



Coastal Advisory Council
January 28, 2016
Coastal Regional Commission- Darien
Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions:

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul Wolff and the Council went through introductions.

Paul introduced new members Mark McClellan with GA Forestry, Larry Miles Citizen at Large, and Katy Smith with UGA Marine Extension.

Paul presented the three vacancies to be filled for membership as Citizen at Large (Denise Grabowski), State Agency (Dan Hawthorne), and Environmental Organization (Clay Mobley). The nominations for those positions were presented as Charles McMillan with GA Conservancy (Environmental Organization), Ben Carswell with the Jekyll Island Authority (State Agency), and Buddy Sullivan (Citizen at Large). The Council voted to approve the three nominations for new members.

Old Business:

Meeting Summary

Comment was received that the Summary didn't capture Director Woodward's comments on the CAC's role. Director Woodward confirmed with staff that the Summary appropriately captured his comments.

Communications Committee Update- Stacia Hendricks

Ms. Hendricks ran through a proposed educational presentation on the Coastal Advisory Council that she will present to the DNR Board the following day. The Council provided feedback and CRD staff assisted Stacia with changes to the presentation. Staff also assisted with preparing a CAC fact sheet to have available as a handout to the DNR Board.

Discussion continued on the role of the CAC on providing information, advice and opinions. Concerns were raised on opinions without a consensus and how to appropriately highlight any minority or dissenting opinions. Chairman Wolff tabled the discussion until the end of the meeting.

New Business:

Member Position Openings

This was discussed during welcome and introductions.

2016 DNR Legislative Priorities- Jill Andrews

Current DNR Legislative Priorities for the 2016 Legislative Session Include:

- HB 840- Wildlife Exhibition Bill
- HB 736- License plates for marine habitat conservation
- Fishing/Hunting License Reform Bill

Ms. Andrews also mentioned HB 483 to designate the shoal bass as the state native riverine sport fish, The GA Legacy Trust Fund to create a funding mechanism for the protection and preservation of

conservation lands, and a Senate Bill sponsored by William Ligon on Coastal Aquifer Storage and Recovery.

Ms. Andrews mentioned the GA Conservancy Legislative Tracker as a great resource to use in following current status of proposed bills.

Ms. Nix commented that the ASR senate bill had been amended to HB 116 and focused more on groundwater protection and the ASR language may be removed.

Ms. Hickson discussed the Coastal GA Greenway Joint Study Committee that was formed as a result of last year's legislative session. The Committee has evaluated the current status of the Greenway as 24% complete and needing approximately \$60 million to complete. The Study Committee recommended that the state approve \$1M each year for the next 10 years to help jumpstart fundraising efforts. This proposal is being considered in the House Economic Development Committee. Study Committee is currently gathering resolutions from the 16 counties involved in the Greenway to garner support for this recommendation.

Coastal Ecosystem Report Card- Jill Andrews

Ms. Andrews presented the 2014 Coastal Georgia Report Card that was produced by Georgia DNR and the Integration & Application Network, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. Data were collected by Coastal Resources Division, Wildlife Resources Division, and Environmental Protection Division. The Report Card provides an assessment of coastal Georgia ecosystem health, producing grades for various categories by comparing and contrasting data from monitoring activities with known standards and reference points. The intent is to provide the public with broad fact-based knowledge about the condition of Georgia's coastal resources. It was acknowledged that additional information is being gathered to address Dissolved Oxygen in coastal systems to determine if it is an appropriate indicator for coastal water quality. The intent is for DNR to update the report card annually. More information can be found at: <http://coastalgadnr.org/ReportCard>

Discussion followed with questions regarding other potential indicators and data sources for coastal water quality. Ms. Andrews mentioned that the goal of this report card was to focus on DNR collected data but future updates may have the opportunity to expand into using additional data sources. Discussion also continued on the grading scale ranging from 0-100% rather than the typical 60-100% scale used in school report cards. Ms. Andrews explained that this scale has become that standard for ecosystem report cards and allows this grade to be compared to grades published in other report cards using the same statistical analysis and grading scale. More detailed information on how the results were developed are available in a process guide available here: [http://coastalgadnr.org/sites/uploads/crd/images/ReportCard/Coastal Georgia Report Card White Paper.pdf](http://coastalgadnr.org/sites/uploads/crd/images/ReportCard/Coastal_Georgia_Report_Card_White_Paper.pdf)

Several other questions followed regarding adding different measures and indicators and Ms. Andrews mentioned that DNR was trained throughout this process and will have the ability to develop new indicators in the future. The goal is to keep or raise the current grade by raising awareness of the natural resources along the coast and providing examples on how to maintain and protect these resources. The public meeting that was held for the release of the report card was recorded and is available on the DNR YouTube page.

Announcements:

Coastal Incentive Grants- Stefanie Nagid

Ms. Nagid provided an overview of the Cycle 19 Coastal Incentive status. There is approximately \$700,000 available for CIG projects in Cycle 19. Five projects rolled over for Year 2 activities totaling \$191,358, \$45,000 is to be retained for the Georgia Coastal Research Council in 2017, and an additional \$80,000 is to be retained for the Directed Project. That leaves approximately \$383,642 available for new projects. 24 applications were received; 14 applications from 5 different Universities and 10 applications from 9 different Local Governments. Staff is also continuing to work on program process change details for Cycle 20 and will provide a full update at the spring meeting.

Directed Project- Kelly Hill

The scope of work for the Low Impact Development BMP Inventory Directed Project has been developed and is awaiting approval. The project will go out to bid this spring and the lowest most qualified bid will be awarded to start the project October 1, 2016.

Rain Barrel Video- Kelly Hill

The Coastal Soil and Water Conservation District utilized Coastal Incentive Grant funds to produce a Build Your Own Rain Barrel Instructional Video. The video is complete and will be posted to the DNR YouTube page. Individual copies are available upon request.

Other Announcements:

- Jennifer Kline announced that the Governor's South Atlantic Alliance was awarded a NOAA Resiliency Grant to develop a Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plan (DRRP) for Glynn County, City of Brunswick, and the Jekyll Island Authority. The project will begin in the spring of 2016 and be completed over two years. The project partners will use the format and guidance developed during the 309 project completed in Chatham and Brantley counties.
- Jill Andrews announced that the Georgia Coastal and Marine Planner (GCAMP) data viewer is now live and can be viewed at: <http://www.geospatial.gatech.edu/GCAMP>. The second piece of this project is a policy analysis to understand how state and federal agencies interact in the offshore environment. CRD is poised to be the point of contact to coordinate with and establish roles of other state agencies in this process. The first policy meeting was held in Atlanta and included participants from the State Properties Commission, GEFA, Public Service Commission, Georgia Power, The Office of the Governor, BOEM, NOAA and EPA.

Continued Discussion

CAC Members used the remaining meeting time to continue the discussion on the role of the CAC and providing opinions and/or advice to CRD and possibly the DNR Board. Discussion continued to focus on the distinction of providing opinions versus fact-based information, avoiding advocacy, and how to properly capture dissenting or minority opinions of all CAC members. This topic will be added to the spring meeting agenda for further discussion.