



NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Social Science Community Newsletter

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Robust and innovative ocean science for informed decisions: NOAA's Research Agenda



Science is at the heart of NOAA and its mission. Everyday more than 12,000 NOAA employees, a workforce that includes world class researchers and managers, provide environmental intelligence to make our communities resilient to the challenges of the future. This is not, however, a simple task.



NOAA's Chief Scientist.

As we steer across uncertain financial times the accountability of results and investments seems but to increase. To tackle the complexity of environmental change NOAA requires a diverse group of minds, unwavering commitment, and a plan.

In May 2014 **Dr. Richard W. Spinrad** was named by our administration as NOAA's chief scientist. At the core of Dr. Spinrad's tasks is the creation of a research portfolio and a vision that can provide guidance for everyone that has an interest in NOAA's science. Some of Dr. Spinrad's objectives include a more effective integration of science across the agency, a rationale to justify scientific investments, the identification of decision tools that can enhance the management of public resources, a prioritization of areas and partners with whom we can strengthen scientific enterprises, and an optimization of our capabilities to transition



Photo Credit: Oregon State University

research to application, operation and use. All of these initiatives are inspired in the belief that excellence in our practices allows us to provide exceptional services and products. By understanding our strengths and limitations we can improve the value we provide to our users and convey NOAA's services under one voice.

Social Science directly contributes to NOAA's Research Agenda through tools and methods that improve the value and performance of our services. Behavioral models, innovative socio-ecological monitoring methods, valuation techniques, co-participatory projects, spatial and historical research are but a few of a growing list of resources that can help us better manage, understand and protect our planet.

In Dr. Spinrad's vision, Social Science is more than just a tool. Social science affords us with the capacity to think differently about environmental problems, a capacity that can be of high significance in tailoring our solutions to acknowledge the needs and interests of our constituents. A desired outcome of NOAA's research agenda is end-to-end integration of social science in NOAA's products and services, such that social science is not merely "sprinkled" on top of completed projects, but is included throughout planning, budget, execution and evaluation processes.

Working with PPI's Social Science Team, the Social Science Committee and across Line Offices, it is Dr. Spinrad's vision that together we can bridge biophysical and social research to positively impact society.

Implementing the DOC Strategic Plan

Natural Capital

Business Roundtables

NOAA, the Economic and Statistics Administration, the Economic Development Administration and the National Institute of Standards and Technology are moving forward in partnership to implement a series of industry-focused regional business roundtables. Their outcome is to create a better understanding of what information and analytical frameworks businesses need to successfully integrate natural capital into their decision-making processes. A focus on reducing risk from coastal and climate hazards aligns with NOAA's Community Resilience priority and Administration efforts to advance the use and valuation of coastal green infrastructure and other ecosystem services. Discussions will explore the business opportunities afforded when natural capital is incorporated in business operations and planning and foster the development of a web-based planning tool.

For additional information please contact PPI's Social Science Team at

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DID YOU KNOW?

NATURE Editorial: "Time for the Social Sciences"

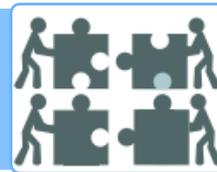
"Governments that want the natural sciences to deliver more for society need to show greater commitment towards the social sciences and humanities."

Click [here](#) to access this article.

The odds of being struck by lightning in your lifetime (est. 80 years) are 1 in 12,000.

From [NOAA NWS JetStream-Online School for Weather](#)

SENTINEL SITE PROGRAM



“Working together to tackle coastal problems.”

Understanding the challenges and opportunities coastal communities face with the threat of increasing sea levels, storm surge and coastal inundation requires the combined strength of federal, state, and local agencies, universities, nonprofits, and volunteer groups. With a daunting number of organizations, projects, and efforts already underway, getting everybody on the same page is a challenge of its own.

The Sentinel Site Program is an innovative enterprise that integrates existing efforts to monitor and respond to increasing sea level rise and inundation in five U.S. locations. The program brings together NOAA’s skills and knowledge with federal, state, and local agencies to develop partnerships that can benefit from shared expertise and information. By supporting the creation of Cooperatives in selected places, the program connects networks of people, capabilities, and resources. It creates a forum to plan, leverage, and execute activities that can efficiently address environmental threats.

In 2014, NOAA social scientists conducted a survey of the program’s participants and other partners. The survey asked respondents to comment on the value of the program and local networks as sources of valuable information, contacts, and resources as well as levels of commitment to the program. A total of 149 people participated.

Main highlights

- 30% of participants worked for NOAA and Sea Grant. 60% of participants were affiliated with other federal and state government, and 24% were affiliated with academia.
- NOAA was listed as the first option to obtain credible, relevant and timely sea level based science information by 40% of participants.
- 60% of participants indicated their preference to be more involved with local networks and with the Sentinel Site Program.
- More than 70% indicated that contributing to a local network and to the program is important to them as well as that they can trust people in a local network or in the program.
- 50% indicated that they get important professional needs met because they are connected to the program.
- 50% indicated that information about sea level rise is more easily accessible because they are involved in the program.

One of the biggest successes is getting partners to talk to each other with the promise of no new money, working together on issues important to them and to NOAA in an unprecedented level of collaboration.

*According to our partners
“[The program is one of] the most collaborative and powerful NOAA-led partnership I am aware of and participate in. This is a great group, which should be increasingly supported.”*

“I am extremely supportive of [the Program]. I recently finished a project modeling the impacts of sea level rise on coastal wetland ecosystems (...). It became clear that the only way to truly gauge the rapidity of local effects and actual local effect would be through the implementation of sentinel sites. I am so pleased to know that NOAA is pursuing this program, bravo! This information will help inform adaptation efforts in human and natural communities.”



In **San Francisco Bay** and in **The Chesapeake Bay** impacts on communities and sensitive habitats are a major concern.



In the coasts of **North Carolina** and the **Gulf of Mexico** the state of marsh habitats is a top conservation priority.



In **Hawaii**, food security is a major concern.

For more information check out <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/sentinelites/>

PUBLICATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

- * [Examining the 10-Year Rebuilding Dilemma for U.S. Fish Stocks](#). Patrick and Cope. PLoS ONE 9(11): e112232. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0112232
- * [Lifting the goliath grouper harvest ban: Angler perspectives and willingness to pay](#). Shideler et al. Fisheries Research.
- * [Complex dynamics may limit prediction in marine fisheries](#). Glaser et al. Fish and Fisheries.
- * [The use of community assessment for public health emergency response to evaluate NWS warnings](#). Chiu et al. Bull. of the Am. Met. Soc.
- * [Surface Pressure Observations from Smartphones: A Potential Revolution for High-Resolution Weather Prediction?](#) Mass and Madaus. Bull. of the Am. Met. Soc.
- * [Tornado Warning Decisions Using Phased Array Radar Data](#) AMS. Heinselman et al. Weather and Forecasting:
- * [The Dynamics of Hurricane Risk Perception: Real-Time Evidence from the 2012 Atlantic Hurricane Season](#). Meyer et al. Bull. of the Am. Met. Soc.
- * [“You can’t see them from sitting here”: Evaluating beach user understanding of a rip current warning sign](#). Brannstrom et al. Applied Geography.
- * [A Qualitative Exploration of Fishing and Fish Consumption in the Gullah/Geechee Culture](#). Ellis et al. Journal of Community Health.
- * [Productivity growth and product choice in catch share fisheries: The case of Alaska pollock](#). Torres and Felthoven. Marine Policy.