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# COASTAL LETTERS



Newsletter of the coastal and marine geography specialty group of the association of  
American geographers

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## Membership Renewal Reminder

Don't forget to renew your membership in the Coastal and Marine Geography Specialty Group. Also, when you renew your membership with the AAG, update your E-mail address – and remind your colleagues! Dues have not changed from 2007-2008. Membership dues for the Specialty Group are currently \$1 for students and \$5 for regular and associate members.

## Editor's Comments

- 1) Welcome to all of you who have recently joined the Coastal and Marine Geography Specialty Group (CoMa).
- 2) Have you been getting CoMa E-mail? If not, please send an E-mail to Jeff Ueland to be added to our list. Also, if you would like to be removed from the mailing list please let me know as well. Additionally please forward this newsletter to anyone who you think might be interested.
- 3) Two new board members were elected at the business meeting in Boston last spring; Chris Houser and Patrick Hesp. Jennifer Rahn was elected Vice-Chair as well. Outgoing board members included Tom Allen and Harry Jol. We would like to thank them for their service
- 4) Paul Gares and Tom Allen have been thinking about trying to pull together a panel session on the role of geographers relating to the issue of sea level rise. Their idea is to have a panel of maybe 4 individuals from different areas of geography (physical, GIS, policy, etc) who would lead off by describing briefly what geographers have done regarding SLR in their area of expertise... And then initiate a discussion with the audience about how geographers could contribute more to the issue. If you are interested, please contact Tom [allenth@ecu.edu](mailto:allenth@ecu.edu) or Paul [garesp@ecu.edu](mailto:garesp@ecu.edu).
- 5) The 2009 annual AAG meeting is in Las Vegas, March 22-27. Abstracts are due by the 16<sup>th</sup> of October. Please be sure to register and check out the CoMa sponsored and co-sponsored sessions listed on page 10 of this newsletter.
- 6) Students, please be sure to register for the Norb Psuty student paper competition (registration information on page 9. We had a great set of papers last year covering two sessions and look to expand this completion in the future.
- 7) If you have any announcements between now and the publication of the next newsletter (in early March) please send them to the editor and we can distribute them immediately or incorporate them into the next newsletter.

Jeff Ueland, Editor ([juleland@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:juleland@bemidjistate.edu))

## Musings from the Chair – Steve Namikas

Greetings to both our new members and those of long standing. For those who have been counting, yes I'm back as CoMa chair for a third year. Harry Jol, CoMa vice-chair for the past two years, was scheduled to take over the chair's duties at the recent Boston meeting. Unfortunately, family medical problems forced Harry to step aside for the time being. It was decided at the Boston business meeting that I would continue as chair for an additional year with Jennifer Rahn taking over as vice-chair. Jennifer will assume the chair for the Las Vegas meeting and a new vice-chair will be elected at the meeting. Our best wishes for a speedy and full recovery go out to Harry and his family.

The October 16<sup>th</sup> deadline for abstract submission for the 2009 AAG Annual Meeting in Las Vegas is rapidly approaching. With some 18 sponsored and co-sponsored sessions at the Boston meeting this year CoMa demonstrated both its vibrancy and its depth. Hopefully we'll be able to surpass that

accomplishment in Las Vegas next year. There is still time to develop sessions. If anyone wants to organize one please send the pertinent info (session topic/title, brief description, co-sponsors (if any), contact info for the organizer(s)) to Jeff Ueland for email distribution to CoMa members ([jueland@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:jueland@bemidjistate.edu)) and Rich Daniels for posting on our website ([danielri@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:danielri@wsdot.wa.gov)).

## News and Views from Members

**Robert (Bob) Ford**, MPH, PhD formerly at USAID, Utah State University, BYU, and Loma Linda University for most of 2008 has assisted the AGEDI Project (Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative) as a senior development consultant via GPC (Geographic Planning Collaborative, Inc.)—see: <http://www.agedi.ae/default.aspx> In collaboration with CIESIN (Earth Institute, Columbia University) partners Marc Levy, Alex de Sherbinin, and Valentina Mara he is currently helping design an EPI (Environmental Performance Index) for the Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi that can be adapted later for the GCC states of the Arabian Gulf (see <http://epi.yale.edu/Home> and <http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/index.html>).

Starting November 2008 Bob will return to Rwanda, Africa--where he spent four years during the 1980's--to become Research Professor at the Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Research and Training Centre (CGIS) at the National University of Rwanda (NUR). He will also assist the new Master's--GIS and the Environment--within the Geography Department, and focus on outreach for the new Centre for Environment, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Development CEESD) as well as the graduate programs of the CGIS-NUR. AAG colleagues are invited to explore opportunities for research, study abroad, or community development internships, and service in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region of Central Africa with CGIS. Formal partnerships already exist with the University of Redlands, Loma Linda University, ESRI, the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, EarthWatch Institute, USAID and other NGO and donor agencies. We welcome more partners! Learn more at: <http://www.cgisnur.org/> Contact: [geobobford@gmail.com](mailto:geobobford@gmail.com) or my webpage: <http://rford.home.igc.org/>

### **Report from the Coast of Tropical Queensland**

David J. Rutherford, Department of Public Policy Leadership, University of Mississippi

**David J. Rutherford**, Department of Public Policy Leadership, University of Mississippi conducted summer 2008 field work including participation with a seminar conducted by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) that studied climate and environmental change on the reefs and waterways of Australia. One week was spent studying the coast between Townsville and Cairns.



Clearing, burning of stubble, and other land management practices associated with sugar cane production (above) have been widespread since European colonization. One result has been wetlands loss and change.



At Trinity Inlet, near Cairns, areas of healthy mangrove wetland (left) were sectioned off by dikes (below left) and drained (below center) to increase land for cane production. Soil chemistry changes, particularly a reduction of pH values to less than 2.5, led to diminishing cane yields and the spread of *Malaleuca* forests.



Ongoing efforts include re-introducing monitored tidal flow and lime treatment (below left and center), resulting in the re-establishment of mangroves and indications that the ecosystem dynamics they support are beginning to function again.

**Tim Nyerges** of the University of Washington is the PI on a project about Oregon coastal vulnerabilities to climate change funded by the NOAA Climate Program Office, Sectoral Applications Research Program. The project is titled: *Geospatial Decision Support Tools for Coastal Resource Management: Vulnerability Maps Characterizing Regional Climate Variability and Change Impacts*:

[http://faculty.washington.edu/nyerges/Vulnerability\\_Maps\\_Regional\\_Climate\\_Change\\_Impacts\\_webpost.pdf](http://faculty.washington.edu/nyerges/Vulnerability_Maps_Regional_Climate_Change_Impacts_webpost.pdf)

**Dr. Dawn Wright** of Oregon State University sent mention that the third International Coastal Atlas Network (ICAN) Workshop was held in July 2008 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The theme was "Federated Coastal Atlases: Building on the Interoperable Approach." It was held in conjunction with the European Environment Agency (EEA) Conference on Coastal Atlas Development. The presentations, discussion papers and other documents are available at [http:// ican.science.oregonstate.edu/](http://ican.science.oregonstate.edu/). ICAN is a newly-founded informal group of organizations who have been meeting over the past two years to scope and implement data interoperability approaches to coastal web atlases (CWAs). The mission/strategic aim of ICAN is to share experiences and to find common solutions to CWA development (e.g., user and

developer guides, handbooks and articles on best practices, information on standards and web services, expertise and technical support directories, education, outreach, and funding opportunities, etc.), while ensuring maximum relevance and added value for the end users. The African Marine Atlas and Caribbean Marine Atlas initiatives are two of the newest members of ICAN. ICAN also welcomes participation from interested CoMa participants.

**Patrick Hesp** (LSU Department of Geography and Anthropology) took 5 graduate coastal students to Mexico in early summer. The road trip from Baton Rouge ended after two gruelling days at La Mancha just north of Veracruz city. The Xalapa based Institute of Ecology's field station at La Mancha is located on a fine beach, and on the downwind end of a magnificent headland bypass transgressive dunefield system (see picture). Students examined first hand dunefield, and transverse and parabolic dune dynamics, nebkha geomorphology, impacts of dune trampling, deflation plian initiation and vegetation ecology, coastal management issues, ancient Tolteca monuments, mexican fare and culture, the delights and vagaries of border crossings, and full vehicle searches from the local policia.



**Steve Namikas and Patrick Hesp** spent the first half of August on the outskirts of Beijing, China working with Dr. Yuxiang Dong in the wind tunnel of the Laboratory of Blown-Sand Environments and Engineering, part of the State Key Laboratory of Earth Surface Processes and Resource Ecology at Beijing Normal University. The wind tunnel is one of the largest currently available for aeolian process research, at 70 m long with a 2 m x 3 m cross section in the working section. It is powered by a 400,000 Watt electric motor that drives a turbine more than 3 m in diameter (see photo), and can produce maximum wind speeds of approximately 45 m/s (160 km/hr).

#### *The wind tunnel and facility*

Several sets of experiments were conducted, including investigations of wind flow over simulated dune slopes, through blowouts, and around artificial vegetation plots, and of the vertical distribution of aeolian mass flux during saltation. The experiments were designed to compliment and supplement a field research program undertaken the previous year. This research project has been supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China.



### ***Colleagues and assistants***

Although we were not able to catch any of the Olympic events in person, we are pleased to report that the combined US-New Zealand-Chinese squad soundly thrashed the Chinese National team in a late-night pickup match of wind tunnel soccer.



**Harry Jol** was named a Geological Society of America fellow as reported in GSA Today (July 2008). The citation says that Harry "has been one of the top North American researchers on the use of ground-penetrating radar in sedimentology and geomorphology for the past 15 years, publishing 40 refereed journal articles, making over 200 conference presentations, and engaging in extensive collaborate research throughout the world." - Congratulations Harry

## **New Books, Chapters and Articles**

Yang, X. (ed.), 2009. Remote Sensing and Geospatial Technologies for Coastal Ecosystem Assessment and Management. Springer, Heidelberg. 505 p.

(<http://www.springer.com/geography/gis+cartography/book/978-3-540-88182-7>)

Yang, X. (ed), 2008. Theme Issue: Remote Sensing of the Coastal Ecosystems. ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, 63(5):485-590.

Raabe, E.A., Harris, M.S., Shrestha, R.L., and Carter, W.E., 2008, Derivation of ground surface and vegetation in a coastal Florida wetland with airborne laser technology, U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 2008-1125, 41 p. available online at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2008/1125/index.html>

## **New CD of Coastal Images**

At the Boston CoMa Business Meeting, the idea of creating a new CD with coastal images was again revisited. Dr. Paul Gares of East Carolina University volunteered to taken on the task of putting the CD together a new. He is now accepting submission and would like people who have images they want included sent directly to him. They can be sent as a group of images depicting a particular theme (e.g. beach nourishment, shore protection structures, a specific experiment such as using dye to depict nearshore current circulation, the use of particular piece of equipment etc...) from a specific location (Cape Cod, the Gulf Coast etc..), or simply random pictures that I can group with others. If he is going to be able to complete this project by the Annual meeting, he will need the images by Christmas. Contact Paul at [garesp@ecu.edu](mailto:garesp@ecu.edu) ; phone (252) 328-6084.

## CoMa Organized Sessions at the AAG in Las Vegas

### 1) *Norbert P. Psuty Student Paper Merit Session(s)*

We have had excellent participation in the student sessions for the past few years. Please encourage your students (or friends) to participate. Up to two winners (possibly split between physical and human or Masters and PhD levels at the discretion of the judges) will be awarded a cash prize of \$200, a ticket to the AAG awards banquet, and more honor, prestige, and glory than you can shake a stick at. NOTES: Submission of a written paper is not necessary. Details and the required entry form are available at our website under the 'Student Merit Awards' link.

Organizer: Steve Namikas ([snamik1@lsu.edu](mailto:snamik1@lsu.edu))

### 2) *CoMa General Sessions*

We typically have 3-6 sessions comprised of papers on a variety of topics from members. Typical topics include coastal and marine geomorphology, human impacts in the coastal environment, GIS in marine environments, coastal hazards, development in the coastal zone, etc.

Organizers: Steve Namikas ([snamik1@lsu.edu](mailto:snamik1@lsu.edu)); Jean Ellis; Paul Gares

### 3) *Aeolian Geomorphology*

Papers ranging from aeolian process mechanics to dune migration and human impacts on dune landscapes to historical reconstructions of dune fields are welcome, whether focused on coastal or inland environments. To be cosponsored by the geomorphology specialty group.

Organizers: Jean Ellis ([jean@geog.tamu.edu](mailto:jean@geog.tamu.edu)); Paul Gares; Steve Namikas

### 4) *Remote Sensing and GIS for Coastal and Watershed Research*

Current developments regarding the use and applications of remote sensing and spatial information technologies for coastal and watershed research and management. Aspects to be considered include:

- \* Nearshore bathymetry, shoreline erosion, and coastal morphodynamics;
- \* Characterization, analysis, and modeling of watershed landscape structure in coastal environments;
- \* Coastal wetland mapping and change detection;
- \* Hydrological and nutrient modeling in coastal watersheds;
- \* Remote sensing of coastal water quality (chlorophyll concentration, turbidity, TSS and others);
- \* Mapping of seagrasses, littoral aquatic vegetation, and benthic habitats;
- \* Linking upstream watersheds to downstream estuaries for integrated ecosystem assessment; and
- \* Coastal watershed management and case studies.

Organizers: Xiaojun Yang ([xyang@fsu.edu](mailto:xyang@fsu.edu)); Luoheng Han

### 5) *Climatology and Coral Reef Ecosystems*

Looking for participants in the areas of:

- \* Applied climate analysis of coral ecosystem perturbations
- \* Climate and climate change data and information needs for research and management
- \* Impacts of climate variations and extremes on coral ecosystems

Organizer: Karsten Shein ([karsten.shein@noaa.gov](mailto:karsten.shein@noaa.gov))

### 6) *"Geomorphic Impacts of Hurricanes" and "Paleotempestology"*

Submissions covering a broad variety of topics are encouraged, including erosion and deposition resulting from hurricane storm surges, changes in coastal morphology, mass wasting and flooding

triggered by hurricane-related rainfall, techniques for assessing geomorphic change caused by hurricanes and geological records of hurricanes.

Organizers: Harry Williams ([HarryF.Williams@unt.edu](mailto:HarryF.Williams@unt.edu)); Kam-Biu Liu

7) *“Marine Geomorphology and Mapping for an Ecosystem-Based Management Approach to Marine Reserve Design and Planning”*

These sessions will be a follow-up to the highly successful AAG sessions of 2008 entitled "Marine Geomorphology as a Determinant for Essential Life Habitat: An Ecosystem Management Approach to Planning for Marine Reserve Networks." In 2009 we will continue to present and critically examine the growing body of data suggesting that the underlying geology and geomorphology of marine environments dictates the location of critical life habitat for a variety marine species. The broad implications of these findings suggest that geomorphology might be used as a proxy for (or at least help to identify) critical life habitat for marine species, and thus serve to advance the application of ecosystem-based management (EBM) to the design of marine reserve networks. Our goal once again will be to bring together a group of scholars working on this and related issues, and to further advance collaboration between scientists and marine managers towards more efficient conservation and management of marine systems. Papers are welcome in the areas of:

- essential benthic habitat and geomorphology
- marine GIS and/or remote sensing for the purposes of integrating geomorphology and biology
- applications for marine reserve network design

These will be combined into at as many sessions as needed and will likely include a final panel discussion.

Organizers: Dawn Wright, Oregon State University, [dawn@dusk.geo.orst.edu](mailto:dawn@dusk.geo.orst.edu) & Will Heyman, Texas A&M University, [wheyman@geog.tamu.edu](mailto:wheyman@geog.tamu.edu)

## Employment Opportunities

### **NORTH CAROLINA, GREENVILLE.**

The Department of Geography at [East Carolina University](http://www.ecu.edu) seeks to fill the position of **Professor and Chair** beginning on or before August 1, 2009. The Department has 22 faculty members and offers BA, BS, and MA degrees in Geography, Applied Geography, and Urban and Regional Planning. We anticipate offering new degree programs in Applied Atmospheric Science and Geographic Information Science and Technology beginning Fall 2009. The department offers a collegial and supportive work environment for faculty with varied interests and research agendas. Members of the faculty have a wide range of specialties in human geography, physical geography, GIScience, and planning ([www.ecu.edu/geog](http://www.ecu.edu/geog)). In a continuing effort to enrich its academic environment and provide equal educational and employment opportunities, the department actively encourages applications from members of all groups underrepresented in higher education. Qualifications for the position include a Ph.D. in Geography, a distinguished record of research, and a demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching and service. Administrative experience is desired. Screening will begin December 1, 2008 and applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Apply: complete a candidate profile and submit a letter of application, a statement of administrative experience and philosophy, a description of research agenda, and curriculum vitae online at [www.jobs.ecu.edu](http://www.jobs.ecu.edu). Also, arrange for three letters of reference to be sent (hard copy) directly to: Dr. Kathleen A. Lawler Row, Geography Chair Search, 104 Rawl Building, East Carolina University, Greenville NC 27858. For questions, contact Dr. Row at [rowk@ecu.edu](mailto:rowk@ecu.edu) or 252-328-6800. EEO/AA



## Call for Las Vegas AAG Student Paper Competition Entries

*Eligibility:* Full-time or part-time undergraduate or graduate students may compete for the **Norb Psuty Student Paper Merit Award** or **Student Illustrated Paper Award** if they (1) are the first or sole author of an oral paper concerning coastal or marine geography which they will be presenting at the 2009 annual AAG meeting, (2) are a member of the AAG and of the Coastal and Marine Specialty Group, and (3) have submitted to the session organizer the completed application form and accompanying materials, to be received by October 16th, 2008 (oral papers or illustrated papers). Poster presentations are not eligible. Papers are judged both on content and on the quality of the presentation. The award consists of a \$200.00 grant to be used to defray AAG and Coastal and Marine Specialty Group membership dues and travel expenses to the annual meeting as well as an award certificate. *Instructions:* Follow the program participation guidelines outlined on the AAG website as an individual participating in a sponsored/special paper session. In addition, complete the application form (below) and send it with your abstract and PIN number to: Steve Namikas ([snamik1@lsu.edu](mailto:snamik1@lsu.edu)).

### **2009 Norb Psuty Student Paper/Illustrated Paper Award Registration Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Are you a Ph.D., M.A./M.S., or undergraduate student? \_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis/project advisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Are you a member of the AAG? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are you a member of the Coastal and Marine Specialty Group? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is your paper primarily focused on human/social or physical geography? \_\_\_\_\_

## 2008 CoMa Business Meeting Minutes – Boston

### **COMA Meeting Minutes**

**Boston, MA**

**18 April, 2008**

**Jeff Ueland**

The meeting was called to order by Jean Ellis (filling in for Steve Namikas) at 8:15pm

1. The agenda was adopted. Motion by Gares seconded by Wright.
2. The meeting minutes from the 2007 business meeting in San Francisco were unanimously approved. Motion by Diane Horn seconded by Paul Gares.
3. Dave Green discussed the changes in the Journal of Coastal Conservation. This is a new journal from Springer and its scope covers both applied and theoretical work as well as areas topics concerning both physical and human applications. Thematic volumes are welcome as well. There will 6-8 papers per issue and 4 issues per year. The journal also provides free color printing for its published submissions.
4. The specialty group chairs meeting report.
  - Dawn Wright was made new chair of the national council.
  - John Agnew, the AAG president for the next year wants to promote integrative geography.

- He also encourages more poster sessions for the Las Vegas meeting next year.
- Specialty groups complained about conflicting meetings. AAG proposed 7am meetings.
- Doug Richardson is promoting an initiative to promote more participation from individuals from the developing world and specialty groups can help individuals get reduced cost memberships for the AAG through this initiative.
- AAG is promoting “Highlighted” sessions due to the large size of the AAG. Each specialty group can have control over its highlighted session. Gares made a motion that the CoMa board of directors come up with a viable and logical way to designate a highlighted and invited session for our “highlighted” session at Las Vegas. Diane Horn offered advice on conducting an invited session. Motion Passed

#### 4. Treasurers report

Our current account balance is \$3218.70. We had expenses this past year of \$99 for our website, \$200 for the student paper competition and \$81.37 for the Russell award plaque. We collected dues of \$605 for 9 months (Jan 07-Aug 07) and \$2.70 in interest. Report approved.

The surplus of funds sparked some discussion relative to how our funds should be utilized.

Gares suggested the CoMa board of directors should use some of these funds to augment the “highlighted” session at the Las Vegas meeting. Diane Horn suggested that we can also apply to the AAG for some funds as well. Gares made a motion that we give the board of directors permission to use up \$750 for next year’s highlighted session. Patrick Hesp seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Dr. Psuty suggested we reduce the student fees, but a student in attendance suggested that the current rate of \$2 was not prohibitive.

#### 5. Website update

Rich Daniels is currently administering the website and does not mind doing it, but asked if anyone if wants to take over as the website administrator. Tom Allen will discuss the possibility of taking over with Rich and report back.

#### 6. Awards

The Norb Psuty Student paper competition. Two awards of \$200 were given this year, one for undergraduates/masters students and one for PhD students.

-undergrad/masters winner was Laura Merner from Clark University. The title of her paper was:  
*Assessing Drivers of Bald-Cypress Mortality in Forested Wetlands of Louisiana*

-PhD winner was Christopher Brehme from the University of Buffalo. The title of his paper was:  
*Biology, Boats, and Boundaries: predicting potential overlap of whales, lobster fishing gear and regulatory lines*

The R.J. Russell award was presented to Dr. Nancy Jackson by Jean Ellis.

## 7. Election of Board Members/Office

Tom Allen's term was completed and there was one board vacancy. Also, Harry Jol, the current Vice-chair has had to step down for the time being so there was discussion as to how to proceed, as Harry was supposed to assume the role of chair this year as stated in the by-laws. Steve Namikas offered to stay on one additional year if necessary. As such, three ideas were forwarded and are summarized below.

1. Elect new chair and vice-chair.
2. Steve stays on for an additional year and we elect a new vice chair for a 3 year term, and Harry assumes the chair when he is able to return.
3. Steve stays on for an additional year and we elect a new vice-chair for a standard term.

Gares moves to accept option three and Hesp seconds. Motion passes.

Jennifer Rahn was nominated for to assume the role of vice chair. She was elected unanimously.

Chris Houser was nominated to fill the board vacant board position. He was elected unanimously.

Patrick Hesp was nominated to fill the board position vacated by Jen Rahn. He was elected unanimously.

## 8. New/other business

Dr. Psuty mentioned that those who were not receiving the newsletter from the ICC to send him your contact information and he would get you on the list. He also mentioned that the ICC was sponsoring 8 sessions at the IGU meeting in Tunisia and that abstracts are due by May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

Dr. Nancy Jackson mentioned that the Journal Estuaries is accepting coastal topics so please submit your work and she mentioned that the turn-around time for submitted work was very good. She also mentioned that Bill Smith from Wake Forest had his proposal accepted to look at barrier island change in the face of global climate change. Contact Dr. Jackson if you are interested in getting involved.

Paul Gares said he is willing to compile and organize a new CD for the group. Jackson suggests to group photos around papers that have been published. Ueland will work with Gares to send an email requesting submissions. Diane Horn suggested that we encourage all submissions to have annotation included with each photo.

Paul Gares suggested that we have a new coastal/marine focus mini-conference in order to create more interaction with colleagues who have similar interests. There was much discussion, but it seemed that cost and the extra time needed around the AAG conference week would be obstacles to overcome.

Chris Houser is slated to set up the field trip for the Las Vegas Meeting

Paul motions that we end the meeting, Pat Hesp seconds. Motion Passes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45pm.