January 2014 Volume 1, Issue 4

Sentinel Site Quarterly

North Carolina Sentinel Site Cooperative

Happy New Year from the N.C. Sentinel Site Cooperative!

The North Carolina Sentinel Site Cooperative (NCSSC) was established in 2012 as part of a NOAA-wide effort to provide coastal communities and resource managers with information on the potential impacts of sea-level rise on coastal habitats.

For more information about anything in this newsletter, contact Whitney Jenkins.

Quick Links

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Research & Monitoring Coordination Workshop Report

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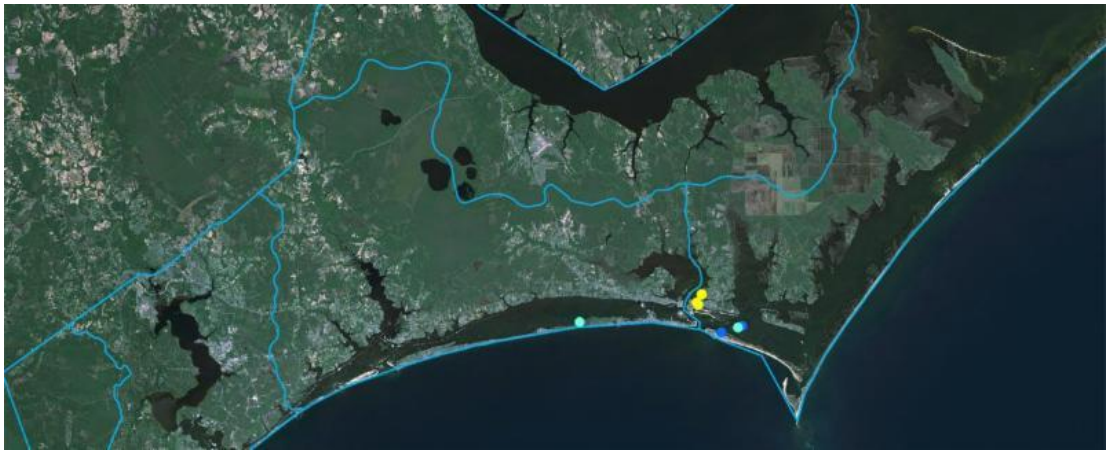
N.C. Sentinel Site Clearinghouse Update

The N.C. Sentinel Site Cooperative is partnering with the North Carolina Coastal Atlas at East Carolina University (ECU) to develop a clearinghouse of research projects related to sea level rise and inundation in the Cooperative's geography. The development of a clearinghouse was identified by participants at the Cooperative's Research and Monitoring Coordination Workshop in March 2013 as one of the highest priorities for the Cooperative.



The N.C. Sentinel Site clearinghouse test map in the N.C. Coastal Atlas

With the development of the clearinghouse, Cooperative partners will be able to easily access and input both past and ongoing research and monitoring projects that relate to sea level change in the Cooperative's geography. The clearinghouse is intended as a mechanism to foster collaboration among researchers and organizations within the Cooperative's boundary to increase the understanding of sea-level rise impacts on coastal ecosystems.

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) has funded contractor Sarah Spiegler to determine the feasibility of creating the clearinghouse. This project leverages existing resources by partnering with the N.C. Coastal Atlas to house the clearinghouse on their website. The N.C. Coastal Atlas is an online mapping system with geospatial data, visualization tools, and thematic maps. It allows for the exploration and analysis of coastal issues in North Carolina, such as natural hazards and shoreline change. This partnership with the N.C. Coastal Atlas will provide a stable portal of Cooperative projects, as well as long-term maintenance by the ECU Library.

The first step in creating the clearinghouse is to survey the researchers working in the Cooperative's boundary to determine how to design the clearinghouse to promote coordination and collaboration among Cooperative partners. Please fill out the survey if you have not done so already. The survey results will inform the creation of the clearinghouse, as well as the development of a long-term plan for the promotion of the clearinghouse to new users. The clearinghouse is expected to be finished in spring of 2014, and may be used as a model for the other four Cooperatives to develop their own clearinghouses.

Questions? Please contact Sarah Spiegler.

NOAA Sentinel Site Program hosts sessions at 2013 Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation Conference

NOAA and partners from the Chesapeake Bay Sentinel Site Cooperative hosted two "sea level change sentinel site" oral sessions at the 2013 biennial Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation (CERF) Conference (November 3-7, San Diego, CA). In the morning session, all five Cooperatives (i.e. Chesapeake Bay, San Francisco Bay, Hawaii, North Carolina, Northern Gulf of Mexico) were able to present overviews as well as progress/ successes to date and any major challenges or concerns going forward. The afternoon sessions featured sentinel site related projects at the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS), the Smithsonian Institution's Tennenbaum Marine Observatories Network, the National Park Service's Assasteague Island National Seashore, and University of Maryland's work at the Paul Sarbanes Poplar Island Project.

Over the course of the session, a number of similarities emerged across the cooperatives including success at bringing together regional players through open communication, fomenting efficiencies, and opening the door to future cooperation or collaboration. Additionally, there have been successes with regard to outreach tools including web resources, newsletters, and regular meetings. Of course, there are numerous challenges as well, some of which are shared among the five geographies. For example, continuity of operations is a concern due to staff turnover, since to a large extent, making the cooperative function is an added responsibility which takes time away from other, funded mandates. In addition, the uncertain funding horizon has discouraged some players from engaging as much as would be desired. Despite these and other challenges, momentum has certainly developed behind the "sentinel site cooperative" concept, and, the session provided a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other and continue forward.

Eventually, PDF versions of the PowerPoint presentations from the sessions and an extensive summary of the sea-level rise symposium will be available on the National Geodetic Survey Web site.

Thanks to Philippe Hensel, a member of the Chesapeake Bay Sentinel Site Cooperative, for contributing this article.

The NOAA Sentinel Site Program leverages existing research and monitoring resources to ensure resilient coastal communities and ecosystems in the face of changing conditions. The program's place-based approach focuses on issues of local, regional, and national significance that impact habitats and species managed by NOAA as well as surrounding coastal communities.