

## **Gulf of Maine Ocean Data Partnership/Northeast Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems**

Conference call forum: Thursday, March 8, 2007 ,10-11AM

Backgrounder at: <http://www.gomodp.org/workshops/partnership-conference-call-03-08-2007/>

1. Introductions of those present: Janet Campbell, Jim Manning, Peter Lawton, Bob Groman, Joan Palmer, Anne Ball, Deb Soule, Fran Lightsom, Paul Currier, David Mountain, Evan Richert, Lou Van Guelpen, John Annala, Michele Dionne, Jennifer Levin
2. Evan Richert gave an introduction/overview of New England Regional Association (NERACOOS) effort to date. Program is evolving in the midst of many other ongoing activities.
  - GoMOOS is working on their proposal as to how their organization will work within the NERACOOS framework. Early discussions include one option (proposed by Janet Campbell) to have GoMOOS divest itself of Ocean Observing assets/modeling functions (to the University of Maine) and have the Portland office take on the staff/executive functions of the NERACOOS organization.
  - Similarly, GoMODP needs to determine its role in the NERACOOS (purpose of this discussion)
  - April 26<sup>th</sup> is the next meeting of the NERACOOS advisory board. They meet on August 1<sup>st</sup> and hope to have the organization plan ready by November.
3. Options for GoMODP involvement – David Mountain/Evan Richert
  - GoMODP is not a “legal” entity; informal arrangement should make us more flexible in our decision making on how to go forward.
  - Purpose/vision of the data partnership is similar to the vision for the NERACOOS.
  - What would inspire commitment on behalf of Partners to continue their efforts at collaboration?
  - Need to establish whether the partnership has strong feelings on any particular options?
4. Group discussion
  - Partnership seems to be functioning in its informal arrangement. There can be complications if it’s made more formal or expand geographic coverage.
  - In some ways its easier to expand if there is already a working organization – could expand to southern New England areas by
  - It may be we are “over organized” – too many different relationships for the same group of people. Should work with the strong linkages that exist rather than

creating new linkages? NERACOOS could be the final component in a strong delivery system.

- Voice at the table is important – should the ODP be a partner, a linked organization or fully absorbed into NERACOOS? This is important as we discuss access to resources. Current operations are mostly voluntary, but there have been some resources required for specific projects and for staff support.
- Data partnership is a good vehicle for data sharing and as the glue that holds various data providers together.
- Distributed number of data providers in the region and a centralized user such as NERACOOS to draw data and provide data products to users. Partnership function should merge with NERACOOS at that level.
- Federal agencies do not share data easily between groups, this is a reason why they need to be part of the partnership.
- Access to funding is a key reason why the partnership should become part of NERACOOS. It has limited the ability of the partnership to accomplish goals.
- Formal possibilities: Should GoMODP be an arm of NERACOOS? contractual relationship? seats on NERACOOS board?
- When money becomes part of the picture for the partnership, we start to have obligations – this is not the current situation!

#### 5. Next Steps

- At the Annual meeting, determined that quarterly discussions will be held with the idea that by August we can create a statement that represents the will of the partners.
- Revise this to have a statement ready for the August 1<sup>st</sup> NERACOOS advisory committee meeting, as the goal is to have a NERACOOS plan ready by the November meeting.
- We need to get a list of pros/cons of each option for partners to evaluate (Gulf of Maine Council absorbs GoMODP and ties back to NERACOOS (Paul and Seth Barker to discuss)? GoMODP be an arm of NERACOOS? Create a contractual relationship with NERACOOS? GoMODP as a separate entity with seats on NERACOOS board?
- Need to have a couple of more discussions – May 1<sup>st</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup> timeframes.
- Federal Agencies may be constrained from joining a non-profit corporation such as GoMOOS (or NERACOOS). Gulf of Maine Council has incorporated federal, state, and international organizations successfully – may form a good model.
- Executive Committee will take up the action of creating the pros/cons of various options and will distribute prior to next meeting.