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## THE GULF OF MAINE ocean DATA PARTNERSHIP



# Gulf of Maine Ocean Data Partnership Newsletter - Fall 2008

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### **ODP Annual Meeting - Save the Date!**

The ODP Annual Meeting will be held on January 29, 2009 at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute in Portland, Maine. We are excited to have a great line up of speakers who will present on related activities around the Gulf of Maine. Discussion will focus on how we can work together to find even greater successes. The meeting will also include updates on the work that ODP Partners have been engaged in over the past year, as well as information on opportunities for each participant to learn how to gain more benefit from the the ODP.

### Major Points on the Agenda

Presentations and panel discussion of various groups in the region:

- COINAtlantic - Paul Boudreau
- Ecosystem Indicator Partnership - Susan Russell-Robinson
- Massachusetts Ocean Partnership - Nicholas Napoli
- Pearl and KnowledgeBase - Peter Vaux

Updates on major ODP projects

- Exchange Network
- ODP Interoperability Experiment

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### **GoMOOS Board Invitation to the GoMODP**

The GoMOOS Board of Directors recognizes the important symbiotic relationship of our two organizations. With GoMOOS' increased focus on advancing data management systems that

enable innovation, this connection continues to grow even more important and relevant. To strengthen this relationship further, the GoMOOS Board of Directors has invited the GoMODP to identify a representative to serve on their board. This representative will have full voting and decision-making powers while ensuring that GoMOOS decisions and activities are complementary to the work of the GoMODP. The Executive Committee has appointed Paul Currier to fill this role, at least until the annual meeting in January.

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### **Exchange Network**

The GoMODP Exchange Network project officially kicked off at the end of July, 2008. We asked partners in the grant to complete a data survey of the data sets they are planning to exchange in this project. We invited the entire partnership to the first webinar on August where we discussed the goals of the project and began to talk about the web application that will be the outcome of the project. Twenty-two members of the partnership joined us on that call.

The second webinar was held on October 9th. The focus of this call was to prepare partners for the 2-day workshop later in the month. On this call we introduced partners to the Water Quality Exchange (WQX) schema that we would be adapting for our project and asked partners to complete an IT survey so we could better understand their capacity and potential needs. It became clear on the call that the partnership was interested in finding away to use metadata records already stored in the Global Change Master Directory (GCMD) in this project in an effort to reduce the duplication of effort in entering data.

We came up with a modified approach that we are calling the ‘Tiered Approach’. Rather than all partners participating with full data sets, the tiered approach will allow partners to participate at several levels. The first is to simply share discovery metadata (i.e., project information) that points back to their organization to harvest data; second, to share metadata and monitoring locations; and finally, the full exchange which would include metadata, monitoring locations and result data.

We have had several information gathering calls with members of the EPA, the Pacific Northwest Water Quality Exchange, New Jersey DEP, and GCMD, which helped to validate our approach and gave us lots of good advice going forward.

The in-person workshop was held on October 28th and 29th at GMRI in Portland, Maine. We had 21 attendees and made significant progress on the development of the schema. We introduced trading partner agreements and continued to discuss the development of the web application.

Follow-up webinars were held on November 17th and December 16th to continue work on the data schema. One more webinar is needed to complete the first review of the entire WQX schema.

We have a lot to do in the next few months. Upon completion of the data template,

GoMOOS will develop the XML (Extensible Markup Language) schema, set up the node server (which has already been purchased), set up the back end database and will begin mapping partner data to the schema. Concurrently, we will continue to work on requirements gathering for the web application with interested partners and are planning a late spring meeting to finalize the requirements of the web application and work through any remaining issues with data exchange.

We have set up a Basecamp project management website at <http://gomoos.updatelog.com>. All partners have access to the Basecamp site, and others can be added simply by request. The GoMODP website is also kept up to date with archived webinars, meeting announcements, and general progress: <http://www.gomodp.org/projects/exhchange-network-project>.

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### **NERACOOS Update**

The Northeastern Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems is now an incorporated organization and its Board of Directors met November 13 (for a list of NERACOOS board members, visit the web at <http://www.neracoos.org/about-neracoos/who-we-are/neracoos-board-of-directors>). At this meeting, the board elected Malcolm Spaulding as President, Peter Smith as Vice President, Cheryl Zimmerman as Secretary, and Linda Mercer as Treasurer. Other committees, including the Nominations Committee and Finance Committees, were also established at the board meeting. More information, including the terms of reference and committee membership are available on line. Currently, the Executive Committee is working to identify a Strategic Planning and Implementation Team, which will play a major role in setting the priorities of the regional association, including data collection and management, and product development. The NERACOOS board is also contemplating the role the stakeholder council will play and how to populate it.

Between now and May, the NERACOOS Board will be defining a process for recruiting and hiring personnel, whether through direct hire or contract, to conduct the work outlined in the NERACOOS support grant, which provides \$400k per year. The ODP Executive Committee will be keeping an eye on this as a potential opportunity.

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### **GoMODP Metadata Committee Update**

Following on from Bob Branton`s and Lou Van Guelpen Metadata Editorial Committee work presented at the GoMODP`s 2006 AGM ( <http://www.gomodp.org/workshops/2006-annual-partnership-meeting/index.html>), Dan Ricard and Bob Branton are making very good progress on developing R software to examine and improve the quality of GoMODP's Global Change Master Directory Directory (GCMD) discovery metadata portal (<http://gcmd.nasa.gov/KeywordSearch/Home.do?Portal=gomodp&MetadataType=0>).

Using GCMD's application program interface (API) this R program: 1) extracts multiple XML formatted metadata records, 2) organizes them by GoMODP partner and data center, 3) formulates web links to the appropriate originating repository (e.g. GCMD or Canada's Geodiscovery Data Portal), 4) examines completeness of citations and 5) prepares an interactive web page for routine posting on GoMODP's PLONE site. The intent is for GoMODP partners to assess the present state of their respective metadata and to work with data centre staff to make improvements where required. Dan and Bob expect to have this software fully operational and ready for display at the January GoMODP's annual meeting.

Future software development efforts may include: 1) calculation of completeness scores by partner and data center, 2) derivation of missing information from elsewhere in the metadata record (e.g. Entry\_Title and Personnel) and 3) determining completeness of scientific keywords. This later effort would greatly facilitate systematic comparison of datasets being considered for inclusion into large data integration projects (e.g. WQX). In any case, past versions of quality reports would be retained on the GoMODP as a basis for showing what if any improvements are being made by the partners and data centers. Dan and Bob are both located at Dalhousie University in Halifax NS Canada, with Dan's efforts being funded by the Centre for Marine Biodiversity and Bob's efforts being given as in kind contribution by the Ocean Tracking Network (OTN). Their intent is to use this software to improve quality of other GCMD based ocean portals including: OTN, Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS) and Census of Marine Life (CoML),

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