

Minutes -- Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine

UNH, 13 November 1992

Present:

Eric Adams	MIT
Peter Auster	Nat'l Undersea Resch Center-Avery Point
Ivar Babb	Nat'l Undersea Resch Center-Avery Point
Arnold Banner	USF&WS-Portland
Brad Barr	Mass CZM
Bob Beardsley	WHOI
Joceline Boucher	Maine Maritime Academy
Wendell Brown	UNH
Marilyn Buchholtz ten Brink	USGS-Woods Hole
Michelle Dionne	Wells Reserve
Stewart Fefer	USF&WS-Portland
Rich Langton	Maine Dept. of Marine Resources
Jim List	Wells Reserve
Gregory Lough	NMFS-Woods Hole
Daniel Lynch	Dartmouth
Larry Mayer	UMaine
John Rosenau	UMass-Amherst
Mike Sieracki	Bigelow Laboratory
David Stevenson	Maine Dept. Natural Resources
Bruce Tripp	WHOI
Bob Wall	Maine Sea Grant College Program
Gordon Wallace	UMass-Boston

The Meeting was called to order by Dan Lynch at 10:15 AM.

Old Business:

Bob Wall and Dan Lynch reported on progress toward a Memorandum of Agreement among the Association, the Council on the Marine Environment, and the RMRP Board. A draft bilateral agreement between the CME and the RMRP Board was circulated. It was generally agreed that such an agreement would be in our interests if it were less specific relative to near-term cooperative projects; clarified the official purposes of the 3 organizations (e.g. through appendices containing mission/charter of each); and established the Regional Association as a first source of scientific advice. Lynch, Wallace, and Wall will pursue this with David Keeley. Key dates are the upcoming CME Working Group meeting (Dec. 2-3, Boston) and the RMRP Board meeting (Dec. 14).

New Business:

RMRP. Bob Wall reviewed the national RMRP program both nationally and regionally. The Gulf of Maine research plan was officially approved in Sept. 92 by J. Knauss. 20 proposals submitted for the Aug. 1 RFP, totaling about \$7M. In late Sept. the Board approved a recommendation to fund 8 projects at \$2.1M. Three projects total \$1.6M and are recommended for funding from FY92 funds.

- a Jordan Basin observational program
- a Western Gulf modeling and historical data analysis
- a study of toxic algae blooms in the Western Gulf coastal current

Each is 3 years duration. The PI's on these projects will be asked to attend a workshop in December to coordinate and recommend additional physical observations and to provide a synthesis of observational programs for use as a framework in the next RFP.

In addition, 5 projects totaling about \$.5M are recommended for funding (\$.4M from FY93 money; \$.1M from FY92) These are generally focused on historical data:

- optical properties of water masses in the Gulf

- nutrient data
- phytoplankton manual
- review of toxins, and molluscum bivalves
- contaminated sediment data base.

For FY93, \$1.9M has been appropriated for the Gulf of Maine. Of this, \$50-100K will go to NOAA administration, and \$.2-.3M for RMRP use. This leaves \$1.5-1.6M for research. \$.4M is already recommended for funding (above). An RFP for the balance -- roughly \$1.2M -- is expected in Jan-Feb. 92. Bob indicated that any feedback to the Board from the Regional Association would be appreciated in the process of composing the RFP.

It was agreed to discuss and formulate comments to the Board on the relationships among the Research Plan, the RFP, Board decisions to date, and issues relative to the next RFP. This will occur at the next Regional Association meeting, prior to the Dec. 14 Board meeting. This will allow our unsolicited comments to be considered before the next RFP is let.

Habitat Workshop. Rich Langton reviewed the recent Habitat workshop held at St. Andrews Biological Station, under CME auspices. Stewart Fefer described the USF&WS project aimed at developing criteria for choosing priority species, which is expected to result in a Priority Species List in 9-12 months. A missing component so far has been input from the marine community. Arnold Banner reviewed a modeling approach being adopted to identify critical habitats, which was used in Florida. Michelle Dionne, Rich Langton, and Dave Stevenson will follow this process for the Association.

Dave Stevenson suggested the Regional Association develop a workshop on habitat; a draft prospectus for same was circulated. It was suggested that we approach the RMRP Board and the CME for joint funding. Dave will continue to develop this idea in the context of a series of such workshops. (see below).

GLOBEC. Bob Beardsley briefed the group on regional aspects of GLOBEC (Global Ocean Ecosystem Dynamics). The program is a joint initiative among NSF and NOAA, with interests in the Northwest Atlantic, as well as the southern ocean, the Pacific, etc. The Northwest Atlantic portion will focus on cod and haddock during early life stages on Georges Bank, with emphasis on physical/biological coupling and potential impacts of climate change. Roughly 3 years have been spent in planning; target funding level is \$5M per year for 5-10 years. A major RFP appeared last summer; 60 proposals were submitted, and decisions will be made in December. There are a series of useful GLOBEC documents including "Northwest Atlantic Program" (report #2, Feb '91) and "Northwest Atlantic Implementation Plan" (report # 6, June '92). These are available from JOI (202-232-3900) and/or the GLOBEC Coordinating Office (Tom Powell, UC Davis, 916-752-4163).

Mass Bays Program. Gordon Wallace provided an update on this program. Studies are in progress and/or completed on atmospheric loadings, non-point source organic loadings, organic loading from the Merrimack, human and ecological risk, and indicators of organic stress. Future work will be focused through an RFP on bioaccumulation; social benefits; and monitoring. There are several centers of activity including MWRA, USGS, MIT Sea Grant, and Woods Hole Sea Grant. MWRA maintains a newsletter and a report series -- contact BernadetteMcCarthy, 617-242-6000 x 4719.

EDIMS. Wendell Brown described a prototype **Environmental Data and Information Management System**. The prototype has been developed for the CME and is intended to include the following as a representative sample:

- GoM database directory
- Who's Who in the GoM
- Gulf Watch mussel data
- GoM maps and bathymetry
- UNH oceanographic time series data archive
- Real-time satellite imagery and meteorology from NOAA/NOS
- EOE Massachusetts shellfish data archive
- New Brunswick Dept. of Environment real-time river discharge
- USGS sediment texture data archive

- AFAP hydrographic data archive from BIO
A draft report/UserDocumentation (12 November 1992) is available from Wendell.

Workshops. Dan Lynch presented the list of workshops from the RMRP Research Plan. There is continuing interest in pursuing this activity under Association management, with joint funding from the RMRP board and the CME. A long-range goal of constructing a high-level edited volume on the Gulf of Maine (similar in scope and quality to the Backus volume on Georges Bank) was discussed. This is one way to frame the series of workshops and their intended outcomes. Specific workshops were discussed and it was agreed that individuals would begin detailing them, as follows:

Data Management -- (of prime interest to the RMRP Board) Brown and tenBrink, with coordination of Don Phelps at EPA-Narragansett. Don is a member of the RMRP Board.

Circulation Modeling -- Lynch will follow up with Signell, Brooks and others. (This category may include ecosystem modeling.)

Habitat (and perhaps Ecosystem Modeling -- Stevenson, Dionne, Langton, and Fefer will coordinate per the earlier discussion. This is another area of joint CME and RMRP interest.

Resource Economics and the Valuation of Research Benefits -- this was discussed as a high-interest area but no clear direction emerged.

It was agreed that a draft proposal for a workshop series would be assembled at the next meeting, based on material developed by those named above.

Budget. The attached budget options were presented by Dan Lynch. The need for an Associate Director was discussed in terms of program -- brochures, newsletter, attendance at CME and RMRP meetings, workshop coordination and publicity, proposal writing. The prospects for developing new members was also discussed. This matter was tabled until the next meeting, at which time commitments to membership will be needed.

Membership Structure. The issue of the member/associate member structure, as posed by Joe Larson by memo, was briefly discussed and tabled, to be dealt with along with the budget at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Friday, Dec. 4 at UMass Boston. The agenda is:

- 1) Budget, dues, and membership structure
- 2) Draft of 3-way Memo of Agreement with CME and RMRP
- 3) Assembly of draft proposal for workshop series
- 4) Formulation of comments on RMRP process to date: Plan, RFP, year 1 actions, year 2 priorities.

Action on items 2,3 and 4 is required in advance of the RMRP board meeting on 14 December.

Respectfully Submitted,

Daniel R. Lynch

Budget: 12 months

A) No Workshops

Salaries			
Exec. Dir.			10K
Assoc. Dir.			20K
Travel (20 days)			2K
Office supplies, mail etc.			4K
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Total Direct			36K
O/H (10%)			4K
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Total Annual Budget			40K
Dues/Member			
11 members (present)			3.636 K/yr
15 (target)	2.667		
20			2.000

B) Bare Bones Workshops

Salaries			
Exec. Dir.			10K
Assoc. Dir.			20K
Travel (20 days)			2K
Office supplies, mail etc.			4K
4 Workshops @ 5K	20K		
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Total Direct			56K
O/H (10%)			6K
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Total Annual Budget			62K
Dues/Member			
11 members (present)			5.636 K/yr
15 (target)	4.133		
20			3.100
