



Coastal Advisory Council
July 28, 2022
SSELC and Virtual via Zoom
Meeting summary

Welcome and Introductions:

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Charles McMillan. All Coastal Advisory Council (CAC) members, guests, and Coastal Resources Department (CRD) staff introduced themselves during round robin introductions. Ms. Jan Mackinnon introduced Dan Quinn as the GCMP's new GIS Specialist.

Old Business:

Meeting Summary April 28, 2022

No comments were made on the meeting summary.

New Business:

Committee Reports

Communications Committee, Katy Smith

The Communications Committee consists of Stacia Hendricks, Katy Smith, Buddy Sullivan, Shawn Jordan, and Charles McMillian. Ms. Katy Smith reported to Council on Ms. Hendricks behalf. The Communications Committee has discussed a goal to provide CRD with list of potential projects and ideas to have a role related to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding. Ms. Smith discussed two different National Sea Grant marine debris funding opportunities. One opportunity is a competition for transformative projects to address marine debris through innovation and partnerships (\$1-3M). The second opportunity is a coalition building competition. Mr. Ben Carswell echoed that the available marine debris funding is outstanding right now- approximately \$56 from NOAA and around \$45 through Sea Grant. Prior to this funding, programs were hesitant to fund vessel removal projects and focused on prevention due to limited budgets but now this funding will allow for more removal projects. CRD has done a great job in the past of identifying and inventorying derelict and abandoned vessels and post disaster efforts but still many more still out there. Ghost crab pots are also a major debris issue currently. The Jekyll Island Authority is interested in partnering and encourages CRD to look at this funding opportunity.

The Communications Committee also discussed that the IJA funding has the potential to bring a lot of sectors together, with potential for projects focusing on conservation and water equity, as it connects to so many different intersecting issues and funding sources. CRD could play a role providing connections with groups, working towards common goals and funding opportunities. One gap identified was addressing drinking water issues in Glynn County. Ms. Smith asked if there was any interest or need for an inventory of drinking water infrastructure and asked if any areas in Brunswick/Glynn County are on shallow or community wells? Ms. Kelly Hill recommended looking at the WelSTROM database online which has all permitted wells mapped at <https://www.welstrom.com/coastal/>. Vice Chair McMillan echoed that source water protection is also an important topic that could fall under these funding opportunities and would like a follow up conversation with Michael Blakely. Ms. Ashby Nix also highlighted the NOAA Coastal Habitat Grant as an additional potential funding opportunity for these types of projects.

Noyes Cut was also discussed by the Communications Committee as a potential IJA fundable project. Dr. Clay Montague provided a brief update on Noyes Cut in the Satilla Estuary. There are 8 cuts in that system and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has approved closing of 3 of them. USACE has funding to close two of them but still needs funding to close Noyes Cut.

Ms. Jennifer Kline recommended interested parties join us at the Resiliency Funding Workshop on 9/8/22 to discuss building partnerships when considering these funding opportunities. Ms. Kline will circulate flyer to CAC when released next week.

Legislative Committee- Scott Hendricks

CRD did not propose any legislation in 2022 session. HB 748 (CMPA to establish formal process for ownership claims in marsh) did not move. This issue is poorly understood by most. Mr. Alton Brown and Vice Chair McMillan put together some examples of marsh ownership and mitigation to present to the Legislative Committee and think it would be beneficial to also present to the CAC. Ms. Worley requested to have a presentation on this and dig into the topic a bit more.

Vice Chair McMillan will work to add this to a future agenda and update the presentation given to CMPA Committee.

Executive Committee- Charles McMillon

The Executive Committee discussed the 4 current vacancies on the CAC. CAC Chair Chester Jackson has resigned so Vice Chair McMillan is acting as CAC Chair currently. Mr. Mark McClellan is also resigning, and the Committee thanked Mr. McClellan for his service on the CAC and leadership role. Jason Weaver and Dr. Tate Holbrook's previous positions also create vacancies on the Council.

Nominating Committee- Jan Mackinnon

The Nominating Committee is made up of the CRD Division Director (Mr. Doug Haymans), current Chair (Dr. Jackson had already resigned), and the former Chair (Mr. McClellan). The Nominating Committee met on July 19, 2022 and discussed interest from Vice Chair McMillan

for moving into the Chair position and Mr. John Hunter's interest in serving as Vice Chair. If approved by the CAC these changes would take effect at the Fall CAC meeting. There were no other nominations from the CAC. Mr. Buddy Sullivan moved to approve the Nomination Committee's recommendations. Dr. Montague seconded the motion. Motion called to a vote; all in favor, none opposed.

Coastal Incentive Grant Cycle 26- Jan Mackinnon

Themes and CRD Research Needs

Funding for Cycle 26 will begin October 1, 2023. The information presented and approved at the CAC meeting will be brought to the August 2022 DNR Board meeting for approval to release the Request For Proposals (RFP) in September 2022.

Ms. Mackinnon presented a powerpoint with a summary of the Cycle 25 projects and associated Themes. In Cycle 25, 23 Pre-Proposals were received consisting of 18 university, 1 state/regional, and 4 local government applicants. Of these 23 Pre-Proposals, 12 proposals were asked to submit a full application. The CIG review Committee met in March 2022 and recommended 7 projects for funding. These projects will begin October 1, 2022. The Cycle 25 Themes and number of grants in each them are as follows: Oceans and Wetlands (3), Sustainable Communities (1), Non-Point Source Pollution (1), Disaster Resiliency and Coastal Hazards (2), and Public Access and Land Conservation (0). Ms. Mackinnon continued to present the suggested themes for Cycle 26 to stay the same as Cycle 25.

CRD has also released the Research Needs list that will be shared with the CAC to identify specific research project ideas that CRD staff see as a need for management application. Dr. Montague asked how the research needs match up with the Themes and Ms. Mackinnon answered that this needs list is organized around CRD's organizational structure. Not all research needs may be best fit for CIG applications- but this list is meant to provide more specific research ideas and staff agree that most projects could find a fit into one of the broad CIG themes. Ms. Jill Andrews also responded that in addition, applications addressing a CRD research need is awarded additional points according to the review criteria.

Ms. Worley asked if CRD is expecting expansion of CIG funding or change in match requirements with the available IJA funding. Ms. Mackinnon answered that CRD has not received notification of changes in match requirements from NOAA with this programmatic funding. The Federal award to CRD varies slightly year to year due to several factors and if there are increases in funding, CRD can accommodate funding additional CIGs.

Ms. Mackinnon stated that CRD staff's goal is to work with applicants in advance of proposal deadlines in developing projects that meet CRD's needs as well as the applicants and noted that all themes are given equal priority.

Review Criteria

There have not been any proposed changes to the Review Criteria this year.

Mr. Carswell asked if the reason these have not changes much is that they are working well? Vice Chair McMillan answered that as a reviewer he thinks that they work well. Ms. Worley and Dr. Vives also concur. Mr. Carswell suggested that potentially after scoring is completed, those on the review committee could take a moment to make any recommendations on review process at that time when it's fresh in their memories and bring that to the CAC in the following summer meeting. Ms. Mackinnon agreed to ask reviewers for that feedback. Also, if any CAC members are interested in being a CIG reviewer, please let CRD staff know.

Mr. Michael Blakeley asked what the normal number of applications is each year? Ms. Mackinnon answered that this fluctuates year to year. Previous year was 23 pre applications, 12 full proposals and 7 funded. There is a new electronic portal system so all applications are submitted online. All application instructions will be posted online in September. CRD also plans to host several virtual meetings to present the CIG application process for new applicants or those needing to learn more about the portal system.

Ms. Worley asked why nonprofits are not eligible to apply? Ms. Andrews answered that it started out as a programmatic requirement from NOAA in the beginning and when the GA Coastal Management Program Document was created it was carried through in setting up the Program. The CIG process has always supported nonprofits as partners with eligible applicants and can receive pass through funding as applicant partners.

Mr. Sullivan moved to approve Cycle 26 Themes and Criteria and Ms. Worley seconded. Motion called to a vote; all in favor, none opposed.

306A Updates

There are no changes in NOAA guidance for the 306A guidance. CRD will continue to work with applicants in working through these requirements for construction related projects.

Terms and Funding Updates

The proposed terms include a maximum of \$80k theme related amount per year in federal funding, with a two-year maximum project term. After removing \$233,190 of carryover funding for Year 2 of Cycle 25 projects, we are expecting approximately \$568,810 to be available in Cycle 26 for new grants. RFP advertisement will begin in September 2022. Pre-Proposals are due early December 2022, and Full Proposals are due February 2023. The CIG Review Committee meets in March 2023 and selects the final projects to include in the GA CZM application to NOAA in May 2023. CRD can usually provide tentative notification to applicants in May 2023, and contracts are issued upon NOAA approval in August/September 2023 with a contractual start date of October 1, 2023.

CAC Bylaw Revisions- Clay Montague

Dr. Montague has taken the lead on revising the current bylaws to address several topics that have arisen over the last few years. Revisions would include language to promote in person

meetings except for certain circumstances where virtual meetings would be allowed. Proposed revisions would also extend the CAC Chair term to two years, change the title of Vice Chair to Chair Elect also serving for two years for more continuity in leadership. Chair Elect will automatically fill in as Chair if Chair leaves before term is finished. Revisions would also include a statement on when an affiliation of a member changes to note that they would be allowed to fulfill the term of their appointment with approval from their original organization and from the DNR Commissioner or resign. Revisions would also clarify electronic voting allowances.

Vice Chair McMillan noted that the Executive Committee will finalize revisions and get to the full Council for review 30 days in advance of next meeting to review and vote at the next meeting.

Other Announcements:

Beach Week- Jennifer Kline

Beach Week was back to a full in person event this year. Staff visited Jekyll Island, Tybee Island and East Beach on St Simons Island. Probably only reached about 600 people versus several thousand in years past. Still a great opportunity to get information out. Staff did notice more partners interested in participating this year- ie Jekyll Fire Dept, lifeguards participating etc. Usually invite state and federal partners.

Clean and Resilient Marina Program- Kelly Hill

CRD has contracted with UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government over the past year to assist in a stakeholder process to update the GA Clean Marina Program guidance and logos. In partnership with UGA Marine Extension and GA Seat Grant and GA Marine Business Association (GAMBA), CRD is now moving forward with certifying marinas under the updated program. The application period is open for marinas to apply and program partners will meet in early September to decide which marinas will be invited to pledge to complete the checklist and become certified by summer 2023. Partners will assist marinas throughout the year with the new checklist with hopes to have all coastal marinas certified over the next few years. Certified marinas will be eligible to fly the Georgia Clean Marina flag and use the logo in their advertising and promotional materials, signaling to the boating community their commitment to protecting coastal waterways.

NFWF Brunswick Proposal- Kelly Hill

CRD has submitted a full proposal to the NFWF Coastal Resilience Fund grant program. This project will address the compounding effects of coastal flooding, high tide events, sea level rise, and stormwater runoff from inland communities as well as the impacts these events are having on vulnerable coastal communities and their associated infrastructure. The GCMP will work with the City of Brunswick, the Glynn County Board of Education, GA DOT, and community residents to address flooding issues in the Habersham Park community, adjacent Lanier Boulevard at Glynn Middle School (GMS), and segments of Highway 17 through a combination of nature-based solutions. This proposal includes community stakeholder engagement and

coordination with City, County, State and Federal partners to identify flooding solutions in this area and complete engineered designs for these solutions.

NFWF Harris Neck Living Shoreline Proposal- Meghan Angelina

CRD has partnered with The Nature Conservancy to apply for the Harris Neck Living Shoreline Proposal for NFWF's National Coastal Resilience Fund. Staff worked with Christi Lambert from TNC and Chuck and Kimberly Hayes from USFWS to submit a proposal for the final engineering plans, construction, and monitoring of an 800-foot living shoreline at Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge. The living shoreline would be constructed along a portion of the Barbour River that is eroding and threatening the infrastructure on the upland and bank. Existing infrastructure and use include protecting the public parking lot, the current public dock and boat ramp, the Crabber's Dock, the Harris Neck African Baptist Church's cemetery dating back to 1880's, and a baptismal site that is noted as a traditional cultural property (TCP) for the Harris Neck Community with continued use today. A preliminary design was created for this proposed living shoreline in 2018. These plans will be updated and NFWF is asking that construction will begin within 6 months of the project start date and monitoring last for at least 1 year post construction.

Workshops will be provided for engineers and contractors, as well as for the public, who will also be invited to participate in a volunteer oyster bagging event. This will be one of the only living shorelines on the mainland-most are on barrier islands – so it will be more accessible for the public to see the living shoreline and directly learn about them on site. Other partners that will be involved include Shell to Shore, Friends of the Coastal Wildlife Refuges Club, and the Darien News. Applicants will be notified if the project is funded by November 2022 and would hope for a late Spring 2023 start date for this project.

NFWF Cathead Creek Proposal- Jaynie Gaskin

CRD has also applied for a NFWF America the Beautiful Challenge grant. The goals of this project are to increase connectivity for aquatic organisms and wildlife migration along the Altamaha River watershed in southeast Georgia and improve public access to nature-based recreation. These goals will be accomplished through the replacement of a choke-point culvert on McClendon Creek in McIntosh County and the addition of an access point for paddle craft, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

IJA NOAA Coastal Program Funding- Jill Andrews and Dan Quinn

There is \$205M coastal restoration/land acquisition grants available to CZM programs through NOAA. Capacity building funding is also included in this funding to assist in managing the IJA funding programs interacting with coastal projects. GA CZM will submit for capacity building funding to support activities under this funding, reestablish CELCP Program and work with communities. May see a new capacity position here for next several years. \$5-6M per project proposal is also available under the competitive funding application. For the competitive IJA funding, CRD is drafting a proposal for a Habitat Restoration Planning, Engineering, and Design project to restore the tidal marsh on part of Egypt Island, located in the Richmond Hill WMA just west of I-95 (Bryan County) and approximately 15 miles inland from the coast. This will be

a two-phase project. Phase 1 would begin in 2023 and would focus on planning, engineering, and design to have a shovel-ready project (i.e., Phase 2) that would begin in 2025 if funding is secured.

Mr. Carswell asked if there is a process for getting shovel ready projects into the pipeline for that funding? Ms. Andrews responded that CRD will be working on that through revitalization of the CELCP plan and identifying opportunities through this next year with partners. Projects on this list will also qualify under NFWF etc.

DNR Career Academy- Jaynie Gaskin

The goal for this inaugural year of DNR Career Academy was to introduce students to GA DNR career opportunities. Twenty-one high school students from across Georgia participated in DNR's first annual Career Academy in July 2022. The students spent a week working alongside current DNR employees from all four Divisions and earned dual enrollment credit from Ogeechee Technical College. CZM staff member Jaynie Gaskin served as the Coastal Resources Coordinator, overseeing all Coastal Resources Division-related activities, and representing the division as the on-site mentor present for the full duration of the program. During CRD's day as host division, Coastal Zone Management and Marine Fisheries staff engaged students in field and lab activities that showcased many different coastal career options.

Member Announcements:

No other member announcements

Vice Chair McMillan adjourned the meeting.