

<b>Grantee Organization</b>	Coastal States Stewardship Foundation (CSSF) on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO)
<b>Grant Number</b>	F14AC01219
<b>Project Title</b>	Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Project <i>Demonstrations and Science Delivery Networks for Coastal Resiliency Information</i>
<b>Amount</b>	\$340,000
<b>Dates of Award Period</b>	11/01/14 to 10/31/16
<b>Interim Report Due Date</b>	July 30, 2015 (reporting period: 11/01/14 to 06/30/15)
<b>Contact Person and Information</b>	Michelle Lennox, MARCO Assistant Director 410-260-8747, mlennox@MidAtlanticOcean.org

## Introduction

We are pleased to submit this interim Project Progress Report on the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean's (MARCO) accomplishments in advancing grant #F14AC01219 for Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Project: *Demonstrations and Science Delivery Networks for Coastal Resiliency Information* provided by the Department of the Interior – North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (NALCC).

Funds under this award support MARCO's goals to develop a program of delivery of coastal resiliency science for the Mid-Atlantic and to deliver science and information for state- and community-level resiliency planning.

The results of our work during the reporting period include:

- Convening MARCO's Climate Change Action Team to identify priority areas for the NALCC grant funds;
- Developing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit projects under the NALCC grant; and
- Running a competitive process for the NALCC funding.

## Accomplishments

### 1. Convening MARCO's Climate Change Action Team to Discuss NALCC Funding

MARCO's Climate Change Action Team (CCAT) met in Wilmington, Delaware on November 12, 2014 to discuss funding from the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (NALCC) for science delivery. One of the primary goals of the meetings was to discuss a game plan for moving forward with NALCC funded *Demonstrations and Science Delivery Networks for Coastal Resiliency Information*<sup>1</sup>, including supporting informed decisions by coastal states and communities to increase the resilience of beaches, marshes and shorelines in the face of sea level rise and storms.

<sup>1</sup> Connected to the following two NALCC projects funded with Sandy disaster recovery assistance act funding: *Decision Support for Hurricane Sandy Restoration and Future Conservation to Increase Resiliency of Tidal Wetland Habitats and Species in the Face of Storms and Sea Level Rise* and *Decision Support for Hurricane Sandy Restoration and Future Conservation to Increase Resiliency of Beach Habitats and Beach-Dependent Species in the Face of Storms and Sea Level Rise*.

Discussions during this meeting focused on identifying the most effective use of the NALCC funds, and acknowledging that the funding from this project expires on October 31, 2016, with no potential to extend the period of performance. The CCAT concluded that it anticipates the project work to be conducted via external contracts due to limited internal capacity.

The CCAT then discussed top priorities for funding projects from the NALCC funds and determined that the priorities for project funding should include:

1. Establish relative value of natural systems, integrate ecosystem services values into decision-making and/or develop common metrics to assess natural systems. Focus on methods to integrate consideration of ecosystem service valuation into decision-making processes. Options discussed include:
  - a. Organize and host a Mid-Atlantic specific conference focused on questions like: How does nature and nature-based infrastructure (N&NBI) hold up? Is N&NBI a good return on investment? How does N&NBI fit into the suite of options available to a coastal community? What is the suite of tools available to protect and/or restore N&NBI at the regional, state and local level?
  - b. Use existing research to develop decision trees on how and when to use N&NBI. Need to determine when performance based metrics and/or methods for evaluating when an N&NBI project is feasible and can offer protection to a community and when the project provides more ecosystem-based benefits (habitat, water quality improvements). Need to start by identifying what decision support tools are available and/or needed.
  - c. Identify specific tools for assisting with specific decisions (e.g. valuing ecosystem services). Consider offering regional training on these tools. Maybe think about a way for MARCO to give an affirmative nod to certain tools to promote consistent use of the tools throughout the region.
  - d. Look at economic valuation methods at play (ACOE, FEMA, local infrastructure investments, impact fees, wetland mitigation banking, state tidal wetlands, Blue Carbon, etc.) and see how to integrate ecosystem service value into those methods. Perhaps hire some economists to compile and provide some synthesis/integration for the Mid-Atlantic.
  - e. Identify priorities for marsh restoration based on resilience outcomes. Create a marsh vulnerability index to identify which marshes are most vulnerable and which marshes would be priorities for restoration (given needs for resilience). Or a regional framework could be developed that might identify data and information gaps (e.g., Where are vegetation surveys needed? Should sediment elevation tables be developed?), inform state policy and support negotiations with ACOE on dredge materials.
  - f. Develop or recommend messaging related to N&NBI. Would be useful to explore some more “user-friendly terms” that could be used to get the concepts across.

## **2. Developing a Request for Proposals**

Following the November 2014 meeting, the MARCO CCAT translated the funding project ideas above into a Request for Proposals (RFP). On May 1, 2015, MARCO posted the RFP on its website, e-newsletter, and other public venues to solicit project ideas from qualified groups and individuals. Through the RFP process, MARCO intends to select one or two projects for funding. Applicants were asked to focus on at least one of the objectives below:

Objective 1: Advance the understanding and use of natural and nature-based features (NNBF) in the Mid-Atlantic to support coastal climate adaptation at local levels.

Objective 2: Integrate ecosystem goods and services information in decision-making about coastal climate adaptation in the Mid-Atlantic.

Objective 3: Identify Mid-Atlantic regional wetland restoration priorities based on risk reduction and associated resilience outcomes.

### **3. Running a Competitive Funding Process**

MARCO received seven proposals through the RFP solicitation. The MARCO CCAT, with representatives from each of the MARCO states, reviewed the proposals received by the RFP deadline using the following seven evaluation criteria:

- Responsiveness to the objectives and priorities identified in the RFP;
- Overall clarity of approach and methodology;
- Technical and scientific merit;
- Usefulness to practitioners of project outputs;
- Budget;
- Qualifications of the investigators, including previous experience with similar projects; and
- Knowledge of the Mid-Atlantic landscape.

Each criterion was rated on a weighted scale, for a total maximum score of 100. Individual reviewer scores were submitted to MARCO's Assistant Director, and the scores were combined to create an average score for each proposal. The proposal reviewers will be convening on a call during the next grant reporting period (July 2, 2015) to discuss the pros and cons of each proposal and will bring forth a recommendation for funding to the MARCO Management Board for approval.

### **Conclusion**

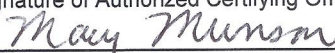
Initial grant spending was slower than anticipated during the reporting period (see attached Form SF-425). MARCO wanted to convene the Climate Change Action Team before announcing an RFP to ensure that the goals of the competition were in line with state interests and priorities. The time lag in announcing the RFP and then the process established to make a contracting decision reduced MARCO's ability to spend down the grant, as the bulk of the NALCC funding is dedicated to contractual services (contracts not yet executed). MARCO anticipates regular spending on the grant, now that we have gone through the RFP process, and MARCO enters the contract negotiation process in the summer of 2015.

MARCO's grant from the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative has resulted in project advancements during the reporting period, including: convening its Climate Change Action Team, developing an RFP for contractual services, and running the RFP competition.

As always, MARCO is grateful for the NALCC's generous financial support. We look forward to continued progress and success with developing a program of delivery of coastal resiliency science for the Mid-Atlantic and to deliver this science and information for state- and community-level resiliency planning.

# FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT

(Follow form instructions)

1. Federal Agency and Organizational Element to Which Report is Submitted U.S. Department of the Interior		2. Federal Grant or Other Identifying Number Assigned by Federal Agency (To report multiple grants, use FFR Attachment) F14AC01219				Page 1 of 1 pages	
3. Recipient Organization (Name and complete address including Zip code) Coastal States Stewardship Foundation, 444 N. Capitol St. NW, Ste. 638, Washington, DC 20001-1556							
4a. DUNS Number 606119076	4b. EIN 202790697	5. Recipient Account Number or Identifying Number (To report multiple grants, use FFR Attachment)		6. Report Type <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> Final	7. Basis of Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accrual		
8. Project/Grant Period (Month, Day, Year) From: 11/01/2014 To: 10/31/2016				9. Reporting Period End Date (Month, Day, Year) 06/30/2015			
10. Transactions <i>(Use lines a-c for single or combined multiple grant reporting)</i> <b>Federal Cash (To report multiple grants separately, also use FFR Attachment):</b>					Cumulative		
a. Cash Receipts				6,225.00			
b. Cash Disbursements				6,225.00			
c. Cash on Hand (line a minus b)				0			
<i>(Use lines d-o for single grant reporting)</i> <b>Federal Expenditures and Unobligated Balance:</b>							
d. Total Federal funds authorized				n/a			
e. Federal share of expenditures				n/a			
f. Federal share of unliquidated obligations				n/a			
g. Total Federal share (sum of lines e and f)				n/a			
h. Unobligated balance of Federal funds (line d minus g)				n/a			
<b>Recipient Share:</b>							
i. Total recipient share required				n/a			
j. Recipient share of expenditures				n/a			
k. Remaining recipient share to be provided (line i minus j)				n/a			
<b>Program Income:</b>							
l. Total Federal share of program income earned				n/a			
m. Program income expended in accordance with the deduction alternative				n/a			
n. Program income expended in accordance with the addition alternative				n/a			
o. Unexpended program income (line l minus line m or line n)				n/a			
11.	a. Type	b. Rate	c. Period From	Period To	d. Base	e. Amount Charged	f. Federal Share
Indirect Expense	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
g. Totals:				0	0	0	
12. Remarks: Attach any explanations deemed necessary or information required by Federal sponsoring agency in compliance with governing legislation: We are not charging indirects, only actual expenses.							
13. Certification: By signing this report, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the report is true, complete, and accurate, and the expenditures, disbursements and cash receipts are for the purposes and intent set forth in the award documents. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001)							
a. Typed or Printed Name and Title of Authorized Certifying Official Mary Munson, Secretary, Coastal States Stewardship Foundation					c. Telephone (Area code, number, and extension) 202-508-3861		
b. Signature of Authorized Certifying Official 					d. Email Address <a href="mailto:mmunson@coastalstates.org">mmunson@coastalstates.org</a>		
e. Date Report Submitted (Month, Day, Year) 07/30/2015					14. Agency use only:		

Standard Form 425 - Revised 10/11/2011  
 OMB Approval Number: 0348-0061  
 Expiration Date: 2/28/2015

## Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0348-0061. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0061), Washington, DC 20503.