site Review Visit Materials

The Sea Grant Programs and the FPOs are expected to use this section as guidance for preparing and organizing materials for use during the Site Review Visit.

At least four weeks prior to the Site Review Visit the materials listed below will be sent to the FPO (SRT Chair). The FPO will collect and then distribute this information to the rest of the

SRT reviewers. Please refer to the timeline in Appendix B and the SRT logistics planning schedule in Appendix D to assist in preparation.

Details about the following materials can be found in Appendix E.

Materials Provided by the NSGO

The FPO is responsible for the following materials:

- A summary of findings from the previous Site Review Visit report and Performance Review Panel report
- A summary of findings from the Sea Grant program's response to the previous Site Review Visit report and Performance Review Panel report (if applicable)
- The 2014-2017 National Network Strategic Plan
- A selected list of the Program's Annual Report Impacts and Accomplishments from the past four years and all national performance measures and metrics (PIER Report)

Materials Provided by the Sea Grant Program

The Sea Grant program is responsible for the following materials:

- Agenda
- Program's 2014-2017 Strategic Plan
- Briefing Book, no longer than 25 pages

VI. Site Review Visit Criteria

Sea Grant Programs will be evaluated for determination of meeting the *Standards of Excellence* and for determination of Performance progress against the State Program Strategic Plan. Details about the criteria that will be used to evaluate the Sea Grant Programs during the Site Review Visit can be found below and in Appendix F.

Determination of the Standards of Excellence

According to the Federal Regulations on eligibility, qualifications, and responsibility of the Sea Grant College Program, 15 CFR 918.3(b)(1)-(9) (see Appendix A), a Sea Grant program must meet the criteria that are encompassed by these categories. The Site Review Visits will focus on those aspects that fit within four broad categories of the *Standards of Excellence*:

- Program Management and Organization (organization, program team approach, and support)
- Stakeholder Engagement (relevance, advisory services, and education and training)
- Collaborative Network Activities (relationships and coordination)
- Performance (leadership and productivity)

Determination of Performance Rating Score

The SRT is also responsible for providing a rating score for each program that participates within national focus areas (identified in the State Program Strategic Plan and Sea Grant appropriated funds). The SRT uses the following rating scale:

- *Highest Performance* - exceeds expectations by an exceptional margin in most areas/aspects (1)
- *Exceeds Expectations* by a substantial margin in some areas/aspects (2)
- *Meets Expectations* in most areas/aspects (3)
- *Below Expectations* in some areas/aspects (4)
- *Unsuccessful* in most areas/aspects (5)

At the end of the Site Review Visit, SRTs should highlight preliminary findings and provide recommendations and suggestions to improve the Sea Grant program's management and organization, stakeholder engagement, networking activities, and performance, as well as highlight any "best management practices". The SRT will also be responsible for providing a preliminary rating score for each program's performance within the national focus areas, as identified by its State Program Strategic Plan and Sea Grant appropriated funds. This information will be shared during the Exit Interview and captured in the Site Review Report. More information on the Exit Interview and the Site Visit Report are listed below.

VII. Exit Interview

Prior to leaving the Site Review Visit, the SRT conducts an exit interview with the program Director and appropriate university officials to summarize the preliminary findings, recommendations, suggestions, and performance rating scores for each national focus area the program participates in. If there is enough time, the SRT may choose to first brief the program Director and other staff members, and then brief the university officials.

VIII. Site Review Report

Within 45 calendar days after each Site Review Visit, the SRT will produce a report determining if the program meets the *Standards of Excellence*. The report will describe findings and make suggestions and recommendations to improve the Sea Grant program's management and organization, stakeholder engagement, networking activities, and performance, and provide numerical ratings based on performance of the program's national focus areas.

The final site review report will have a section highlighting findings, recommendations, and suggestions as well as any "best management practices" identified:

- A *finding* is a conclusion based on the Site Review Visit
- A *recommendation* is a formally prescribed course of action for which the Sea Grant program is accountable
- A *suggestion* is an idea that is presented for consideration

- A *best management practice* is a method or technique that has shown results superior to those achieved with other means. The best management practices identified are shared with other Sea Grant programs

The site review report must state whether the Sea Grant program meets the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence* (based on the Sea Grant Federal Regulations, see Appendix A) and ratings per national focus area. The draft report, written on-site and before the end of the visit, will form the basis for the site review report. The report will be finalized by the SRT Chair (FPO) and sent to the NSGCP Director and to the State Program Director within 45 calendar days of the review.

An outline of what is included in a Site Review Report is located in Appendix G.

IX. Program Response

Within 15 calendar days of when the program receives its Site Review Report, the program is required to respond to all recommended changes via written response to the NSGCP Director. The response should explain how the program has already implemented, intends to implement, or why the program declines to implement each recommended course of action. The Sea Grant program is not required to respond to suggestions, but program leadership is encouraged to consider implementing those deemed useful and appropriate.

X. After the Site Review Visit

External Evaluation

The NSGAB members will convene an external Evaluation Committee to provide an external review of the Site Review Visit findings and responses from the programs to ensure that the program's Site Review Visits were conducted in a consistent and equitable manner.

The NSGAB members will also convene an Independent Review Panel (IRP) comprised of members from the NSGAB, NOAA, SGA, leaders from academia/industry, and State/Federal Agencies will provide an external evaluation of the effectiveness of the NSGO and the NSGCP overall. The main purpose is to evaluate the NSGCP in its entirety (i.e. all the individual programs as well as the NSGO at least once every 4 years). This approach allows external reviewers to move beyond evaluating recertification and ratings, challenges, and progress being made in individual programs, and to consider the broader issues by evaluating the management of the NSGO and the overall impact of the NSGCP. These include identifying areas for growth or improvement, exploring ways to strengthen the NSGCP network relationships, examining the nature of the individual program's relationship with NSGO, and the effectiveness and credibility of annual evaluation (to support findings about the 'state' of the individual programs as well as the network overall).

At the conclusion of the external evaluation process, the Evaluation Committee will report their findings from both the Evaluation Committee and the Independent Review Panel (IRP) to the NSGAB for approval. The Evaluation Committee findings about individual Sea Grant programs will be provided to NSGCP Director in advance of the Quadrennial NSGO Review (see below). The IRP report will be provided to the NSGCP Director and subsequently shared with the OAR and NOAA leadership and the SGA, and incorporated into the next NSGAB Report to Congress.

Quadrennial NSGO Review Process

The four-year valuation process wraps up with a Quadrennial NSGO Review. The NSGO Review includes a complete program evaluation review that is based on the: (a) SRT report and ratings, (b) the Sea Grant program Director's response to the SRT recommendations, and (c) the Evaluation Committees findings.

At the conclusion of the Quadrennial NSGO Review, the NSGCP Director will make the final determination of whether or not a Sea Grant program meets the *Standards of Excellence* and thus if a program is: 1) recertified, 2) eligible for merit funding, and the 3) determination of final merit score. The NSGCP Director will require a program that doesn't meet the *Standards of Excellence* or if the program's performance rates poorly, to submit a corrective action plan for a particular area that is not meeting standards.

The NSGCP Director will submit to each Sea Grant program a final evaluation and recommendation letter that summarizes the findings from the Site Review Visit and the Quadrennial NSGO Review. The letter will include recertification status and whether the program is eligible for merit funding. If the program is eligible for merit funding the letter will include an overall merit score and the projected amount of merit funding the program will receive over the next four-year cycle.

More information on the recertification of Sea Grant programs and allocation of merit funding can be found in Appendix H.

Appendix A: Sea Grant Program Standards of Excellence

This section lists the *Standards of Excellence* that are expected of every Sea Grant program. This information can also be found in [Sea Grant's Federal Regulations \(15 CFR 918.3\)](#). The Site Review Teams are responsible for reviewing all of the qualifying areas plus “collaboration” (collaboration was added based on the 2006 National Research Council Report, Evaluation of the Sea Grant Review Process). The Federal Regulations state that Sea Grant programs “must rate highly in all of the following qualifying areas”.

Site Review Criteria

1. Program Management and Organization

- **Organization.** The Sea Grant program under review must have created the management organization to carry on a viable and productive Sea Grant program and must have the backing of its administration at a sufficiently high level to fulfill its multidisciplinary and multifaceted mandate.
- **Programmed team approach.** The Sea Grant program under review must have a programmed team approach to the solution of ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes problems which includes relevant, high quality, multidisciplinary research with associated educational and advisory services capable of producing identifiable results.
- **Support.** The Sea Grant program under review must have the ability to obtain matching funds from non-Federal sources, such as state legislatures, university management, state agencies, business, and industry. A diversity of matching fund sources is encouraged as a sign of program vitality and the ability to meet the Sea Grant requirement that funds for the general programs be matched with at least one non-Federal dollar for every two Federal dollars.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

- **Relevance.** The Sea Grant program under review must be relevant to local, state, regional, or national opportunities and problems in the ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes environment. Important factors in evaluating relevance are the need for ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes resource emphasis and the extent to which capabilities have been developed to be responsive to that need.
- **Extension/Advisory services.** The Sea Grant program under review must have a strong program through which information, techniques, and research results from any reliable source, domestic or international, may be communicated to and utilized by user communities. In addition to the educational and information dissemination role, the advisory service program

must aid in the identification and communication of user communities' research and educational needs.

- **Education and training.** Education and training must be clearly relevant to national, regional, state and local needs in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources. As appropriate, education may include pre-college, college, post-graduate, public and adult levels.

3. Collaborative Network Activities

- **Relationships.** The Sea Grant program under review must have close ties with Federal agencies. State agencies and administrations, local authorities, business and industry, and other educational institutions. These ties are: (i) To ensure the relevance of its programs, (ii) to give assistance to the broadest possible audience, (iii) to involve a broad pool of talent in providing this assistance (including universities and other administrative entities outside the Sea Grant College), and (iv) to assist others in developing research and management competence. The extent and quality of an institution's relationships are critical factors in evaluating the institutional program.
- **Collaboration.** The Sea Grant program under review must provide leadership in ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes activities including coordinated planning and cooperative work with local, state, regional, and Federal agencies, other Sea Grant programs, and non-Sea Grant universities.

4. Performance

- **Leadership.** The Sea Grant program under review must have achieved recognition as an intellectual and practical leader in marine science, engineering, education, and advisory service in its state and region.
- **Productivity.** The Sea Grant program under review must have demonstrated a degree of productivity (of research results, reports, employed students, service to State agencies and industry, etc.) commensurate with the length of its Sea Grant operations and the level of funding under which it has worked.

Appendix B: Site Review Visit Timeline

Tentative Timeline of Activities for 2014-2017 Site Review Visits	Federal Fiscal Year 2018								Federal Fiscal Year 2019														
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Site Visit: Presentation at SGA & NSGAB Meetings		■																					
Sea Grant Program Site Visits scheduled			■																				
Selection of Directors and Board members for Site Visits			■																				
Site Visit Webinars conducted by the NSGO				■																			
PIER to Produce Site Visit Materials							■																
Programs Prepare for Site Visits					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■								
Site Visits Conducted at Programs									■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■							
PO's Send Final Site Visit Report to Program Directors										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Program Responses to Site Visit Reports											■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
NSGCP Report																		■					
Evaluation Committee and Independent Review Panel Convene																			■				
SGA/Board Meeting																					■		
Extended NSGO Review (Rating)																						■	
Letters to Programs																							■
Site Visit information available to NSGAB (biennial report to Congress)																							■

Appendix C: Public Notice Example

A minimum of thirty days prior to the site review visit, the Director of the Sea Grant program under review shall issue a public notice that the program will be visited by a Site Review Team convened by the Director of the NSGCP on [X dates].

The notice invites any person to email comments on the program at least one week before the Site Review Visit date to oar.sg-feedback@noaa.gov. The notice will be sent to relevant partners and stakeholders, placed on the home page of the program's website, and included in relevant email newsletters or announcements, or stakeholder lists.

An example of a public notice is below.

-----*Public Notice Example*-----

Public comments sought for **XX Sea Grant** Review

Deadline is [*one week before the Site Review Visit date*]

XX Sea Grant will be reviewed on [*Site Review Visit dates*] by a team convened by the National Sea Grant College Program. The review will be conducted at **XX location** and will consider all aspects of **XXSG**'s programs including management and organization, performance, stakeholder engagement and collaborative activities, including those with various offices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

This notice invites you to participate in our review by emailing your comments about **XXSG** to oar.sg-feedback@noaa.gov.

Kindly send your comments at your earliest convenience--the comment period will end on [*one week before the Site Review Visit date*]. Please put "**XX Sea Grant** site review" in the subject line.

Thank you for assisting us by letting the review team hear from you!

Appendix D: SRT Logistics Planning Schedule

The SRT logistics planning schedule below is to both provide overall information for programs and detailed information for the SRT Chair (FPO), co-Chair and team members. This logistics planning schedule is to be used as a tool for SRTs to prepare for the Site Review Visit. There is little below that the program under review will need to do. Please keep in mind that these Site Review Visits may have specialized needs and this checklist was created to assist in the Chair and co-Chair in planning to ensure a successful Site Review Visit. Please alter the timeline to fit your Site Review Visit individualized needs, as appropriate. If you have any questions regarding the topics below, please refer to the respective corresponding sections in the guidance for more information.

Before the Site Review Visit

High Level Planning: 7-8 Months Ahead of Site Review Visit

- NSGO will work with Sea Grant Directors and Advisory Board Members to:
 - Solicit Sea Grant Director and Advisory Board Member availability for planning Site Review Visits,
 - Schedule Sea Grant Program Site Review Visits, and
 - Provide webinars about Site Review Visits.

Around 3-5+ Months Ahead of Site Review Visit

- Program Officer will work with Sea Grant program to create Site Review Visit Agenda.
 - The suggested timeline for the agenda is below:
 - Tuesday: the first day discussing the Standards of Excellence (1 day),
 - Wednesday and/or Thursday morning: discussing performance progress towards State Program Strategic Plan (1 to 1.5 days),
 - Thursday afternoon: for writing a report and briefing the program management team and appropriate university officials (0.5 day).
- Program Officers are to work with SRT members to schedule travel and lodging
 - Provide information for reviewers to contact NSGO to make flight reservations
 - The NSGO will provide a budget code to reviewer's office for reviewer's expenses

Around 2+ months before Site Review Visit:

- Program Officers are to create a summary of findings from the previous Site Review Visit report and Performance Review Panel report.
- Program Officers are to create a summary of findings from the Sea Grant program's response to the previous Site Review Visit report and Performance Review Panel report (if applicable).
- Program Officers in coordination with the co-chair will hold a conference call with all SRT members. Suggested topics to cover during the call include:

- Introductions
- Site Review Visit Overview
 - Can use the PowerPoint presentation that was provided by the NSGO.
 - Provide background on the Site Review Visit (purpose/ goals and member roles/ responsibilities).
 - Discuss the type information that members will be reviewing (it's important for the members of the SRT to understand what they are doing and their role prior to the start of the review.)
- Discuss writing assignments for each section of the final Site Visit Report
- Address questions that SRT members have
- Determine who wants hard copies of the materials
- Go over all travel/ logistical information. Suggested travel logistics to discuss below:
 - Site Review Visit will take place Tuesday – Thursday (*fill in dates*)
 - Travel dates are Monday (*date*) and Friday (*date*)
 - Clarify logistics on meeting days, times, and locations per day for the five day site visit trip.
 - These can include meeting for dinner on first day (Monday) as well as all events during the following days.
 - It is always a good idea to let reviewers know when it would be appropriate for leaving on the last day (Thursday) so that no one leaves the site visit before it is concluded.
 - Hotel Location of where site visit reviewers are staying (contact information) and any logistics associated with stay at hotel.
 - If hotel group reservations were made, make sure reviewers credit cards are provided at hotel check in.
 - Location of hotel from airport and if shared taxi/uber can be scheduled if reviewers are arriving at similar times.
 - Address any questions about reservations that were booked by the NSGO.
- A minimum of thirty days prior to the site visit, the Director of the Sea Grant program under review shall issue a public notice.

1 Month before (30 days)

- Program Officer will send reviewers the SRT material package.
- Program Officer to ensure the program has posted/sent out the Public Notification.
- Program Officer to hold one last conference call with SRT. Suggested topics to discuss:
 - Travel questions
 - Questions on the materials
 - Who is bringing a laptop?
 - Exchange cell numbers

- Make sure everyone understands the agenda and suggested schedule changes may be made. (This may be a good opportunity to re-visit the writing assignments.)
- Go over any last minute details/changes
- Ensure Program Officer has all flight information of travelers who in NSGO will support travel for SRT members?

During the Site Review Visit

- Program Officer the night before the review kicks off should divide up the SRT report writing assignments between the reviewers (if you haven't already done so).
- As an introduction to the review on the first morning, it may be useful for the SRT Chair (Program Officer) to set the stage of the review (e.g., the outlining the site visit and providing an overview of the establishment of the PIE system).
- Sometime during the first day or so (if haven't done so already) the Program Officer should discuss with the Program Director who is being reviewed (if the agenda allows) see if the program management team can be briefed before university officials. Programs are strongly urged to include their university officials when the SRT is reporting back to the program. If there is a scheduling conflict with the university officials, then the SRT will only debrief the program on the review.
- Program Officers should ensure there is sufficient time for the SRT to meet and begin drafting the report during the site visit. There should also be time set aside (maybe after the evening activities) when the SRT can meet and discuss the program.
- The Chair and co-Chair should coordinate drafting findings, suggestions, and recommendations from the team during the Site Review Visit.
- To assist in an easier exit interview, all recommendations, suggestions, and ratings per national focus area should be finalized during the Site Review Visit prior to the exit interview. The report doesn't need to be written or complete, but all recommendations, suggestions and ratings per national focus area should be finalized.
- And don't forget to thank program staff for effort, and University leadership for support of the program

After the Site Review Visit

- The Program Officer has **45 calendar days** to send the final report to the Sea Grant Director. In this 45 day window the below should happen:
 - Program Office is to finish the draft of the report and send it out to the SRT for comments/ corrections. If necessary, hold one additional conference call with the SRT to finish the report and ensure all issues are addressed.
 - Program Officer is to send a final draft to the Sea Grant Program Director for fact checking purposes only (i.e. only factual errors will be accepted) prior to finalizing the report.

- Once a final report is received by the program, the program Sea Grant Director has **15 calendar days** to send a response letter to the NSGCP Director addressing all recommendations.

Appendix E: Site Review Visit Materials

PIER Report

Information gathered from the program's last four program Annual Report submissions in PIER will be provided by PIER in a downloadable report. The Program Officer will be responsible in providing the PIER report to the Sea Grant Program and SRT member.

- A. **Program Management and Organization** (organization, program team approach, and support)
 - a. Sea Grant Staffing (Individuals and FTEs; SG Funded and non-SG Funded)
 - b. Total Number of Proposals (Pre-, Full, and Funded) from Home Institution
 - c. Research Projects (Titles and PIs)
 - d. Total funding (SG + Match + Pass Through)
 - e. Distribution of Funds (SG + Match + Pass Through) by Functional Area
- B. **Stakeholder Engagement** (relevance, advisory services, and education and training)
 - a. Number of SG-Sponsored/Organized Meetings, Workshops and Conferences and Attendees
 - b. Volunteer Hours
 - c. Students Supported
 - d. K-12 Students Reached
- C. **Collaborative Network Activities** (relationships and coordination)
 - a. List of Program Partners (identified in projects, accomplishments, and impacts)
 - b. Sources and Amounts of Leveraged Funds (Managed and Influenced)
- D. **Performance** (leadership and productivity)
 - a. Leadership (Level of Effort by Focus Area, Impacts and Accomplishments)
 - b. Productivity (Impacts and Accomplishments; National Performance Measures and Metrics (targets/actuals), Publications)

Briefing Book

The program is responsible for providing the briefing book. The briefing book should include a brief written program synthesis (retrospective and prospective) and be no longer than 25 pages. It should include descriptions addressing the four categories of the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence*:

1. Program Management and Organization (including organization, programmed team approach, and support),
2. Stakeholder Engagement (including relevance, extension/advisory services, and education and training),
3. Program's Collaborative Activities (including relationships and collaborations), and
4. Performance (including leadership and productivity).

The data shared with the Site Review Team should cover the time period under review. The list of items that must be included for each broad category in the briefing book are found below:

A. Program Management and Organization

Organization

- Management Team composition and brief description of their responsibilities
- Advisory Board membership and function (expertise, meeting schedule, recommendations)
- Program setting within the university or consortium organization and reporting structure (organizational chart)

Recruiting Talent

- Brief description of the process used to develop RFP priorities
- Brief description of the review process including composition of review panels
- Number of institutions represented throughout RFP process (number of institutions in pre-proposal, full proposal and funded)
- New vs. continuing projects and Principle Investigators

B. Stakeholder Engagement

- List of key partnerships and how the program involves its partners (show examples)
- List of important stakeholders and how the Program involves its stakeholders (show examples)

C. Collaborative Network/NOAA Activities

- Short description of the activities/projects the Program is collaborating on with other Sea Grant, NOAA, and additional agency partners
- Number of and types of regional/multi-program projects
- Success in Sea Grant National Competitions

D. Performance

Leadership

- Leadership by staff on boards and committees
- Short description on how program achieved recognition as an intellectual and practical leader in marine science, engineering, education, and advisory service in the state/region.

Productivity

- A summary of the programs progress towards the national performance measures and metrics
- In PIER, selected impact and accomplishment statements that are linked to the program's 2014-2017 State Program Strategic Plan goals and objectives.
- In the narrative of the briefing book provides an opportunity to integrate impacts and accomplishments over time to make for stronger stories.
- Program objectives and any associated comments

E. Program changes resulting from the previous Site Review Visit and Performance Review Panel (if applicable)

Appendix F: Site Review Visit Criteria

This section lists the criteria that will be used to evaluate the Sea Grant programs during the Site Review Visit. The Site Review Team will be required to provide two levels of evaluation at the completions of the Site Review Visit: 1) determine if the program has ‘met’ the *Standards of Excellence* (found in Appendix A), and 2) provide a performance rating for each national focus area identified in the State Program Strategic Plan and Sea Grant appropriated funds by evaluating the program’s leadership and productivity.

At the end of the Site Review Visit, SRTs should highlight findings and provide recommendations and suggestions to improve the Sea Grant program’s management and organization, stakeholder engagement, networking activities, and performance, as well as highlight any “best management practices”. The SRT will also be responsible in providing a rating score for each program that participates within national focus areas as identified by their State Program Strategic Plan and Sea Grant appropriated funds.

For more information on the Exit Interview, please see section VI of the guidance. For more information on the Site Review Report, please see section VII of the guidance and Appendix G. For more information on how the ratings will be used after the Site Review Visit please see the section VIII of the guidance and the NSGO Review Process.

1) Standards of Excellence Determination

The program will be evaluated to determine if they have ‘met’ the Sea Grant standards. The *Standards of Excellence* four areas:

- Program Management and Organization (organization, program team approach, and support),
- Stakeholder Engagement (relevance, advisory services, and education and training),
- Collaborative Network Activities (relationships and coordination), and
- Performance (leadership and productivity).

Each member of the Site Review Team should determine if the program has “met standards in all of the following qualifying areas” or is “below expectation in some areas/ aspects” or is considered “Unsuccessful in most areas/aspects” for each category. The following table can be used by each team member to capture feedback.

Standards of Excellence Qualifying Areas	Meets standards in all of the f
Program Management and Organization	
Organization	
Programmed team approach	
Support	
Stakeholder Engagement	
Relevance	
Extension/Advisory services	
Education and training	
Collaborative Network Activities	
Relationships	
Collaboration	
Performance	
Leadership	
Productivity	

The team should discuss their individual ratings and concern, and collectively determine from a broad perspective if the program:

1. *Meets standards* in all of the following qualifying areas and may include a limited number of suggestions or recommendations to improve the program in any qualifying area.
2. *Below expectation* in some areas/ aspects with recommendations for corrective actions in any specific qualifying area.
3. *Unsuccessful* in most areas/aspects with recommendations for corrective actions in any specific qualifying area.

Team members should be aware that recommendations provided are formally prescribed course of actions for which the Sea Grant program under review is accountable for. For example, if a program is found to be #2 or #3 in the above ratings, the team is required to provide recommendations for improvements. The program is accountable for responding to all recommended changes in their response letters. A program is not accountable to suggestions. For more information on this topic, please refer to VII Program Response in the guidance.

To facilitate discussion in each of the four areas of the *Standards of Excellence* (Program Management and Organization, Stakeholder Engagement, Collaborative Network Activities and Performance), the *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions have been provided below to guide the Site Review Team's discussion. The programs are expected to address these key evaluation questions in order to show that the program is meeting the *Standards of Excellence*. Additional discussion points are also listed below the definitions and key evaluation questions. The additional discussion points are to be used as potential indicators for assessing progress and may be used in framing discussions on how the program is meeting the four areas of the *Standards of Excellence*. A program doesn't have to meet all of the additional discussion points provided as long as the program can adequately address how it is meeting the *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions.

Program Management and Organization

Listed below are *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions to be used for assessing if the program 'met' the Sea Grant standards for Program Management and Organization.

- **Organization Definition.** The Sea Grant program under review must have created the management organization to carry on a viable and productive Sea Grant program and must have the backing of its administration at a sufficiently high level to fulfill its multidisciplinary and multifaceted mandate.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* The program should have created the necessary management organization to carry on a viable and productive Sea Grant program. To what extent does the program have backing of its administration at a sufficiently high level to fulfill its multidisciplinary and multifaceted mandate?
- **Programmed Team Approach Definition.** The Sea Grant program under review must have a programmed team approach to the solution of ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes problems which includes relevant, high quality, multidisciplinary research with associated educational and advisory services capable of producing identifiable results.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* What is the program's team approach to solving ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes problems, which includes relevant, high quality, multidisciplinary research with associated educational and advisory services capable of producing identifiable results?
- **Support Definition.** The Sea Grant program under review must have the ability to obtain matching funds from non-Federal sources, such as state legislatures, university management, state agencies, business, and industry. A diversity of matching fund sources is encouraged as a sign of program vitality and the ability to meet the Sea Grant requirement that funds for the general programs be matched with at least one non-Federal dollar for every two Federal dollars.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* How well was the program able to obtain matching

funds from non-Federal sources, such as state legislatures, university management, state agencies, business, and industry?

- **Over Arching Program Management and Organization Questions.** These key evaluation questions are also to be used for assessing if the program ‘met’ the Sea Grant standards for Program Management and Organization.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* How does the program demonstrate the ability to continue the pursuit of excellence and sustain the following:
 1. high performance in marine research, education, training, and advisory services.
 2. provide leadership in ocean/ coast/ watershed/ Great Lakes activities including coordinated planning and cooperative work with local, state, regional, and Federal agencies, other Sea Grant programs, and non-Sea Grant universities;
 3. effective management framework and application of institutional resources to the achievement of Sea Grant objectives;
 4. long-term plans for research, education, training, and advisory services consistent with Sea Grant goals and objectives;
 5. furtherance of the Sea Grant concept and the full development of its potential within the institution and the state;
 6. adequate and stable matching financial support for the program from non-Federal sources; and
 7. effective system to control the quality of its Sea Grant programs?
- **Additional Discussion Points.** The questions listed below may be used to support the above *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions Program Management and Organization. The questions listed below are not required to be used to help frame discussions, but may be useful as potential indicators for assessing program progress towards meeting Sea Grant standards.
 - How did the program implement or consider the recommendations from the previous SRT?
 - To what extent is the Director sufficiently engaged with the program?
 - To what extent is the host university sufficiently engaged with the program?
 - How active is the program’s advisory board and to what extent did the advisory board contribute to the State Program Strategic Plan?
 - How much contact do advisory board members have with constituents of the program?
 - How often does the advisory board meet?
 - How much opportunity exists for new membership (turnover)?
 - Evaluate how the program used its 4-year plan to guide management and decision-making.
 - How do RFPs reflect the objectives in the 4-year plan?

- What steps did the program take to effectively circulate RFPs to units of other institutions with relevant expertise?
- How productive are the ongoing interaction between the Sea Grant program and representatives of other relevant research and education institutions within the state?
- To what extent is the program transparent (as to what gets funded)?
- Evaluate if the peer reviews are adequate and well designed with clearly identified criteria.
- How well the program's results of funded projects are appropriately measured and assessed?
- To what extent are the program's practices or projects promising and worth sharing?

Stakeholder Engagement

Listed below are *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions to be used for assessing if the program 'met' the Sea Grant standards for Stakeholder Engagement.

- **Relevance Definition.** The Sea Grant program under review must be relevant to local, state, regional, or national opportunities and problems in the ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes environment. Important factors in evaluating relevance are the need for ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes resource emphasis and the extent to which capabilities have been developed to be responsive to that need.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* To what extent is the program relevant to local, state, regional, or national opportunities and problems in the ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes environment?
- **Extension/Advisory Services Definition.** The Sea Grant program under review must have a strong program through which information, techniques, and research results from any reliable source, domestic or international, may be communicated to and utilized by user communities. In addition to the educational and information dissemination role, the advisory service program must aid in the identification and communication of user communities' research and educational needs.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* What system does the program have in place by which information, techniques and research results from any reliable source, domestic or international, are communicated to, and utilized by, user communities? In addition to the educational and information dissemination role, how does extension help in the identification and communication of user communities' research and educational needs?
- **Education and Training Definition.** Education and training must be clearly relevant to national, regional, state and local needs in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources. As appropriate, education may include pre-college, college, post-graduate, public and adult levels.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* To what extent is education and training provided by the program relevant to national, regional, state and local needs in fields related to

ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources?

- **Additional Discussion Points.** The questions listed below may be used to support the above *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions Program Stakeholder Engagement. The questions listed below are not required to be used to help frame discussions, but may be useful as potential indicators for assessing program progress towards meeting Sea Grant standards.
 - How are appropriate stakeholders informed of program results?
 - How do stakeholders support the program?
 - Is the program a trusted and immediate point of contact for information on ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes issues?
 - The program should support/dedicate resources towards education? How are those resources relevant to national, regional, state, and local needs in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources?
 - Evaluate how the program supports students and/or informal learning opportunities.

Collaborative Network Activities

Listed below are *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions to be used for assessing if the program ‘met’ the Sea Grant standards for Collaboration Network Activities.

- **Relationships.** The Sea Grant program under review must have close ties with Federal agencies, state agencies and administrations, local authorities, business and industry, and other educational institutions. These ties are: (i) To ensure the relevance of its programs, (ii) to give assistance to the broadest possible audience, (iii) to involve a broad pool of talent in providing this assistance (including universities and other administrative entities outside the Sea Grant College), and (iv) to assist others in developing research and management competence. The extent and quality of an institution's relationships are critical factors in evaluating the institutional program.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s):* Evaluate the programs partnerships with Federal agencies, State agencies and administrations, local authorities, business and industry, and other educational institutions? Do these ties:
 - ensure the relevance of its programmed activities,
 - give assistance to the broadest possible audience,
 - involve a broad pool of talent in providing assistance, and
 - assist others in developing research and management competence?
 - To what extent is there coordination/cooperation with other Federal, State, and local agencies in the state/region/nation?
- **Collaboration.** The Sea Grant program under review must provide leadership in ocean/coast/watershed/Great Lakes activities including coordinated planning and cooperative work with local, state, regional, and Federal agencies, other Sea Grant programs, and non- Sea Grant universities.

- *Key Evaluation Question(s)*: How does the program lead or participate in regional activities? National? To what extent does this participation make effective use of Sea Grant network capabilities?
- **Additional Discussion Points.** The questions listed below may be used to support the above *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions Program Collaborative Network Activities. The questions listed below are not required to be used to help frame discussions, but may be useful as potential indicators for assessing program progress towards meeting Sea Grant standards. How has the program chosen and developed partnerships?
 - How many and what quality of partnerships exist (including those with other NOAA programs)?
 - How many, if any, new partnerships have been formed?
 - How does the program contribute to the cohesiveness of the Sea Grant network?
 - Evaluate if there is effective communication and collaboration between the program and other Sea Grant programs and with the National Sea Grant Office.
 - How does the program participate or lead activities that support the overall network?

Performance

Listed below are *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions to be used for assessing if the program ‘met’ the Sea Grant standards for Performance.

- **Leadership.** The Sea Grant program under review must have achieved recognition as an intellectual and practical leader in marine science, engineering, education, and advisory service in its state and region.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s)*: How is the program recognized as an intellectual and practical leader in marine science, engineering, education, and advisory service in its state and region?
- **Productivity.** The Sea Grant program under review must have demonstrated a degree of productivity (of research results, reports, employed students, service to State agencies and industry, etc.) commensurate with the length of its Sea Grant operations and the level of funding under which it has worked.
 - *Key Evaluation Question(s)*: To what extent has the program demonstrated a degree of productivity commensurate with the program’s operations and level on funding under which it has worked? What are the significant contributions to society through advancements in science and technology in their focus areas (e.g., seminal publications or patents): new understanding, products, processes, and technology?
- **Additional Discussion Points.** The questions listed below may be used to support the above *Standards of Excellence* definitions and key evaluation questions Program Performance. The questions listed below are not required to be used to help frame

discussions, but may be useful as potential indicators for assessing program progress towards meeting Sea Grant standards.

- What are the endorsements of stakeholders or of University higher-ups that demonstrate the program is an intellectual and practical leader?
- What awards has the program received or what affiliations can the program's management team claim leadership in (e.g. director participates on regional planning commission, etc.)?
- How is the program making a significant contribution to society through advancements in science and technology in their focus areas?
 - What is the area of impact: Local/ State/ Regional/ National/ International?
 - What has been Sea Grant's role in producing this contribution?
- To what extent are the science and technology contributions commensurate with the size of the program?
- Is there an appropriate balance of research, extension, and education within the program and are the program's focus areas integrated?
- What are the economic benefits (e.g., value, jobs, businesses) of the program?
 - Are there new or expanded industries, companies, businesses?
 - Are there cost savings or productivity improvements?
 - What has been Sea Grant's role in producing this benefit?
- How has the management of natural resources improved as a result of the program's efforts?
 - What is the area of impact: Local/ State/ Regional/ National/ International?
 - What has been Sea Grant's role in producing this benefit?

2) Performance Ratings Determination

The SRT should now look in more depth at the performance section of the *Standards of Excellence* to evaluate how effectively the program performed in each national focus area with respect to leadership and productivity. A rating score should be provided for each program that participates within a national focus area as identified in their 2014-2017 State Program Strategic Plan and Sea Grant appropriated funds. The national focus areas are:

- Healthy Coastal Ecosystems
- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Resilience Communities and Economies
- Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

SRT members will review and discuss with programs their accomplishments, impacts, and performance measures, and funding levels for each of the national focus area above. The SRT will also assess each program's impact on science and society relative to federal investment. The

evaluation of program performance involves the use of judgement in weighing the qualitative and quantitative evidence available.

After discussion with the program on progress made towards each national focus area as identified in the 2014-2017 State Program Strategic Plan and Sea Grant appropriated funds, the SRT will then need to convene and determine a rating for each national focus area. During the team discussion each team member should rate the program in each national focus area (1-5), whole number rating scores should be provided. The SRT uses the following rating scale:

- *Highest Performance* - exceeds expectations by an exceptional margin in most areas/aspects (1)
- *Exceeds Expectations* by a substantial margin in some areas/aspects (2)
- *Meets Expectations* in most areas/aspects (3)
- *Below Expectations* in some areas/aspects (4)
- *Unsuccessful* in most areas/aspects (5)

The following table can be used by each team member to capture feedback.

Determination of Performance Rating					
Performance (Leadership and Productivity)	<i>Highest Performance exceeds expectations by exceptional margin in most areas/ aspects (1)</i>	<i>Exceeds Expectations by a substantial margin in some areas/ aspects (2)</i>	<i>Meets Expectations in most areas/ aspects (3)</i>	<i>Below Expectations in some areas/ aspects (4)</i>	<i>Unsuccessful in most areas/ aspects (5)</i>
<i>Healthy Coastal Ecosystems</i>					
<i>Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture</i>					
<i>Resilient Communities and Economies</i>					
<i>Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development</i>					

Meets Expectations in most areas/aspects (3)

This is the baseline level of where to start the review. At this level the program achieved their goals/objectives in the strategic plan. The program demonstrates that it achieved the goals and objectives as shown by progress performed in impacts, accomplishments, performance measures accomplished with funding levels provided to the program in a given national focus area.

Progress in areas of research, education, and training, or advisory service in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources should be considered.

- If a program did not meet a particular goal/objective, it may still meet this target if there is significant progress or a reasonable explanation (unexpected difficulties, shift in partners, etc.).

Below Expectations in some areas/ aspects (4)

At this level the program did not achieve some of their goals/objectives in the strategic plan.

Program did not demonstrate that it met some goals/objectives within their plan as shown by only some progress toward those goals/objectives as shown by impacts, accomplishments, performance measures with funding levels provided to the program in a given focus area (research, education, and training, or advisory service in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources).

- Program did not provide a reasonable explanation for not meeting some of the goals/objectives within their plan.

Unsuccessful in most areas/ aspects (5)

At this level the program did not meet most of the goals/objectives of their strategic plan.

Program did not demonstrate that it met most of the goals/objectives within their plan and failed to show reasonable progress toward those goals/objectives as shown by impacts, accomplishments, performance measures with funding levels provided to the program in a given focus area (research, education, and training, or advisory service in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources).

- Program did not provide a reasonable explanation for not meeting most of the goals/objectives within their plan.

Exceeds Expectations by a substantial margin in some areas/ aspects (2)

At this level the program exceeded some goals/objectives of State Program Strategic Plan.

Program demonstrates progress beyond achieving the strategic plan goals and objectives with significant breadth and quality of work performed as shown by impacts, accomplishments, performance measures with funding levels provided to the program in a given focus area (research, education, and training, or advisory service in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources).

Highest Performance exceeds expectations by exceptional margin in most areas/aspects (1)

At this level, the program far exceeded goals/objectives of State Program Strategic Plan. Program demonstrates progress that far exceeded expectations of the program's strategic plan goals and objectives due to exceptionally high quality of work performed as shown by impacts, accomplishments, performance measures with funding levels provided to the program in a given focus area (research, education, and training, or advisory service in fields related to ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal resources).

Appendix G: Site Review Report

**Site Review Report of the
~~XXXXX~~ Sea Grant College Program**

~~XXXXX~~ Dates of Review



INTRODUCTION

The Site Review Team’s (SRT) visit to the **xxxx** Sea Grant (**XSG**) Program took place from **enter SRT visit dates**.

The SRT members included:

Name (Chair, Federal Program Officer) Affiliation City, State	Name (Co-Chair, Advisory Board Member) Affiliation City, State
Name (Sea Grant Director) Affiliation City, State	Name (External Reviewer #1) Affiliation City, State
Name (External Reviewer #2) Affiliation City, State	Name (External Reviewer #3) Affiliation City, State

Prior to the beginning of the Site Review Visit, and in conformance with National Sea Grant College Program guidelines, the **xxxx** Sea Grant issued a public notice of the upcoming Site Review Visit by inviting interested parties to send written comments to the Federal Program Officer (FPO). The public notice was distributed by means of **xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx**. The FPO received **xxx** letters in response to the public notice. (*Characterize the letters in no more than a few sentences e.g., “Most of the letters were highly supportive of the **xxxx** Program. A few letters raised issues, which were either covered in the course of the review or were deemed to be minor in consequence.”*)

The Site Review Visit took place (*in one sentence describe the site visit location venues: campuses, etc.*)

During the Site Review Visti, the SRT met with (*brief description, e.g., identify stakeholders, university administrators, researchers, management staff, etc.*). The SRT also benefited from poster sessions, if applicable (*e.g., name specific topics, or with researchers, extension staff, and graduate students*).

This report of the Site Review Visit follows the provided guidance for 2014 – 2017 Program Site Review Visits. The SRT discussed broad issues with the Program related to the **xxxx** Sea Grant program’s: 1) Organization and Management of the Program; 2) Stakeholder Engagement; 3) Collaborative Network Activities; and 4) Performance, and how effectively the program performed in each national focus area with respect to leadership and productivity to determine progress made towards each national focus area as identified in the 2014-2017 State Program

Strategic Plan. Within each of these areas, each member of the SRT provided expert insights and opinions to the FPO.

With this report, the FPO presents the findings of the SRT and presents suggestions and recommendations to the Program to facilitate program improvement. It does not necessarily reflect the views of any specific member of the SRT.

I. ORGANIZING AND MANAGING THE PROGRAM

Based on the criteria descriptions and considered questions, in this section, please explain how the program addresses each of the following:

- Organization
- Programmed team approach
- Support

NOTE: Please include any finding, recommendation, and suggestion that addresses this section here as well.

II. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Based on the criteria descriptions and considered questions, in this section, please explain how the program addresses each of the following:

- Relevance
- Extension/Advisory Service
- Education/Training

NOTE: Please include any finding, recommendation, and suggestion that addresses this section here as well

III. COLLABORATIVE NETWORK/NOAA ACTIVITIES

Based on the criteria descriptions and considered questions, in this section, please explain how the program addresses each of the following:

- Collaboration
- Relationships

NOTE: Please include any finding, recommendation, and suggestion that addresses this section here as well

IV. PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Based on the criteria descriptions and considered questions, in this section, please explain how the program addresses each of the following:

- Leadership
- Productivity

NOTE: Please include any finding, recommendation, and suggestion that addresses this section here as well

V. PERFORMANCE RATING DETERMINATION

Based on the criteria descriptions and considered questions, in this section, please explain how the program addresses each of the following:

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems	Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture	Resilience Communities and Economies	Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development
Rating:	Rating:	Rating:	Rating:

NOTE: Please include any finding, recommendation, and suggestion that addresses this section here as well

V.I. FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS and SUGGESTIONS

NOTE Findings, recommendations, suggestions below should be the same those presented during the Exit Interview. The FPO may not have any recommendations or suggestions.

Findings

- The FPO finds that the Program meets the *Standards of Excellence* expected of all Sea Grant programs.

OR

- The FPO finds that the Program could meet the *Standards of Excellence* expected of all Sea Grant programs if they address the following recommendations.

OR

- The FPO finds that the Program does not meet the *Standards of Excellence* expected of all Sea Grant programs for the following reasons.

Recommendations (items the Program must consider)

-
-

Suggestions (ideas the Program may want to consider)

-
-

V. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

-
-

SRT AGENDA

Insert agenda below

Appendix H: Recertification and Allocation of Merit Funding

The four-year evaluation process wraps up with a Quadrennial NSGO Review. At the conclusion of the Quadrennial NSGO Review, the NSGCP Director will make the final determination of whether or not a Sea Grant program meets the *Standards of Excellence* and thus if a program is: 1) recertified, 2) eligible for merit funding, and the 3) determination of final merit score. While occurring very rarely, the NSGCP Director may require a program that doesn't meet the *Standards of Excellence* or if the program's performance rates poorly, to submit a corrective action plan for a particular area that is not meeting standards.

Recertification of the Sea Grant Programs

The Office of Management and Budget, the NSGAB and other entities have recommended that the Sea Grant programs be recertified on a reasonable and regular schedule. The four-year cycle evaluation, including the program Site Review Visit, the External Evaluation, and NSGO Review, constitutes the Sea Grant program recertification process. A successful review results in recertification of the program for the next four years. Recertification is required for a program to maintain its federal funding.

A determination that a Program 'meets' the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence* per [Sea Grants Federal Regulations \(15 CFR 918.3\)](#) (Appendix A) results in recertification of the program for the next four-year Omnibus cycle. Programs that meet the *Standards of Excellence* are then eligible for merit funding. Recertification and merit funding timelines are below:

- 2010-2013 evaluation results in recertification and merit funding for 2018-2021
- 2014-2017 evaluation results in recertification and merit funding for 2022-2025
- 2018-2021 evaluation results in recertification and merit funding for 2026-2030

If a program does not meet the *Standards of Excellence* based on the program Site Review Visit or if the program's overall performance is determined to be *Unsuccessful* in most areas/aspects, the program is placed on probationary status. Any Sea Grant program on probation will not be eligible for merit funding. Once a program is on probation, the program will be assessed to determine if the program is making progress towards meeting the *Standards of Excellence* during each succeeding Annual NSGO Review. If progress is satisfactory, the program will be allowed to continue on probation until the next Site Review Visit. If at that time the program meets the *Standards of Excellence*, the program is considered recertified. However, if progress is found not to meet the *Standards of Excellence* expected of a Sea Grant program after two years of Annual NSGO Reviews, or if a program does not reach the *Standards of Excellence* for a second consecutive four-year review cycle, the NSGCP Director will refer the matter to the NSGAB for consideration of whether to recommend decertification of the program.

Any Sea Grant program placed on probation as a result of the Site Review Visit must be rated *Meets Expectations* in most areas/aspects or higher in the next Site Review Visit. If the program fails to achieve that rating, the NSGCP Director will refer the matter to the NSGAB for consideration of whether to recommend decertification of the program.

Allocation of Merit Funding

Any program that does not meet the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence* based on the Site Review Visit or is on probation will not be eligible for merit funding.

A merit pool of funds has been established in the Sea Grant budget to be allocated to individual Sea Grant programs on the basis of overall performance. If programs are eligible for merit funding then the programs national focus area ratings from the Site Review Visit are used to assign each program an overall merit score. The overall merit score and the available funds in the merit pool determine the amount of merit funding a program will receive in the next four-year cycle.

The following rating scale is used during the Site Review Visits in determining progress towards a program's national focus areas per its State Program Strategic Plan:

- *Highest Performance* - exceeds expectations by an exceptional margin in most areas/aspects (1)
- *Exceeds Expectations* by a substantial margin in some areas/aspects (2)
- *Meets Expectations* in most areas/aspects (3)
- *Below Expectations* in some areas/aspects (4)
- *Unsuccessful* in most areas/aspects (5)

For each program, the national focus area rating is weighted based on the proportion of funding resources allocated (by estimated level of effort) by the program to that national focus area. A final merit score is determined for each program by weighting the ratings by the proportion of funding resources allocated by the program to that focus area. "Funding resources" include all Sea Grant appropriated funds (federal and associated match), and pass thru funding used to meet the goals and objectives of the program's four-year strategic plan.

For example, if a program allocated 25% of its funding resources to the HCE focus area and was rated a 2, it allocated 15% of its resources to SFA focus area and was rated a 2, it allocated 20% of its resources to RCE focus area and was rated a 3, and it allocated 40% of its resources to ELWD focus area and was rated a 3, it would score an overall weighted rating of 2.6, calculated as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{HCE} & & \text{SFA} & & \text{RCE} & & \text{ELWD} \\ [25\% \times 2] & + & [15\% \times 2] & + & [20\% \times 3] & + & [40\% \times 3] & = & 2.6 \end{array}$$

The final merit score is 2.6, corresponding to a rating of “Exceeds Expectations by a substantial margin in some areas/aspects”. The final merit score determines merit funding levels. Final merit funding levels depends on the size of the merit pool of funds available, which cannot be finalized until more is known of Sea Grant’s appropriation levels.