

Margaret Davidson – Talking Points
RNR Congress on Sustaining Natural Resources and Conservation Science:
What is at Stake in the Years Ahead
December 14, 2012
Coastal and Ocean Resources

NOAA is in the Department of Commerce

- A unique position. NOAA is in the economic budget directorate while many other agencies are under natural resources development at OMB.

Ocean and coastal resources are a complex issue

- Different levels of government oversight
- Planning and zoning concerns
- Local decisions guided by state or federal guidance

Coastal Zone Management Act

- Not a regulatory bill

Coasts represent about 60% of GDP

Complex governance of coasts

- Water: EPA, USGS, Bureau of Reclamation, Weather Service
- Coasts: EPA, Department of Interior (USGS, FWS, Parks), Forest Service, DOT, NOAA, etc.

Diverse ecosystem of coasts and oceans

- Challenging budget outlook due to diversity and multiple jurisdictions

U.S. approach to governance

- Coverage by multiple agencies hinders appropriations for the coasts
- Need for agencies to cooperate to define an ecosystem niche and promote complementary programs
- Healthy coasts critical for natural economy

Agencies must be serious about pulling declining resources together

- Monitoring and data (fundamental infrastructure) suffering

New technologies can help agencies save scarce funds

Individuals more likely to recognize and identify with local geography

Pervasive distrust of science

- Cognitive dissonance
- Need to adapt new paradigm to convey value of ecosystem services
- Need to engage with community leaders
- Current dialogue is at an impasse
- Representatives of scientific and professional societies will pave the way to the next level of dialogue