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Musings from the Chair

Harry Williams, University of North Texas

Welcome to another issue of the COMA Newsletter and greetings from the chair. We have a strong COMA-supported program this year in San Francisco. COMA is sponsoring a panel session, an illustrated paper session and 15 paper sessions (see listing below). Topics cover a broad range of physical, environmental and human perspectives on coastal and marine issues. Four special paper sessions are being held in commemoration of Dr. H. Jesse Walker, longtime AAG member and founding member of the Coastal & Marine Specialty Group. We have a student paper competition, with participants vying for one of COMA's prestigious Norb Psuty Student Paper Merit Awards. Please support your COMA colleagues by attending these sessions when you have the chance. The culmination of all this activity will be the COMA business meeting on Friday at 7.10 pm in Union Square 22, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor. Don't be put off by the word "business"; the meeting is more of a social event and will include a report of COMA activity over the preceding year, presentation of student merit awards and election of new officers. Available officer positions include Chair, Vice Chair, Board member (2 positions) and a Student Board member. Any COMA specialty group member in good standing may run for an available officer position (with the exception of the student board member who must be a doctoral student). Members may self-nominate or nominate another member (if willing to serve). If you are interested in serving in one of these positions, please let me know. Please try to join us for collegiality, networking and fun at the business meeting. Looking forward to seeing you all in San Francisco.

Harry Williams

COMA Website

Please visit and bookmark the COMA website <http://www.aagcoma.org/>. Thanks again to Richard Daniels, COMA member and Web Editor, for maintaining our site where you can find archived minutes and newsletters, award winners, a full listing of all COMA-sponsored AAG meeting sessions upcoming in San Francisco and more.





2015 AAG Meeting COMA Awards

2015 Norb Psuty Student Paper Merit Awards

Best physical geography paper: **Brianna Hammond**, Texas A&M University.

Using Foredunes to Quantify Rate of Recovery of Assateague Island, MD.

Abstract: Barrier islands are dynamic landscapes that are believed to minimize storm impact to mainland communities and also provide important ecological services in the coastal environment. The protection afforded by the island and the services it provides, however, depend on island resiliency in the face of accelerated sea level rise, which is in turn dependent on the rate of island recovery following storm events that may also change in both frequency and magnitude in the future. These changes in frequency may affect even large dunes and their resiliency, resulting in the island transitioning from a high to a low elevation. Previous research has shown that the condition of the foredune depends on the recovery of the nearshore and beach profile and the ability of vegetation to capture aeolian-transported sediment. An inability of the foredune to recover may result in mainland susceptibility to storm energy, inability for ecosystems to recover and thrive, and sediment budget instability. In this study, LiDAR data is used to quantify the rates of dune recovery at Assateague Island, Maryland. Preliminary results indicate foredune recovery varies significantly both alongshore and in the cross-shore, suggesting that barrier island response and recovery to storm events cannot be considered from a strictly two-dimensional (cross-shore) perspective.

Best human geography paper: **Jessica R.Z. Simms**, Louisiana State University.

Resilience on Louisiana's Gulf Coast: social networks and disturbances.

Abstract: On Louisiana's Gulf Coast, farming, fishing, and hunting have provided viable livelihoods for coastal residents for countless generations. Yet, it is becoming increasingly difficult for these residents to depend upon these activities for their livelihood in the wake of disruptions such as hurricanes, coastal erosion and oil spills. Understanding the changing nature of the underlying socio-ecological dynamics and their effects has become all the more important following such disruptive events. Further, these events have illuminated the importance of local residents' resilient practices. Because social networks are often cited as significant factors in preparing for and coping with disasters (Eisenman, et al. 2008; Folke, et al. 2003; Örjan & Crona 2009; Colten, et al. 2012), understanding the dynamics of these ties will serve to enhance resilience practices. Inadequate attention has been paid to the multiple and complex forces that influence the origins, motivations, and practices of the role of social networks and resilience and the implications that this has for the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities. Combining analyses of archival and primary and secondary materials with key informant interviews, the empirical focus of this research is to document how participation in social networks, i.e., faith-based networks, civic organizations, family, cultural and heritage identities, etc. affects Gulf Coast residents' resiliency when faced with disruptions such as a hurricane, an economic slump, coastal erosion, or oil spill(s).

Norb Psuty Student Paper Merit Award Honorable Mentions:

Valeria I. Torres-Lopez, University of Puerto Rico.

Beach geomorphological assessment at Ocean Park Beach, San Juan, Puerto Rico (2014-2015).

William Baker, Texas A&M University.

Rip Current Hazard at Playas Jaco and Cocles, Costa Rica.

Call for Nominations

R.J. Russell Award nominations

Nominations for the R.J. Russell Award should be directed to the Vice-Chair, Karsten Shein at Karsten.Shein@noaa.gov. COMA is requesting nominations for the annual R.J. Russell Award. This award is made to a person who has contributed significantly to advancing coastal and marine geography. These contributions may be in research, teaching, public service, and/or to the specialty group. Nominees do not have to be members of either the specialty group or the AAG. Nominations may come from any member of the Coastal and Marine Geography Specialty Group who is not a member of the selection committee (Vice-Chair and Board). At least two letters of nomination are required for consideration for the Award. At least one of the nominations must include a complete letter of nomination which will include a one paragraph letter describing the nominee's contributions to the field of coastal and marine geography and a list of the nominee's relevant publications. More information about the Award and an example letter are available at the COMA website http://www.aagcoma.org/files/russell_nom.html .

R.J. Russell (1895-1971) was a renowned coastal scientist who was a president of both the Association of American Geographers (AAG) and the Geological Society of America (GSA). He was also a member of the National Academy of Sciences. A more complete biography of R.J. Russell is found at <http://www.aagcoma.org/files/russell.html> .

Matthew Fontaine Maury Paper of the Year Award nominations

The Maury Award is given to recognize a published, peer-reviewed paper that has made a significant contribution to advancing coastal or marine geography during the award year. The Maury Award is open to all papers on which a dues-paying member of the COMA specialty group is the sole or first author and which has been published in the peer-reviewed literature (not including books or book chapters) during the 2016 calendar year. Papers appearing in early-release online format in 2016 are eligible. Nominations for the 2016 award may be made by any dues-paying COMA member until January 31 2017, by submitting a nomination in writing (e-mail is acceptable) to the Chair of the COMA Specialty Group. The nomination must include a copy of the paper or URL link to the paper for evaluation. The nominated author, if attending the AAG Meeting in 2017, must indicate their willingness to present a brief summary of their work at the COMA Business Meeting, prior to presentation of the award. The winner of the Maury Award will receive a commemorative plaque and letter of citation. Any co-authors will also receive a letter of citation. The paper and authors will be listed on the COMA web page and in the COMA newsletter.



Elected Officer & Board Member nominations

At the 2016 COMA Business Meeting there will be elections for the following positions:

- Chair (2-yr term)
- Vice-Chair (2-yr term)
- Board Member (2-yr term; two positions open)
- Student Board Member (1-yr term; must be a doctoral student)

Please submit nominations to chair Harry Williams HarryF.Williams@unt.edu or any other current COMA officer. Elected officers must be regular members of the Coastal and Marine Geography Specialty Group.

Members may self-nominate. Nominations will close during the 2016 Business meeting in San Francisco on April 1st.

2016 Annual Business Meeting

Please consider attending the **2016 COMA business meeting, taking place Friday, April 1st (no fooling, we're serious!) at 7:10pm** in Union Square 22 on the 4th floor of the Hilton Hotel. Among other excitement, winner(s) of our Norb Psuty student paper merit competition will be announced at the meeting. Officers will be elected and reports will be given. While Friday nights are never optimal for business meetings given conflicting dining and socializing plans, the COMA business meeting and after party is a surprisingly amenable venue for socializing! Furthermore, meeting on Friday night is necessary to announce student competition results from the Psuty session scheduled that morning.

So please attend the business meeting - we guarantee it will be less crowded, much less expensive, and possibly as much fun as other things you might otherwise be doing then. And it's a great opportunity for specialty group members to visit and celebrate our winners. Some attendees will, by tradition, likely depart from the meeting for refreshments and/or dinner at a local establishment. We hope to see you there.

2016 AAG Meeting – COMA Sessions

Your handy, hyperlinked list of [COMA Sponsored Sessions](#) at the 2016 AAG Annual Meeting is now available. The following sessions are in chronological order; note the four COMA-sponsored session series on Hurricanes, on H. Jesse Walker and Coastal Geography, and Emerging Issues in the Governance of Ocean Spaces. Some of the component sessions of these series occur sequentially during one day, while others are split between two days. The Specialty Group also sponsored session III of the Symposium on Physical Geography: Challenges of the “Anthropocene,” part of a larger six-session series. Listed below the COMA-sponsored sessions are five other sessions with a high ‘coefficient of coastality’ but are not sponsored by the Specialty Group.

- [Coastal Tourism](#)
Tuesday, 3/29/2016, from 12:40PM – 2:20PM in Powell Room A, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor
- [H. Jesse Walker and Coastal Geography 1](#)
Wednesday, 3/30/2016, from 8:00AM – 9:40AM in Mason B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor
- [H. Jesse Walker and Coastal Geography 2](#)
Wednesday, 3/30/2016, from 10:00AM – 11:40AM in Mason B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor
- [Coastal and Marine Issues and Science session](#)
Wednesday, 3/30/2016, from 3:20PM – 5:00PM in Union Square 21, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor
- [Symposium on Physical Geography: Challenges of the "Anthropocene" III: Evidence and Quantification of Large-scale Human Impacts](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 8:00AM – 9:40AM in Continental 6, Hilton Hotel, Ballroom Level
- [H. Jesse Walker and Coastal Geography 3](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 8:00AM – 9:40AM in Mason B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor
- [Emerging Issues in the Governance of Ocean Spaces 1: Space and Territory](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 8:00AM – 9:40AM in Metropolitan C, JW Marriott Hotel, 2nd Floor
- [H. Jesse Walker and Coastal Geography 4](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 10:00AM – 11:40AM in Mason B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor
- [Hurricanes 1](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 8:00AM – 9:40AM in Union Square 20, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor
- [Emerging Issues in the Governance of Ocean Spaces 2: Policies and Processes](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 10:00AM – 11:40AM in Metropolitan C, JW Marriott Hotel, 2nd Floor
- [Hurricanes 2](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 10:00AM – 11:40AM in Union Square 20, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor
- [Emerging Issues in the Governance of Ocean Spaces 3: Power and Politics](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 1:20PM – 3:00PM in Metropolitan C, JW Marriott Hotel, 2nd Floor
- [Hurricanes 3](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 1:20PM – 3:00PM in Union Square 20, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor
- [Emerging Issues in the Governance of Ocean Spaces 4: Overview and Future Directions](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 3:20PM – 5:00PM in Metropolitan C, JW Marriott Hotel, 2nd Floor
- [Hurricanes 4](#)
Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 3:20PM – 5:00PM in Union Square 20, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor
- [Coastal and Marine Specialty Group Norbert Psuty Student Paper Merit Award](#)
Friday, 4/1/2016, from 8:00AM – 9:40AM in Golden Gate 1, Hilton Hotel, Lobby Level
- [A Research Agenda for a 'Radical' Marine Spatial Planning](#)
Friday, 4/1/2016, from 5:20 PM – 7:00 PM in Union Square 3, Hilton Hotel, 4th Floor

AAG and COMA represented at the 2015 International Hurricane and Climate Change Summit

Five members of the AAG were invited speakers of the 5th International Hurricane and Climate Change Summit held in Chania, Greece June 9-14, 2015. Co-organised by Climate Specialty Group Chair, Jennifer Collins, the following AAG members presented on topics such as paleotempestology, hurricane intensities and tropical cyclone risk assessments: (from left to right) Kelsey Ellis, Jerry Jien, Jennifer Collins, Mark Welford and Harry Williams. Over the past several years the topic of hurricanes and climate change has received considerable attention by scientists, the insurance industry, and the media.



Photo credit to Andy Johnson.