

Scheduled Meetings

- Caucus 1—June 7, 2005 (University of Miami @ Orlando)
- Caucus 2—Aug. 2, 2005 (Nova Southeastern University @ Orlando)
- Caucus 3—Dec. 6, 2005 (University of South Florida @ St. Petersburg)
- Caucus 4—Jan. 13, 2006 (Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution @ Ft. Pierce)
- Caucus 5—April 3, 2006 (Mote Marine Laboratory @ Sarasota)
- Caucus 6—June 20, 2006 (Florida Institute of Technology @ Melbourne)
- Caucus 7—Sept. 19, 2006 (Florida State University @ Tallahassee)

- Caucus 8—December 2006 (Florida Atlantic University @ SeaTech, Dania Beach)
- Caucus 9—January or February 2007 (University of Florida @ Gainesville)
- Caucus 10—April 2007 (Private Sector Group @ Orlando)
- Caucus 11—June 2007 (University of North Florida @ Jacksonville)
- Caucus 12—September 2007 (Florida International University @ Miami)
- Caucus 13—December 2007 (Florida Gulf Coast University @ Fort Myers)
- Caucus 14—January or February 2008 (State of Florida Institute of Oceanography @ Keys Marine Laboratory, Long Key)

Further meetings will be planned as host institutions offer to support these efforts. In a world of formal meetings by policy decision makers, the FL COOS Caucus offers a fresh opportunity for open debate and public policy development important to our future and that of the Florida coastal ocean and beyond. The FL COOS Caucus Web site has been developed to support these efforts and to help define Florida's immediate and long-term interests in coastal ocean observing systems.

Mission

The FL COOS Caucus conducts periodic meetings to discuss the most current activities being undertaken to develop the Coastal Ocean Observing System (COOS) and related integrated global ocean observing systems. A key thematic goal is to help identify Florida's common interests and to develop plans of action to accomplish specific tasks to further those interests.

Vision

The FL COOS Caucus is committed to a forward thinking Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System (Florida COOS), as part of the Southeastern U.S., Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean regions. These Florida COOS-related activities will be organized as part of the U.S. effort to participate within the integrated global ocean observing system that is responsive to the needs of Florida users and inclusive of all areas and influences that affect the Florida coastal ocean.

Sustainable Ocean Resources

Considering the passage of Florida's Oceans and Coastal Resources Management Act, the issuance of President Bush's Executive Order establishing a Committee on Ocean Policy (as part of the Council on Environmental Quality) and the releasing of the U.S. Ocean Action Plan, Florida should play a significant role in these national undertakings and the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) efforts.

Links

- Florida's Oceans and Coastal Resources Management Act http://election.dos.state.fl.us/laws/05laws/ch_2005-166.pdf
- U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy announcement www.oceancommission.gov
- Ocean U.S.-National Office for Integrated and Sustained Ocean Observations www.ocean.us
- 2002 Annual Report on National GOOS Activities www.ocean.us/documents/docs/GOOS_Regional_Report_2002_Final.doc
- Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) <http://www.secoora.org/default.asp>
- Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System Regional Association (GCOOS-RA) <http://ocean.tamu.edu/GCOOS/gcoos.html>
- SURA (Southeastern Universities Research Association) Coastal Ocean Observing and Prediction (SCOOP) Program <http://scoop.sura.org/>
(example of COOS activity on SW Florida Coast and NE Florida Coast)
- East Florida Shelf Information System (EFSIS) <http://efsis.rsmas.miami.edu>
(example of COOS activity on the East Florida Shelf)
- Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Prediction System (COMPS) <http://comps.marine.usf.edu>
(example of COOS activity on the West Florida Shelf)
- For additional links or more information, visit the Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System Caucus Web site at www.nova.edu/ocean/flcoos/index.html

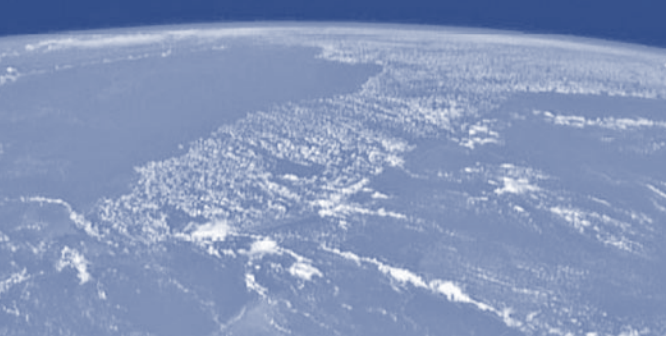
Top 20 Research Components

The specific FOCRC budget recommendations for the twenty research components in priority order are as follows:

1. Real-time interdisciplinary observing system	\$7,720,000
2. Identify and evaluate new technology for continuous biological, IOOS compatible measurements	\$ 400,000
3. Establish continuous, long-term estuary salinity and dissolved-oxygen monitoring	\$ 150,000
4. Estimate impacts on dependent species from loss of mangrove and seagrass habitat	\$ 450,000
5. Develop, install, and implement new and improved biological monitoring instruments and protocols	\$ 750,000
6. Establish interdisciplinary remote sensing capacity for coastal and offshore waters	\$1,000,000
7. Produce for all state waters by 2015 highest-resolution bathymetric maps identifying physical geological setting/submarine aquatic vegetation (initial planning)	\$ 250,000
8. Improve red tide predictions (linking research and monitoring to physical oceanography)	\$ 150,000
9. Integrated waters budget analysis to identify extent of inflow change to coastal waters	\$ 800,000
10. Develop new fishery populations assessment tools (including acoustical and genetic methods)	\$ 250,000
11. Identify and prioritize specific coastal areas for bathymetric mapping (entire State's coast by 2010)	\$ 100,000
12. Improve understanding of land-sea linkages (with estuarine, riverine, lagoonal and shelf models)	\$ 650,000
13. Conduct monitoring, assessment, and modeling evaluations of fishing ecosystem impacts	\$ 200,000
14. Evaluate long-term stability of coastal wetland related to sea level rise and episodic disturbances	\$ 250,000
15. Assess effectiveness of MPA, MR, and other protected areas to enhance the surrounding ecosystem	\$ 500,000
16. Determine/provide method to track ocean and coastal economy sectors (market and nonmarket values)	\$ 375,000
17. Improve HAB understanding and control factors by integrating monitoring and ocean observing	\$ 150,000
18. Link coast maps to existing offshore data and identify gaps and noncompatible data sets	\$ 300,000
19. Establish and enhance stationary and mobile monitoring, assessment and modeling capabilities	\$2,100,000
20. Identify coastal water quantitative relationships (nutrient concentrations and flora/fauna impairment)	\$ 150,000
	\$16,695,000
Plus	
a) funds to develop a statewide, standardized, and comprehensive data management system	\$ 600,000
b) funds to develop a Resource Assessment beginning Dec. 1, 2006	\$ 400,000
Total	\$17,695,000

Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System (FL COOS Caucus)





Who We Are?

Many Floridians of diverse ocean-related backgrounds (including academic, government, NGO and private industry) have expressed interest in the development, implementation and use of a comprehensive and integrated Coastal Ocean Observing System (COOS). A venue was needed for discussions between members of the academic and research community, governmental and regulatory officials, and the private sector providers and other user groups regarding emerging efforts to develop coastal ocean observing systems.

Accordingly, the FL COOS Caucus (FCC) meetings originated through convening efforts of Otis Brown, Dean of the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science; Richard Dodge, Dean of the Nova Southeastern University's Oceanographic Center; and Peter Betzer, Dean of the University of South Florida's College of Marine Science.

The intent of the FL COOS Caucus meetings is to provide a productive dialogue to help determine the most useful options and policy parameters consistent with Florida's diverse ocean resource and ecosystem needs. The meetings are the best opportunity to engage the scientific, management, regulatory and private sector provider and user groups.

It is not the purpose of the FL COOS Caucus meeting participants to create a formal new entity. The Caucus employs a town-hall format for participants to establish the basis for, and to demonstrate the benefits of, cross-disciplinary, cross-sectorial dialogue between marine sciences and resource experts in a group setting. Relying on fair-minded consensus building strategies, ocean issues can be debated, and various solutions and policy initiatives examined.

In The News

FL COOS CAUCUS STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE FOCRC RESEARCH PLAN AND BUDGET

...better tools to protect, manage, and predict ocean and estuary conditions and resources.

On March 13, 2006, the Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Council (FOCRC) identified the top 20 research components from their Annual Science Research Plan as funding priorities for the 2006 Regular Legislative Session. The FL COOS Caucus enthusiastically supports the FOCRC's recommendations and the coastal ocean observing systems (COOS) research initiatives that are inherent within the research components.

The complete budget recommendation totals \$17.695 million and includes \$600,000 for data management and dissemination improvements and \$400,000 for undertaking a comprehensive oceans and coastal resource assessment. An initial resource assessment is scheduled for completion on December 1, 2006 and will be used as a baseline of information to assist the research plan.

Of very special importance to all Floridians, was the FOCRC recommendation that Research Component 3.2 be provided \$7.72 million in state funds for the FY 2006-2007. These funds will allow the state to undertake a three year effort to establish eight dispersed pilot prototype observing projects in three coastal regions and five major estuary regions.

The Florida COOS Caucus believes that initiating projects along the northwest Florida coast, the Dry Tortugas, the east Florida coast and in the Apalachicola / Apalachee Bays estuary region, the Tampa Bay estuary region, the Charlotte Harbor estuary region, the Indian River estuary region, and the St. Johns estuary region represents the best scientific approach for the development of statewide real-time interdisciplinary coastal ocean and estuary research, observing, and prediction system.

Further, the FL COOS Caucus believes Florida should set an example for the nation by coordinating its research programs with the national efforts to develop an Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). Described in the Florida COOS White Paper proposal, these Florida efforts could help to set the stage for the development of the systems of systems that provide the improved scientific and observational basis for the well-documented national objectives: detecting and forecasting oceanic components of climate variability, facilitating safe and efficient marine operations, ensuring national security, managing resources for sustainable use, preserving and restoring healthy marine ecosystems, mitigating natural hazards, and ensuring public health.

By examining our ocean ecosystem as a whole, researchers can better predict and respond to the environmental, geological, and weather impacts on Florida's citizens and visitors and better assess and manage impact of human activities on our ocean and coastal ecosystems.



FL COOS Caucus Institutional Hosts

- **Dean Otis Brown, Ph.D.**
University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science
- **Dean Richard E. Dodge, Ph.D.**
Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center
- **Dean Peter R. Betzer, Ph.D.**
University of South Florida College of Marine Science
- **Jan Petri**
Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, Inc. Director of Governmental Relations
- **Kumar Mahadevan, Ph.D.**
Mote Marine Laboratory President and CEO
- **Chairman George A. Maul, Ph.D.**
Florida Institute of Technology Department of Marine and Environmental Systems
- **Chairman William K. Dewar, Ph.D.**
Florida State University Department of Oceanography
- **Director/Chairman Manhar Dhanak, Ph.D.**
Florida Atlantic University SeaTech/Department of Ocean Engineering
- **Chairman Joseph Tedesco, Ph.D., P.E.**
University of Florida Civil and Coastal Engineering Department
- **Mitchell A. Roffer, Ph.D.**
Roffer's Ocean Fishing Forecasting Service, Inc. President
- **Dean Neal S. Coulter, Ph.D.**
University of North Florida College of Computing, Engineering and Construction
- **Director Rudolf Jaffé, Ph.D.**
Florida International University Southeast Environmental Research Center
- **Randall Alberte, Ph.D.**
Florida Gulf Coast University Director of Biotechnology
- **Sandra Vargo, Ph.D.**
State of Florida Institute of Oceanography Assistant Director