

2007 Annual Report of The Coastal Society

Board Strategizes about TCS in the 21st Century

The TCS Board of Directors gathered near Baltimore at the end of January 2007 to develop a strategic agenda for the Society that actively moves it forward in the 21st century. Assisted by professional facilitators from NOAA's Coastal Services Center in Charleston, SC, the Board met for nearly two days of discussions. Results from the membership survey in fall 2006 helped focus the Board's efforts. The survey indicated that members consider land use, planning and management; access; loss of habitat; protected area management; water quality and hazards; and education to be among the most important coastal issues for today. These results and others from the survey set the stage for discussions throughout the retreat.

Working on a long term vision for the Society, the Board agreed to make the most of TCS' strengths which lie in empowering interdisciplinary coastal professionals, scientists and decisionmakers to promote and affect improved management of the coasts and oceans and nurturing professionals to fulfill these roles. An unflinching look at the strengths and weaknesses of TCS helped guide an honest and open discussion. The Board agreed that TCS needs to increase networking opportunities outside of the conference, as well as to enhance communication in non-conference years. Improving the Society's financial stability would enable it to be less dependent on conferences for support. Accomplishing more as a Society will require greater financial resources and an active and engaged membership base. The Board must continue to focus the Society's objectives, enhance its visibility, and improve members' and nonmembers' perception of who TCS is and what it does.

To maintain momentum, Board members agreed to spearhead efforts in a range of identified areas. These include:

- *retaining, expanding and diversifying the membership base,
- *exploring international opportunities,
- *updating the bylaws,
- *increasing member involvement in many aspects of TCS,
- *developing strategies for existing and future chapters,
- *preparing a strategic plan as well as a financial development plan,
- *developing guidance on advocating for resources, and
- *revisiting the vision and mission of TCS.

Planning for 21st International Biennial Conference

Much energy was put into the planning of the upcoming conference to be held in Redondo Beach, CA on June 29 – July 2, 2008. Conference co-chairs are Kate Killerlain Morrison of the Massachusetts Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and Jim Fawcett of USC Sea Grant. The Call for Abstracts was issued in the fall of 2007 and brought in a full schedule of presentations and posters. Plenary sessions were planned and invitations to keynote speakers were issued, focused on leaders in coastal management and urban coastal issues. Educational field trips were planned prior to the conference to allow attendees to enjoy the natural beauty of the area and learn about the issues.

Coastal Resource Recovery Fundraiser Awards Made

In response to the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, TCS initiated a new fundraising effort to contribute to existing coastal resource protection, restoration and education projects underway in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Approximately \$2,100 was raised at the TCS 20 conference, and awarded via a competitive selection process to coastal resource projects run by the Alabama Coastal Foundation, the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, and the Mississippi Coast Audubon Society. These organizations will be reporting back to TCS via articles in the *Bulletin*. TCS plans continue to raise funds and award them competitively to assist local coastal communities in areas of need.

One of the three groups that received TCS funds, the Alabama Coastal Foundation (ACF), strives to improve and protect the quality of Alabama's coastal resources by identifying and solving problems through education, cooperation and participation. TCS Funding assisted ACF in hosting two local tree plantings in Daphne and Little Dauphin Island. The Daphne planting was 200 trees including Red Maple, Tulip Poplar, Sweet Bay Magnolia, Swamp Tupelo Gum, Bald Cypress, and Red Bay. This expansion of tree species will be tracked by community volunteers, who will monitor the area regularly for deformities, exposed roots, or other problems. With the help of Mobile Bay NEP and Marine Resources Division, the Little Dauphin Island planting included Yaupon, Sand Oak, Splash Pine, Wax Myrtle, and Baccharis. This planting was particularly important as years of hurricane and storm damage had depleted the barrier island of protection, leaving it vulnerable to wind and erosion. TCS was pleased to be a part of this effort. In the words of ACF: "This seedling of a project has produced acres of enhanced estuarine wetland and coastal habitats, preserving our coastal web of life for generations to come."

Healthy Financial Outlook

TCS began the year with \$65,420 in assets, and ended on 12/31/07 with \$31,232. Funds collected for the Coastal Resource Recovery Fund were kept separate from the operating funds, although they are included in the total assets. TCS lent financial support to its chapters through sponsorship of chapter events and student travel funding to the TCS conference. It also supported events during the annual Coastal and Ocean Managers Week in Washington, DC. The Board has adopted a biennial budget for 2007-2008 to plan for both a conference and non-conference year.

Member Services and Involvement

Membership in TCS went from 356 at year end 2006 to 269 at year end 2007. The decrease was due to dropping 211 lapsed members from the fourth quarter 2006 and all of 2007. TCS had hoped to retain them by continuing their benefits of membership. It was imperative that the TCS Membership Committee and Board use the results of the Fall 2006 Membership Survey to develop the right membership categories and appropriate benefits. Beginning 1/1/08 an annual subscription to the *Coastal Management Journal* will be included in the dues for Regular membership. New membership categories such as New Professional and Retired were approved by the Board and will be presented to the membership for a vote in 2008.

New Officers and Directors Elected

The following individuals were elected to serve TCS beginning January 1, 2007:

Director: Rick Devoe, South Carolina Sea Grant

Director: Lisa Schiavinato, North Carolina Seas Grant

Treasurer: Jeff Smith, NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation

Chapters

At the beginning of 2007, there were five chapters affiliated with TCS: Cascadia (CA, OR, WA, BC), Duke University, University of Washington, East Carolina University, and University of Rhode Island. The chapters had an active year of hosting speakers, holding networking events, presenting papers and posters on research done, fund raising for local charities, and conducting community service projects. Unfortunately, the Cascadia Chapter disbanded in large part due to the difficulty of maintaining local membership in large region. However, members of that chapter hope to reexamine the possibility of a smaller chapter, possibly in the Seattle or Puget Sound area.

TCS did add a chapter in 2007. The Coastal Society of Hawaii (TCSH), located at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, is now officially part of TCS. Run by University of Hawaii students, and advised by a board of professionals from the academic, private and public sectors, this group seeks to “inspire coastal stewardship and create a sense of community by engaging people in thought provoking dialogue.” We proudly welcome this chapter into the TCS family.

TCS Initiatives

The following initiatives were begun or continued in 2007, and will be carried over into 2008.

Bulletin – The *TCS Bulletin* will continue to be published quarterly. The publisher for the past two years, the Urban Harbors Institute, produced a fresh new look to the publication, and kept the TCS web site and conference web site up to date. TCS maintained its 2007 contracts with Ellen Gordon as editor and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst as publisher of the *TCS Bulletin* and extended them into 2008.

International Exchange -

In its first international exchange initiative, TCS partnered with Louis Berger and the US Agency for International Development to send TCS members to Sri Lanka to exchange information, tools, and understanding of marine protected areas.