

Accountability Report Transmittal Form

Agency name: P26 - South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium

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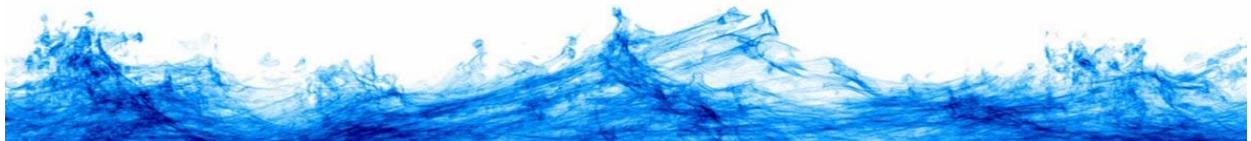
"Science Serving South Carolina's Coast"

**P26 - South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
FY 2007-2008 State Accountability Report**

Submitted September 15, 2008



South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
287 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29401



Section I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Mission, Vision, and Values

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium (hereinafter referred to as the Consortium), created in 1978 by the S.C. General Assembly, has as its purpose the management and administration of the Sea Grant Program and related activities to support, improve, and share research, education, training, and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources. The Consortium's unique mission is to generate and provide science-based information to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal and marine resources that fosters a sustainable economy and environment. The Consortium vision is to be the best Sea Grant Program in the Nation, and one of the most efficiently and effectively managed state agencies in South Carolina. The agency's motto is *Science Serving South Carolina's Coast*. A link to the agency's recently revised strategic plan, titled *The Changing Face of Coastal South Carolina: Valuing Resources – Adapting to Change*, may be found at <http://www.scseagrant.org/SeaGrant/>.

The Consortium develops and supports balanced and integrated research, education, and extension programs for South Carolina which seek to provide for future economic opportunities, improve the social well-being of its citizens, and ensure the wise use and development of its marine and coastal natural resources. It administers an effective and efficient communications and outreach network among academia, business, government, and the general public to ensure that Consortium activities are responsive to marine and coastal stakeholders and that information generated is delivered in a useful and timely fashion. The Consortium is part of a nationwide network of 32 Sea Grant Programs that report to the National Sea Grant College Program, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce; thus, Consortium activities are responsive to regional and national needs, as well as to those of South Carolina. The Consortium is unique among Sea Grant programs nationally in that it is an academically based independent state agency.

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium believes values are the foundation on which its operating principles are built, and that they are essential for successful performance. The Consortium values trust, honesty, and respect, which are critical for productive business practices, both throughout the agency and in working with researchers, partners, and constituents; integrity and objectivity of our program activities including exemplary scientists who provide science-based information of the utmost credibility and integrity; and excellence in quality of work, an emphasis on teamwork and partnerships, and efficient delivery of information that takes a non-advocacy approach.

1. Major Achievements

The Consortium's ability to achieve its mission and goals is dependent upon four major factors: (1) state appropriations, which provide the administrative and management foundation for Consortium efforts and activities; (2) extramural funding, secured through competitive grants and contracts, to support coastal and marine research, education, and extension program activities that benefit South Carolina and the region; (3) a well-trained and experienced staff to effectively develop and manage its programs and the information that derives from this work;

and (4) a dynamic agency strategic plan – a living document – that incorporates elements related to outcomes and milestones, and is flexible enough to adapt and address changing needs.

State Appropriations. The Consortium’s recurring state appropriation increased from \$545,748 in FY06-07 to \$615,836 in FY07-08, an increase of \$70,088 (or about 12.8 percent). The State Legislature approved in total the Consortium’s FY07-08 budget request for \$143,750 in recurring funds; however, some \$73,000 was vetoed by the Governor. The Consortium’s state appropriation is critical to the agency for two reasons. First, it represents the agency’s primary support for critically important management, operational, and administrative functions. Second, and more importantly, it is used by the Consortium to meet the federal Sea Grant match requirement of \$1 in non-federal funds for every \$2 in federal Sea Grant funds.

Extramural Support. For the reporting period, the Consortium was able to secure \$4.2 million in extramural (competitive and otherwise) funding from non-state sources to support coastal and marine research, education, and extension activities from non-state sources. Listed below are the extramural grants received by the end of June 30, 2008. New grants starts are listed in *italics*; the budget numbers as they were awarded.

Program Management

- “S.C. Sea Grant College Core Program” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$1,136,670 - February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 (continuing).
- “S.C. Sea Grant College Program - Merit Funding” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$95,000 - February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 (*Year 1 of 5*).

Humans and the Coastal Landscape

- “SouthEast Coastal Ocean Observations Regional Association (SECOORA): Building a Regional Association Framework for the Coastal Ocean Observing System of the Southeastern United States” - NOAA Coastal Services Center - \$394,546 - May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2009 - NOAA Coastal Services Center - (Year 3 of 3).
- “*SouthEast Coastal Ocean Observations Regional Association (SECOORA): Developing the Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System*” - NOAA Coastal Services Center - \$750,000 – May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2009 - NOAA Coastal Services Center - (*Year 1 of 1*).
- “Enhancing Communications and Coordinating Outreach Activities throughout the IOOS Community: The NFRA Contribution” - NOAA Coastal Services Center - \$50,000 - August 1, 2007 to July 31, 2008 (Year 3 of 3).
- “Development of a Research Plan for the South Atlantic Region” - Georgia Sea Grant College Program - \$10,000 - June 1, 2006 to May 31, 2008 (Year 1 of 1).
- “Expanding Existing Surveillance Systems to Include *Pfeisteria*, Other Harmful Algal Blooms, and Marine Toxins in South Carolina” - Centers for Disease Control - \$180,000 – September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008 (Year 5 of 5).
- “Providing Ocean and Human Health Research, Education, and Training to Appropriate Audiences - a HML-SCSGC MOA Initiative” - NOAA Hollings Marine Laboratory - \$508,052 - August 1, 2007 to present.

Humans and the Risks of Coastal Natural Hazards

- “CI-FLOW” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - National Strategic Investment Program - \$50,000 - February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008.
- “The Carolinas Coastal Climate Outreach Initiative” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - National Strategic Investment Program - \$100,000 - February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 (Year 2 of 3).

Coastal Dependent Economy

- “S.C. Sea Grant Fisheries Extension Enhancement Program” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$78,254 - June 1, 2007 to April 30, 2008 (Year 4 of 5).
- “Addressing the Challenges of Coastal Growth in South Carolina: A S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Initiative” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$50,000 - February 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008 (continuing).

Scientific Literacy and Workforce Development

- “Support for Beach Sweep/River Sweep '07 Activities” - Private Cash Donations - ~\$20,000 - September 2007.
- “Southeastern Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE-SE): A Systematic Approach to Forming Ocean Science Education Partnerships” - National Science Foundation (with partial funding provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) - \$505,747 - September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008 (Year 3 of 5).
- “*Sea Grant Knauss Fellowships (5)*” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$207,500 - March 1, 2007 to February 28, 2008.

Consortium Staffing. During the reporting period, the Consortium filled the position of Sea Grant Regional Climate Extension Specialist, which is funded by a federal grant from the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program. Consequently, the Consortium’s outreach efforts for FY07-08 were conducted by a full staff of six extension specialists (there were only five during FY06-07). This group provided 236 extension workshops, presentations and consultations, which were attended by more than 4,785 participants.

The Consortium also hired an Applications Analyst to manage the agency’s IT (Internet Technology) needs and to enhance the Consortium’s abilities to increasingly conduct business over the Internet.

Strategic Planning. During the current reporting period, the Assistant Director for Research and Planning spearheaded the effort that resulted in the Consortium’s new 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. The plan was approved by the Consortium’s Board of Directors on September 12, 2007. Two-year Implementation Plans, based on the Strategic Plan, have been developed to guide the Consortium’s activities for 2006-2008 and 2008-2010. The 2006-2010 Strategic Plan can be found on the Consortium’s website at: www.scseagrant.org/scseagrant/.

Program Evaluation. The Consortium received a "high performance" rating through the external National Sea Grant Program Assessment process, which indicates the agency has effectively documented its achievement of its strategic goals and other performance metrics.

More details on these efforts can be found in Section III, Category 7 Results and in the Consortium's FY06-07 National Sea Grant Office Annual Progress Report submitted on August 31, 2007, which is also located at: www.scseagrant.org/scseagrant/.

3. Key Strategic Goals

The goal of the Consortium's strategic planning process is to maximize the ability of S.C. Sea Grant's research, education, and outreach programs to address the coastal resource needs of South Carolina. To this end, the Consortium's legislative mandate identifies the following three strategic goals which provide the foundation for future Sea Grant activities.

1. "To provide a mechanism for the development and management of the Sea Grant Program for the State of South Carolina and adjacent regions which share a common environment and resource heritage."
2. "To support, improve and share research, education, training and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources."
3. "To encourage and follow a regional approach to solving problems or meeting needs relating to ocean and coastal resources in cooperation with appropriate institutions, programs, and persons in the region."

As stated earlier, during the reporting period the Consortium developed a new strategic plan for 2006-2010, a significant modification of and improvement over its 2000-2005 strategic plan. In light of the importance of this accomplishment to the Consortium's activities going forward, a more detailed discussion of the planning process is found in Section III, Category 2.1, and Section III, Category 7.2 Results.

4. Key Strategic Challenges

As noted in previous reports, coastal growth will continue to remain a primary natural resource management issue for the state into the foreseeable future. The challenges faced by South Carolina's coastal and inland communities in managing this growth and ensuring economic opportunity, conserving our coastal and marine resources, and enhancing the quality of life for South Carolina citizens are immense. More recent pressures have been mounting to utilize the resources of the state's territorial sea – the area of the coastal ocean that extends out three miles from the state's shoreline. The need to map our marine resources, improve the health of the state's fisheries, protect the state's people and infrastructure from increasingly severe coastal storms and hurricanes, plan for the possibility that energy development will occur off our coastline, and continue to build public awareness and enhance the scientific literacy of the state's citizenry and students is becoming more critical each day.

The S.C. General Assembly's commitment to and support of the Consortium over the last three decades, for which we are most grateful, has allowed the agency to be able to successfully

compete for non-state funding. However, although thirteen percent of its budget currently coming from state appropriations (up four percentage points from FY06-07), the Consortium's state support remains at a relatively low level. While the diverse constituencies of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium have benefited from the agency's long-term non-state budgetary growth to support relevant research, education, and extension programming, state support is critically important to the agency in order to sustain a minimum required level of administrative, planning, and program management effort, as well as staffing levels, to support its ever-increasing fiduciary responsibilities in program coordination, fiscal management, and constituent support and to handle the rapidly growing public demand for Consortium products, services, and activities. The Consortium's FY07-08 state appropriation (\$615,836) remains less than it was at the start of this decade when it totaled \$650,800.

At the national level, the availability of extramural funding available through competitive research and outreach opportunities is becoming increasingly limited, given the significant reduction in discretionary spending appropriated by the U.S. Congress. This situation has heightened the need for the Consortium to pursue funding opportunities from alternative sources, such as foundations, the private sector, and individuals. The Consortium Board of Directors has charged the Agency Head and staff with developing a strategy to diversify the Consortium's program funding base.

5. Improvements Emanating from Accountability Reporting

The State Accountability Report is but one of three major annual reports the Consortium is required to prepare each year (the others are required by our federal sponsors). Information presented in the State Accountability Report is used to meet these other reporting requirements, and vice versa. However, due to the nature of the Consortium's mission and role, a number of the metrics that this report mandates cannot easily be addressed by the agency, primarily because it deals with the development and support of scientific research and discovery and the delivery of the resultant information to its constituencies. Successful outcomes of Consortium efforts cannot be measured like "widgets" from a factory, but can be tracked by documenting changes in policy, management, and behavior. Of course, these are more qualitative than quantitative, and are extremely difficult to measure. As a result, the Consortium tracks many of its "successes" through the use of testimonials and support that it receives from its constituents.

Section II: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

1. Main Products and Services

The Consortium's major products and services fall into the following categories:

- *Marine and coastal research and education programs* that generate and deliver applied and objective science-based information to: (1) inform individuals, businesses, local and state government, and other organizations on the balanced use and conservation of coastal and ocean resources, (2) enhance public safety and minimize structural and natural resource losses that occur as a result of natural (e.g., hurricanes) and anthropogenic (e.g., pollution) events, and (3) provide economic opportunities through increased revenues and/or cost savings to business and industry.
- *Extension, advisory services, and technical assistance* activities (such as workshops, seminars, constituent meetings) focusing on coastal hazards, environmental and water quality issues, coastal processes (e.g., beach erosion), climate change and sea level rise, coastal business and economics, aquaculture, fisheries, and coastal community development.
- *Communications products* that inform and educate citizens about the issues relevant to how the state's coastal, marine, and ocean resources and cultural heritage affect the quality of life of all South Carolinians (e.g., *Coastal Heritage* magazine).
- *Community-based volunteerism*, through marine litter and habitat restoration projects (e.g., Beach Sweep/River Sweep; Oyster Reef Restoration).

2. Key Customer Groups and Their Requirements and Expectations

The Consortium serves many constituencies through the provision of information and funding (see Appendix 1). The Consortium's constituencies look to the agency as a source of objective, science-based information on coastal and marine resource issues and opportunities. In general, the Consortium serves:

- Faculty, staff, and students of our eight member institutions
- Federal, state, and local natural resource and economic development agencies
- Institutions and individuals involved in the management of the state's coastal resources
- State and local government officials and community leaders
- K-12 teachers and students
- Non-governmental organizations
- Business and industry
- Citizen groups
- General public
- Funding sources such as foundations

3. Key Stakeholder Groups

The Consortium interacts and collaborates with a number of stakeholders in conducting its programs and activities. A selected listing of the agency's program partners and collaborators can also be found in Appendix 1.

4. Key Suppliers and Partners

The Consortium depends on the expertise and knowledge of the faculty, staff, and students of its member institutions, as well as its own professional staff, to generate, translate, and deliver pertinent coastal and marine resource-related information to its constituents. It also depends on the success of the proposals it prepares and/or submits on behalf of its member institutions to secure the financial resources necessary to support the myriad of activities with which it is engaged. Eighty-seven percent of the Consortium's budget is obtained from federal agencies such as the NOAA National Ocean Service (including its Coastal Services Center and Centers for Coastal Ocean Science), NOAA Operations (for ship time), NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Geological Survey - Coastal and Marine Geology Program, the National Science Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, a number of state agencies such as S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (SCDHEC-OCRM) and Bureau of Water, private foundations, business, and industry.

5. Operation Locations

The Consortium's main office is located at 287 Meeting Street in Charleston, South Carolina. Specialists working for the S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program are located in offices in Beaufort, Charleston, Conway, and Georgetown, South Carolina.

6. Employees

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium currently has 6.86 state FTEs and 7.14 federal FTEs. The trend in number of FTEs essentially has remained constant over time (see Figure 7.4.A). Currently, all of the Consortium's 14 FTE positions are filled.

7. Regulatory Environment

The Consortium does not operate under a regulatory environment, and has no regulatory or management functions. It operates under both state and federal legislative mandates, however.

8. Performance Improvement Systems

Examples of the performance improvement systems used at the Consortium include:

- Formal, external National Sea Grant Program Assessment review (presently quadrennial, but the frequency of assessments is under review)
- Ad hoc "blue ribbon" committee reviews (topic-specific)
- Improved strategic planning and review processes, which engage the agency's diverse constituencies
- On-going meetings with faculty from member institutions
- Establishment and engagement of a Consortium Program Advisory Board
- Individual extension specialist advisory committees

- Rigorous, external peer review process for all competitive research, education, and outreach proposals
- Monthly meetings of the Consortium senior leadership (“Core Group”)
- Staff professional development opportunities
- Recognition of staff performance with performance raises and bonuses, when possible

9. Organizational Structure

The Consortium is structured to optimize communication and feedback linkages necessary for the proper development and implementation of its programs.

Consortium Member Institutions. Institutions that hold membership in the Consortium include The Citadel, Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, the College of Charleston, the Medical University of South Carolina, South Carolina State University, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and the University of South Carolina. Consortium institutions provide the expertise of their respective faculty and professional staffs, as well as a wide range of facilities and equipment, necessary to carry out the diversity of programs supported by the S.C. Sea Grant program. In addition, each member institution has Institutional Liaisons to provide direct contact between the Consortium staff and each member institution. *As an indication of their support and commitment to the Sea Grant program, each Consortium-member institution waives indirect costs on all Sea Grant-funded projects.*

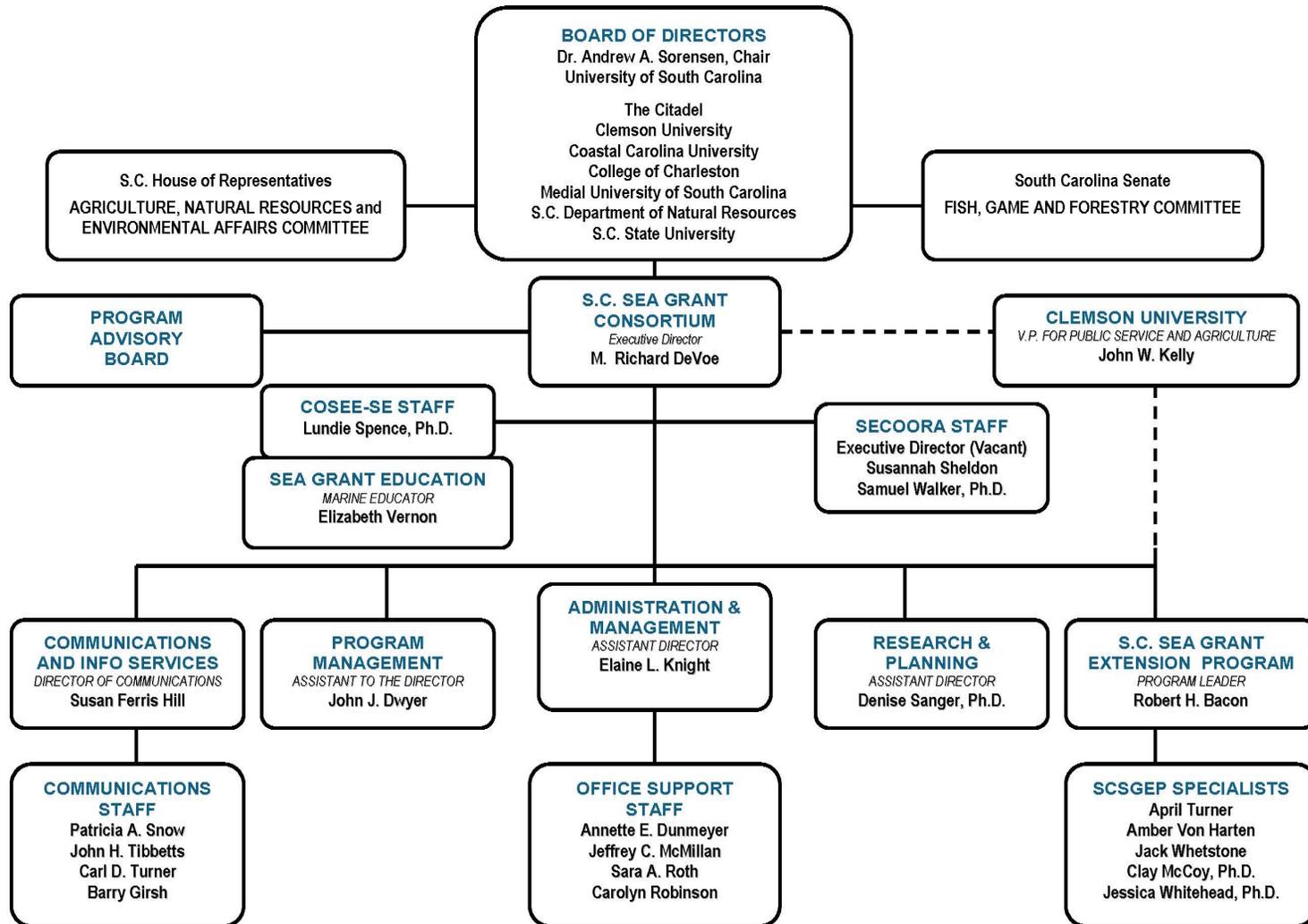
Consortium Board of Directors. Activities of the Consortium are governed by authorizing committees of the S.C. General Assembly and a Board of Directors to which the Agency Head reports (see organizational chart on next page). The Board of Directors includes the chief executive officers of the Consortium's member institutions. The Board meets annually to review Consortium program policies and procedures. The Board provides a direct line of communication between the Consortium Agency Head and the higher administrative levels of its eight member institutions.

Consortium Agency Head. The legislation creating the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium also established the position of Agency Head. The Agency Head is responsible for managing the Sea Grant program for South Carolina, including development and implementation of Sea Grant proposals, oversight of the proposal solicitation and review process, communication with the National Sea Grant College Program office, management and oversight of all Sea Grant projects and programs, and management of fiscal resources. The Consortium is also expected to seek funding from a variety of extramural sources, which represents an ever-increasing percentage (now 87 percent) of total Consortium support.



ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

S.C. Sea Grant Consortium



10. Expenditures/Appropriations Chart

Base Budget Expenditures and Appropriations Other Expenditures

Major Budget Categories	FY06-07 Actual Expenditures		FY07-08 Actual Expenditures		FY08-09 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$1,031,934	\$ 281,809	\$1,219,396	\$ 315,647	\$1,240,630	\$ 357,956
Other Operating	556,027	139,798	583,127	159,587	593,416	127,416
Special Items	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent Improvements						
Case Services						
Distributions to Subdivisions (Allocations)	3,302,407		3,054,034	0	4,940,141	0
Fringe Benefits	236,731	73,374	309,417	89,802	287,027	123,342
Non-recurring	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	\$5,127,099	\$ 494,981	\$5,165,974	\$ 565,036	\$7,061,214	\$ 608,714

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	06-07 Actual Expenditures	07-08 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$0	\$0
Capital Reserve Funds	\$0	\$0
Bonds	\$0	\$0

11. Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 06-07 Budget Expenditures	FY 07-08 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results*
01000000-Administration	Manage and administer the Sea Grant Program and related activities to support, improve, and share research, education, training, and advisory services in fields related to ocean and coastal resources.	State: \$494,981 Federal: \$4,499,619 Other: \$132,499 % of Total Budget: 100	State: \$565,037 Federal: \$4,564,076 Other: \$61,975 % of Total Budget: 100	Table 7.3.A Figure 7.3.A Figure 7.3.B Figure 7.3.C Figure 7.4.A Figure 7.4.B

Section III:
**CATEGORY 1 – SENIOR LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY**

1.1. How Senior Leaders Set, Deploy, and Ensure Two-way Communications

Consortium Core Group. The Consortium is led by the Agency Head, but is managed and organized in a non-hierarchical fashion. An internal mechanism that has been established by the Consortium to facilitate a programmed team leadership approach is the Consortium’s “Core Group.” The Core Group facilitates communication and information exchange among the Consortium’s management staff. Members of the Core Group are the Agency Head, the Assistant Director, the Assistant Director for Research and Planning, the Extension Program Leader, the Director of Communications, and the Program Manager. The Core Group constitutes the agency’s senior leadership. Meetings are held on a monthly basis to ensure efficient and effective communications and program direction. Using this “team” approach, the Agency Head can ensure that Consortium policies, programs, and activities are focused on the agency’s priority needs. The Core Group is responsible for setting the agency’s short- and long-term directions, expectations, and ethical standards.

Staff Meetings and Retreats. The Agency Head mandates monthly staff meetings to which all Consortium staff attend. Staff meetings are used as a mechanism to ensure that the values and goals of the agency are understood. Monthly staff meetings also provide another forum for sharing information and discussing the Consortium’s progress toward strategic goals. To ensure that all Consortium staff understand the agency’s strategic plan and quality expectations, a Consortium-wide retreat (annually when feasible) is conducted. Staff are encouraged to share their ideas about ways to improve the agency’s performance. The staff fully participated in the development of the 2006-2010 strategic plan, “*The Changing Face of Coastal South Carolina: Valuing Resources – Adapting to Change.*”

1.2. How Senior Leaders Focus on Customers and other Stakeholders

All S.C. Sea Grant Consortium programs and activities are driven by input and guidance provided by its diverse and varied stakeholders throughout South Carolina and the southeast United States, and the agency establishes these relationships in a number of ways.

Staff Leadership. One critical way that Consortium managers demonstrate leadership and engage the agency’s diverse stakeholder community is through their involvement in leadership roles with a number of public, private, and non-governmental organizations (NGO). Staff assume key roles in organizations, professional societies, and activities that advance both the mission and the visibility of the Consortium, which enables it to better serve the needs of its constituencies. Selected examples of the many leadership roles the Agency Head and Consortium staff play in the community, the state, the region, and the nation are listed in the Consortium’s National Sea Grant Program Assessment Briefing Book, which can be found at www.scseagrant.org/pdf_files/scsgc_1999-2004.pdf.

Involvement of Stakeholders in Planning and Review. The Consortium consistently seeks involvement and input from its Board of Directors, Program Advisory Board, Institutional

Liaisons, S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program (SCSGEP) specialist Advisory Committees, and its constituencies (see section III.3.1) to help shape Consortium priorities and programs (see section III.2). This ensures that our activities are responsive to the needs of the Consortium's stakeholders and allows us to determine (1) priority needs pertaining to coastal and ocean resources use and conservation, (2) current activities that are underway to address these needs, (3) priority needs that are not being adequately addressed by current activities, and (4) most importantly, specific potential actions that the Consortium can take to address these unmet needs.

1.3. How the Organization Addresses its Programs' Impacts on the Public

The primary functions of the Consortium are to identify priority coastal and marine resource needs that can be addressed through research, education and/or extension programs, to solicit and secure funding to support these activities, and to generate and provide resultant information to the agency's stakeholders in forms that they can use. To ensure that Consortium activities are consistent with public needs and are of high quality, the Consortium (1) regularly canvasses agency stakeholders to assess current needs and issues, (2) employs a rigorous peer review and evaluation process of all proposals submitted to the agency (see section III.4.5), (3) solicits formal evaluations from all Consortium conference and workshop participants, (4) is formally evaluated by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program Office (NSGO) through its Program Assessment Team (PAT) process every four years (see below), and (5) conducts constituent surveys during its strategic plan revision and *Coastal Heritage* mailing list update processes.

The Consortium generates two primary "products" for its constituencies – program funding and information. The agency has no resource management or regulatory responsibilities, nor does it produce or manufacture anything that would pose a risk to the public. All products, activities and services generated by the Consortium are at the request of the constituencies the agency serves.

1.4. Fiscal, Legal, and Regulatory Accountability by Senior Leadership

Internal Procedures. The agency's *South Carolina Grant Consortium Handbook: A Staff Guide to the Internal Operations of the Agency* details the Consortium's programmatic, staff, and administrative policies. The handbook underwent a major revision in August 2007, and was approved by the Consortium Board of Directors. It was made available to all employees in early 2008.

Fiscal Procedures. The Consortium adheres to the fiscal and administrative rules and regulations that accompany all federal grant and contract agreements. The Consortium also employs strong internal controls for the review and approval of project expenditures. Purchase requisitions are reviewed for appropriateness and availability of funds prior to approval. Receiving reports are reconciled against purchase orders issued and approved. Payment is generated through the Comptroller General in Columbia, SC. The State Auditor's office recently completed an audit of FY07 Consortium records, the final results showed no deficiencies in the agency's budget and accounting procedures.

Recent Site Visits and Reviews. The Consortium is externally reviewed by an external NOAA National Sea Grant Program Assessment Team every four years, and is reviewed by the S.C. State Auditor's Office every year. All review and audit results were positive and revealed no major deficiencies in programmatic or administrative aspects of Consortium operations.

1.5. Key Performance Measures

In addition to the materials and metrics provided to the National Sea Grant College Program Office as part of its Program Assessment process (see below), the Consortium's senior leadership reviews the following program management and administration metrics on an annual basis:

- **Mission Accomplishment**
 - Rating by the external National Sea Grant Program Assessment process
 - Number of professional awards for its *Coastal Heritage* magazine and other products
 - Number of proposals prepared and submitted; number of proposals funded
 - Number of faculty supported at the Consortium's universities
 - Number of graduate and undergraduate students supported through Consortium funding
 - Number of K-12 teachers with formal ocean science-based training and graduate credit
 - Implementation planning milestones met
 - Grant award and interagency billing and accounting processes within a two-week timeframe
- **Customer Satisfaction**
 - Number of extension workshops and presentations, and attendance
 - Number of extension publications and products produced
 - Number of communications publications and products produced
 - Number of news releases distributed; number of media placements as a result
 - Number of unsolicited media placements
 - Number of hits, unique visits, and *downloads* (new) to the Consortium Web sites
 - Number of coastal site captains and individual volunteers on the coast in Beach Sweep
- **Financial Performance**
 - State recurring funds secured
 - Extramural (competitive and otherwise) funding secured from non-state sources
 - Return on investment (federal funding to state funding)
 - Annual single agency audit with no significant findings
- **Human Resource Results**
 - Staff retention/vacancy levels
 - Number of staff training and development opportunities
 - Staffing level of six Sea Grant Extension Specialists

1.6. Senior Leadership Use of Organizational Performance Review Findings

As one of 32 Sea Grant College Programs that exist across the United States, the Consortium is subject to a rigorous Program Assessment process that is administered by the National Sea Grant

College Program Office. The Consortium senior staff prepare a detailed “Briefing Book” for use by the Program Assessment Team that outlines the Consortium’s organization, management, processes, achievements, and quantitative and qualitative programmatic outcomes. Preparation of this document requires a review of both National Sea Grant performance measures and state Agency Activity Inventory performance measures (see section III. 4 and Section III. 7.1.).

Four major performance measures are evaluated by the National Office; within those four measures, 14 specific metrics are assessed. Associated with each metric is a set of detailed questions used to evaluate the level of performance in each category. The Consortium has thus adopted these measures in its goal of becoming the top Sea Grant College program in the nation. The key performance measures are (1) Organizing and Managing the Program, (2) Connecting with Sea Grant Users, (3) Effective and Aggressive Long Range Planning, and (4) Producing Significant Results. The fourteen sub-elements are used as performance metrics for rating the agency. The agency is rated by the national Program Assessment Team using the following four-point value system: Needs Improvement; Meets Benchmark; Exceeds Benchmark; and Highest Performance.

The Consortium’s last NSGO Program Assessment was held in June 2004, and the detailed results were provided to the Agency Head and the Consortium Board of Directors, and presented in last year’s accountability report. The Agency Head met with the Consortium Core Group to discuss the results of the review and address areas that have been identified as needing improvement. The Agency Head also convenes special panels as needed to evaluate all or part of the Consortium’s operations and programs.

The Board of Directors is kept apprised of organizational performance, and their input is solicited to improve the agency’s performance and responsibilities.

1.7. Succession Planning and Development of Future Organizational Leaders

The Consortium’s senior leaders regularly focus their attention on staff succession. The Agency Head and Assistant Director have regular meetings (averaging one every two months) to discuss professional and budgeting goals and staffing needs. More recently, senior leadership has refilled staff positions with individuals who bring with them the potential to serve in leadership roles for the agency in the future.

1.8. How Leaders Create Environment for Performance Improvement and Accomplishment of Strategic Objectives

The Consortium’s leadership uses the agency’s strategic planning process, advisory groups, feedback from internal and external reviews, and staff input to set key organizational priorities for improvement, and communicates this information to staff through the Core Group and monthly staff meetings.

1.9. How Senior Leaders Create Environment for Organizational and Workforce Learning

The Consortium’s leadership and staff play key leadership roles in organizations, professional societies, and activities that advance the mission of the Consortium and the visibility of the state

of South Carolina, and enable it to better serve the needs of its constituencies and communities. Areas of emphasis are determined through the agency's strategic and implementation planning process, and refined during meetings of the Core Group.

1.10. How Senior Leaders Engage and Empower Workforce and Recognize Performance

The Agency Head and senior leaders encourage all staff to be proactive in taking on initiatives. "Going the extra mile" is rewarded through merit pay increases when appropriate, or recognition through announcements of employee accomplishments at the monthly staff meetings or by email communications. Performance is formally recognized in the employee's EPMS file.

1.11. How Senior Leaders Support and Strengthen Communities

The senior leaders participate in community activities by serving on boards (the Agency Head serves on the Board of Directors of the Noisette Foundation, the Slocum-Lunz Foundation, and the LowCountry Institute, for example). The agency sponsors workshops and seminars in various communities throughout the state where timely subjects such as coastal development, sea level rise, and hurricane preparedness are discussed. Extension specialists devote 100% of their time serving constituents in their particular specialties (e.g., fisheries or water quality issues).

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

2.1. Strategic Planning Process

The goal of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium's strategic planning process is to maximize the ability of Consortium's research, education, and outreach programs to address the coastal resource needs of South Carolina. The Consortium's ability to anticipate and respond to constituent's needs is critical to its success in serving the state. For the reporting period, the Consortium has transitioned its operations to meet the strategic goals laid out in its revised 2006-2010 Strategic Plan (see Section III.7.2).

The planning process for the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan included the development of key focus areas based on the outcome of a constituent survey, review by our Program Advisory Board, and review and approval by the Board of Directors. The constituent survey was conducted online to determine the most pressing issues facing South Carolina. The constituents surveyed included researchers, coastal decision-makers, private sector, educators, and members of the public.

The Consortium's Program Advisory Board (PAB) was established in 2005 and meets approximately once per year. Membership on the Consortium PAB includes representatives from a mix of academic, agency, business, and public interest organizations from South Carolina and adjacent coastal states. The purpose of the Consortium PAB is to:

- Provide the Consortium with a broad perspective on South Carolina's critical coastal and marine resource issues, needs and opportunities
- Review and evaluate input received from Consortium stakeholders for use in revising and focusing the agency's strategic and implementation plans

- Offer strategic guidance and advice to the Consortium as it develops and implements research, education, and outreach programs and projects
- Advise the Consortium Agency Head regarding emerging trends in coastal and marine resource policy and management
- Identify potential opportunities for funding support, new partnerships, and innovative ways of “doing business”

The PAB has met three times; the goal of the first meeting was to educate the PAB about the Consortium’s activities and seek their input on pressing issues. The goal of the second meeting was to present a draft 2006-2010 Strategic Plan for their input. On May 1, 2007, the PAB met again at which time the Consortium’s 2006-2010 Strategic Plan was endorsed for review and approval by the Consortium Board of Directors, which occurred at its fall 2007 meeting. The plan identifies seven themes and strategic goals; four programmatic and three management.

Programmatic Themes

Humans and the Coastal Landscape

Strategic Goal – The ecological and economic value of coastal and ocean ecosystem processes are documented, the effects of coastal growth on these ecosystem processes are assessed, and state and local decision-makers, resource managers, and interested public have the information and tools to ameliorate these effects.

Humans and the Risks of Coastal Natural Hazards

Strategic Goal– Coastal residents, communities, and businesses understand the risks and vulnerabilities associated with both chronic and episodic coastal natural hazard events; and are prepared for and able to recover from them with minimal disruption to social, economic, and natural systems.

Coastal-Dependent Economy

Strategic Goal – Sustainable economic development in the coastal region that is compatible with changing demographics, business development, regulatory environments, and long-term conservation of natural and cultural resources.

Scientific Literacy and Workforce Development

Strategic Goal – Coastal and ocean education programs foster scientific literacy, stewardship, and a scientifically trained workforce.

Management Themes

Planning, Program Management, and Overall Performance

Strategic Goal– Maintain and enhance viable planning, financing, and performance efforts in support of the mission and programmatic goals of the Consortium.

Connecting with Users

Strategic Goal – The Consortium effectively identifies and addresses the needs of its diverse constituencies throughout the state and region.

Human Resources

Strategic Goal – Maintain and enhance a highly qualified, well-trained, and recognized agency staff.

2.1.a. Organizational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. One of the Consortium’s greatest strengths and opportunities is the structure of the agency established by the S.C. General Assembly. A major element of the Consortium’s mandate is to interact with other state natural resource agencies as an information provider, broker, facilitator, and catalyst on coastal and marine resource conservation, management, and utilization issues. By virtue of its structure as a consortium, the Consortium must operate in partnership with its eight member institutions in planning, implementing, and administering its research, education and outreach programs. Another strength of the Consortium is that it is not a regulatory agency. As such, the Consortium can work with coastal and marine resource users, without engendering in them the kind of wariness and mistrust that often characterizes relationships between the “regulator and regulated.” On the other hand, the Consortium is a relatively small state agency with limited staff and operational resources and no infrastructure assets; thus it depends heavily on the willing engagement of its Consortium member institutions to provide expertise, facilities, and institutional capabilities in order to deliver its products and services. This requires significant investments in time and effort.

2.1.b. Financial, Regulatory, Societal, and Other Potential Risks. Among the greatest risks to Consortium administrative and programmatic stability and program consistency is the financial risk associated with the exigencies of annual funding at both the state and federal levels. To address this risk, the Consortium has sought to diversify its revenue stream through extramural funding, and has engaged a subcommittee of its PAB to provide guidance to the agency on strategies for securing extramural funding from non-traditional sources. This strategy has served to mitigate the effects of annually varying state and federal funding (see section III.7.1).

2.1.c. Shifts in Technology, Regulatory Environment, and Customer Preferences. In order to maintain and foster relevant, timely, and integrated research and outreach programs, the Consortium must continually adapt to changing technology. Participation by Consortium staff and partners in teleconferences, video conferences, and Web conferences is increasing to reduce travel costs. The Consortium is also adapting its Program Management Information System to enhance efficiencies in providing administrative support to its member institutions.

Additionally, the Consortium has tracked and provided comments to the S.C. Enterprise Architecture (SCEA) Architecture Oversight Committee (AOC). The agency will implement the proposed changes in the upcoming year as they are developed.

2.1.d. Workforce Capabilities and Needs. The Consortium believes one of its greatest assets is its employees. To ensure the human resource component of the agency has the appropriate capabilities, the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan has identified, in its Administrative section, the goal of achieving an “environment of excellence” and has included metrics to assess progress. In addition, the agency updated both its internal and external procedures manuals to ensure consistency within the agency and in interactions with agency partners.

2.1.e. Organizational Continuity in Emergencies. The Consortium has an emergency plan in place which consists of maintaining all files on a server which is backed up regularly and maintained off site. During an emergency, all computers and servers will be unplugged, raised off the floor and covered. After the emergency, the servers can be turned on which will allow for remote access to email in the event the office cannot be opened. This will ensure the Agency can continue to function soon after the emergency. Senior leaders share contact information (e.g., cell phone numbers) with all staff in order to remain in contact during emergencies.

2.1.f. Ability to Execute the Strategic Plan. The agency Core Group ensures that the Consortium Strategic Plan is executed through the development of two-year Implementation Plans. The goal of the Implementation Plans is to provide a work plan for the agency staff to follow, which identifies specific programs and activities to be undertaken during the course of the year, and which will be tracked to document progress against the agency's Strategic Goals.

2.2. Key Strategic Objectives Address Strategic Challenges

The Consortium's overarching goal of maximizing the potential of the state's coastal and marine resources is a broad one. To effectively direct its day-to-day activities toward this goal over the past year, the Consortium organized its research, education, and extension activities in defined programmatic areas tied to seven strategic goals based on its 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. Based on these goals, the Consortium staff has developed Implementation Plans for 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 which are designed to achieve the goals by focusing efforts on priority issues. All agency staff has participated in developing the Plans, and each has responsibilities for completing tasks as identified so that it is truly a team effort guided by one vision and mission for each individual's effort. This enables us to look at our results in a manner consistent with the Baldrige Excellence Criteria. The Consortium's strategic goals are listed in the Strategic Planning Chart (below). The Consortium's "Key Agency Action Plans/Initiatives" are not included in the chart (because they are too numerous) – they can be found in the Consortium's 2006-2010 Strategic Plan which can be accessed at: <http://www.scseagrant.org/SeaGrant/>.

Strategic Planning

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 07-08 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
I. Administration	1. Generate information about the function and value of South Carolina's coastal and ocean ecosystems, and communicate this information to decision-makers and the public.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	Table 7.1.A; and tables and figures in Section 7.
	2. Conduct investigations and outreach activities that document and provide science-based information to decision-makers to address the effects of population growth and land use change on coastal and ocean ecosystems.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	3. Generate and deliver information on the natural forces of climate (e.g., sea level rise) and weather (e.g., hurricanes and coastal storms) and their effect on the human, built, and natural environment.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	4. Develop technology and extend information to at-risk homeowners, businesses, and government agencies to prepare for and mitigate the impacts from chronic and episodic coastal hazards.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	5. Support research and technology transfer efforts to enhance viable and sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and related industries.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	6. Identify sustainable community-based economic development and management strategies to support traditional and emerging coastal-dependent business and industry.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	7. Design and implement K-12 educational programs for teachers that increases proficiency in science and knowledge of coastal and ocean ecosystems.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	8. Promote the development of a diverse and technically trained workforce.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	9. Ensure the programmatic mission of the Consortium is accomplished through planning activities and a viable administrative and management system which supports its programmatic themes.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective (cont.)	Related FY 07-08 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
I. Administration (cont.)	10. Develop, maintain, and enhance the Consortium's funding levels and financial and reporting system to support the programmatic goals of the research, education, extension, and training programs of the Consortium.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	Table 7.1.A; and tables and figures in Section 7.
	11. Ensure that problems and needs of those who live and work along the coast are accurately identified.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	12. Ensure that Consortium programs are effective in providing the necessary science-based information and that this information is delivered to target audiences in a timely fashion and appropriate formats.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	
	13. Encourage an "environment of excellence" to maintain and hire talented staff and support the development of professional and other skills among the Consortium staff in partnership with other Federal, state, and local agencies and professional organizations.	See Category 2.3 for explanation.	

*Key Cross-references are a link to the Category 7 – Business Results. The references provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

2.3. Development and Tracking of Action Plans

The Consortium's 2006-2010 Strategic Plan includes planned efforts for the agency to work toward and achieve its strategic goals. The Consortium develops biennial Implementation Plans that specify tasks to be completed during the subject years, and include metrics to be used to measure progress and success. The agency has developed Implementation Plans for the periods 2006-2008 and 2008-2010. In addition, the Consortium's long-term goal is to conduct a formal and thorough review of each of the Consortium's strategic program areas every four to five years, and again, involve stakeholders in this process through communications mechanisms like workshops and Web-based surveys that include feedback loops. In addition, the Agency prepares an Agency Activity Inventory each year that includes expected results and outcomes measures. The last Inventory was completed and submitted to the state on August 7, 2008.

2.4. Communication and Deployment of Strategic Objectives and Action Plans

The goal of the agency's strategic planning process is to maximize the relevance of Consortium

research, education, and outreach programs to key state and regional coastal and marine resource needs. The development of the agency's strategic plan involved communicating with staff, institutions and faculty, decision makers, and our constituencies. Staff were first consulted at a strategic planning retreat and follow up meetings with appropriate staff were conducted to insure we were communicating and deploying the strategic plan. The inclusion of strategic planning objectives in our request for proposals has resulted in communication and deployment of activities by our member institutions and faculty. In addition, coastal decision makers participate in our request for proposal development and review of proposals received which provides additional deployment of our strategic objectives. Finally, the agency's constituents have been engaged through the agency's Program Advisory Board (PAB), extension advisory committees, and posting of our strategic plan on our Web site. Once completed, the agency's strategic plan was distributed widely, such as being placed on the Consortium's Web site. In addition, copies were targeted to board members, PAB members, agency employees, government officials and various key constituents.

2.5. Measuring Progress on Action Plans

Performance metrics are identified as a critical element of the agency's biennial implementation plan, and agency-wide metrics are identified in its strategic plan. A set of metrics also is listed in section III.4.3 of this document.

2.6. Evaluation and Improvement of Strategic Planning Process

The Consortium's strategic objectives reflect the important issues facing the coastal and marine areas of the state. These issues have been developed with input from the agency's extremely diverse constituencies to ensure the Consortium remains responsive to the needs of the state and its citizens. The agency's Strategic Plan includes indicators of success and actions to undertake to ensure the agency's success in meeting its goals and objectives. In addition, the agency has developed two-year implementation plans as a means to determine whether we have addressed the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. The agency strategic plan will be revised in 2010 to revise and update the agency's goals, objectives, indicators, and actions.

2.7. Internet Access to Consortium Strategic Plan

The Consortium's Strategic Plan is available to the public at the following Web address: <http://www.scseagrant.org/SeaGrant/>.

Category 3 – Customer Focus

3.1. Identifying Customers, Stakeholders, and Key Requirements

The Consortium's constituencies can be divided into two categories: institutional and external. The Consortium's institutional constituencies consist of the faculty, staff, and students of the agency's eight member institutions. Externally, the Consortium is charged with serving the needs of an extremely diverse group of organizations, institutions, and individuals representing

universities; federal, state, and local natural resource and economic development agencies; business and industry; state and local governments; community groups; non-governmental organizations; K-12 educational institutions; and others. The Consortium utilizes formal and informal methods to assess the needs of its institutional and external customers, including its strategic planning process (see section III.2); active participation in meetings, conferences, and workshops; direct stakeholder contacts; and service on a large number of planning, professional, and organizational committees.

The Consortium maintains direct and frequent contact with coastal and marine user groups and the general public, and serves as a conduit between institutional knowledge-seekers and coastal and marine knowledge-users, through its extension and communications activities. These outreach programs assure that (1) problems and needs of those who live and work along the coast are accurately identified, (2) research projects and programs are effectively providing the necessary science-based information, and (3) this information is delivered to target audiences in a timely fashion and "user-friendly" format. Further, these users play an active role in the ongoing process of refining the Consortium's strategic plan to meet the changing needs of the state and region.

The Consortium's Sea Grant Extension Program involves users in formal and informal ways in its program planning and evaluation process in the areas of Marine Aquaculture, Coastal Natural Hazards, Coastal Processes, Coastal Environmental Quality, Coastal Communities, Marine Fisheries, and Coastal Climate. It begins with Sea Grant Extension specialists, who live and work in coastal communities and interact daily with their program clientele. This informal daily interaction creates a relationship of trust between the specialists and the communities they serve, and provides the specialist with a deep knowledge of the issues and concerns among members of the user community. Another informal mechanism by which the extension specialists gain a knowledge and understanding of stakeholder interests and concerns is through participation on a variety of program-related, community-based committees and task forces. These focused, topical interactions bring the specialists into regular contact with state agency representatives, representatives of local government, community interest groups, the business community and individual citizens. In addition, each specialist is guided by a formal advisory committee consisting of local and state government agency representatives, business owners, representatives of community organizations, individual citizens, and the Sea Grant Extension Program Leader. The information, advice, and guidance received through these informal and formal means is then fed into the formal Consortium strategic planning process.

The Consortium's communications program supports the agency's mission by identifying general users of coastal and marine resource information, assessing their needs, and providing them with information to address problems, enhance opportunities, and increase their understanding of coastal issues and our impact upon the marine environment. The communications program sets its objectives in accordance with the agency's strategic plan, and builds visibility and support for Consortium programs and activities. In support of Consortium goals, communications employs various means to communicate with the public, including regular publications (e.g., the quarterly magazine *Coastal Heritage* and the agency's "impacts" newsletter *Inside Sea Grant*), media relations (e.g., press releases and feature stories), and the agency's main Web site (www.scseagrant.org), as well as topic-specific sites (e.g., www.HazNet.org and www.113Calhoun.org), which are regularly

updated. Communications also organizes and spearheads special events such as the annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep (see section III.7.2) in partnership with the SCDNR, the biennial International Conference on Shellfish Restoration, and SCORE – the South Carolina Oyster Restoration and Enhancement program (also in partnership with SCDNR). The Consortium’s communications efforts ensure that information is delivered to target audiences in a timely fashion and “user-friendly” format.

3.2. Listening, Learning, and Meeting Expectations

Several internal mechanisms have been established by the Consortium to facilitate a programmed team approach to address coastal and marine resource issues and constituency needs. This includes the Core Group (See section III.1.1), Web site, and *Coastal Heritage* readership survey.

Per current State guidelines, the Consortium’s staff continues to improve the Consortium Web site (www.scseagrant.org) by enhancing its interactive features, making the site more assessable to people with disabilities, and keeping the information up-to-date and relevant. The Consortium has a Web Compliance Transition Plan in effect, and has since then posted a retrofitted Web site, which is 508 Compliant (for more information, see section III.7.2).

The Consortium also conducted a subscriber survey, which was included in the Summer 2007 issue of *Coastal Heritage*. *Coastal Heritage* is the Consortium’s award-winning quarterly publication covering diverse topics related to physical and biological sciences, coastal and marine education, and coastal culture and heritage. Results from the subscriber survey are presently being collated and analyzed.

3.3. Key Customer Access Mechanisms

As previously mentioned the Consortium consistently seeks involvement and input from its constituencies to help shape Consortium priorities and programs (see section III.2). This ensures that our activities are responsive to the needs of the Consortium’s stakeholders and allows us to determine:

- Priority needs in South Carolina pertaining to coastal and ocean resources use and conservation;
- Current activities in South Carolina that are underway to address these needs;
- Priority needs that are not being adequately addressed by current activities; and
- Most importantly, specific potential actions that the Consortium can take to address these unmet needs.

The goal of the Consortium’s strategic planning process is to provide a framework upon which to maximize the effectiveness of our research, education, and outreach programs to address the coastal and marine resource needs of South Carolina. In addition to its on-going strategic planning process, the Consortium utilizes other means to enhance its ability to identify constituent groups and their needs. It does this through interaction with members of the Consortium’s Board of Directors, the agency’s Program Advisory Board, liaisons at the Consortium’s member institutions, its Sea Grant Extension Program specialists, and its Communications and Information Services staff.

3.4. Measuring Customer Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction and Improving Agency Actions

The Consortium engages a number of techniques to measure constituent satisfaction, including the use of post-program participant evaluation surveys, advisory committee mechanisms, direct client feedback, focus groups, and surveys (see section III. 2) to gather longer term information on the effectiveness of agency programs.

3.5. Using Information and Feedback for Relevancy and Improvement

The Consortium seeks to clearly identify constituent needs, and develop programs to address those needs. We deliver the information once it is generated, or once it is found, and we steer the constituents to the appropriate sources if we cannot provide it. We are (and must be) objective brokers of non-biased information. Trust is the key in all of our interactions – building trust is one of our core values. Our program initiatives are all based on input from our stakeholders, solicited via formal and informal vehicles, as noted in various sections throughout the report.

In the Consortium’s popular Coastal Heritage magazine, there is a “request for comments” note, and our Web site solicits input as well. We regularly seek detailed comments via surveys distributed at every workshop, conference, and event we organize, and we receive input from review panels and advisory bodies regarding programmatic priorities and funding decisions that we set and make respectively.

3.6. Building Relationships with Customers and Stakeholder Groups

We build solid relationships through our daily interactions with our various stakeholders. We make it evident to them how we support their goals and needs, while receiving a continual stream of information from them on ways to better serve their needs. Building strong, working relationships is the bedrock for the agency’s success. One of our guiding management principles is to seek out the *active engagement* of our stakeholder groups. The Consortium’s success is built on a strong foundation of *partnerships* formed with appropriate individuals and groups. Partnerships help leverage the funds that are available for any given project or program, and make the process more interactive and engaging, while increasing the participants’ stake in the actions being taken or studied. In fact, our end products have “value-added” based upon this approach of inclusion. One example is the present, ongoing engagement of various constituencies throughout the state to participate in the process of determining and defining the scope of shoreline change and its relationship to coastal development in South Carolina.

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

4.1. Operations, Processes, and Systems for Tracking Operational and Financial Performance

The Consortium’s programmatic, operational and financial goals are determined through a system of strategic planning that includes management and administrative as well as programmatic goals and objectives and performance measures. Administrative and management

goals and objectives are developed by the Agency Head and Assistant Director, according to National Sea Grant guidelines, state regulations, and with input from the Consortium member institutions. The Core Group assists the Agency Head in making decisions on a broad array of management and program related issues. It also functions to keep the parts of the agency working together smoothly and efficiently. Programmatic input is received through direct and indirect stakeholder feedback that includes Sea Grant extension advisory committees, one-on-one contacts, email/internet user surveys, scoping workshops, and feedback from the agency's Program Advisory Board (see section III.2.1). This process helps to set research, outreach, and administrative priorities, determine the agency's goals for non-Sea Grant/non-state revenue, and is the basis for establishing implementation plans for program staff.

4.2. Data/Information Analysis for Effective and Innovative Decision Making

Administratively, the Consortium uses a Management Information System (MIS) to manage the flow of project information and track progress. The agency's current MIS system is being upgraded to a Web-based system that can be used to manage information more efficiently, freeing up time for staff to address other important needs. The new system is planned to be launched during the first quarter of 2009.

This new MIS system will allow our major "internal" constituency, scientists and staff from our eight member institutions, to electronically submit proposals for agency consideration and provide progress and completion reports for review, all of which would be captured into the database. Programmatically, the Consortium used data and information gathered through the processes described in section III.4.1 to establish plans of work with the basic programmatic delivery strategies – research, extension, education, and communications. Included in these plans of work are program goals and objectives. For each of these, measures of success are established and methods of evaluation implemented. Objectives are user-driven and measured through specific benchmarks or outcomes. Programs are evaluated against these, through participant feedback (e.g., workshop surveys), and through the annual feedback of advisory committees.

The Consortium now requires that all research and education proposals include sections that describe in detail (1) how the proposed work relates to resource management issues and/or other identified problems and priorities, and (2) the expected outcomes of the work on an annual basis. Annual and final project reports are also required to address these issues and outcomes. Consortium proposals, programs and projects are evaluated using the following measures:

A. Rationale – The degree to which the proposed project addresses an important state and/or regional issue, problem, or opportunity in the development, use, and/or conservation of marine or coastal resources.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (10)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (2)
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B. Programmatic Justification – The degree to which the proposed project addresses the priorities outlined in the guidance provided by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium in its Request for Proposals and other program information.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (10)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (2)
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C. Clarity of Objectives – The degree to which the proposed objectives address the problem or opportunity identified in the Rationale and Programmatic Justification sections and, in the case of research proposals, the relevance of the hypotheses upon which the objectives are based.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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D. Scientific/Outreach Methods – The degree to which the feasibility of the proposed methods and design of the proposed project will address the stated objectives, as well as the degree to which the use and extension of innovative, state-of-the-art methods to be used in the proposed project will advance the scientific or outreach discipline.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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E. Expected Outcomes – The degree to which the planned outcomes are clearly defined, in terms of interim and final measurable results and products, and with a reasonable timeframe for completion and delivery. (Outcomes should be identified for each year, be measurable, and have a positive impact on the systems, technology, or management practices under study. An example outcome is “Appropriate success metrics for assessing restored oyster reef ecological function and sustainability for intertidal and subtidal habitats will be developed and refined.”)

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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F. User Engagement – The degree to which targeted users of the results of the proposed activity have been brought into the planning of the activity, will be brought into the execution of the activity, and will be kept apprised of progress and results, the adequacy of the methods to be used to engage the users, and whether resources have been allotted for stakeholder engagement.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (10)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (8)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (2)
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G. Dissemination of Results – The degree to which the proposed project includes specific strategies for information delivery to and product development for identified targeted users (e.g., through the scientific literature, Sea Grant Extension and Communications products, educational efforts, etc.).

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (15)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (9)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (6)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (3)
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H. Investigator’s Knowledge of Field – The degree to which the investigator(s) is (are) experienced, proficient, and recognized in their respective fields.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (1)
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I. Adequacy of Budget – The degree to which the proposed budget will adequately support the proposed work and provide the necessary and appropriate amount and distribution of funding across budget categories.

<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent (5)	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good (4)	<input type="checkbox"/> Good (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor (1)
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Total Score:	
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4.3 Key Measures, Reviewing, and Staying Current

Key measures are drawn from the two basic agency functions (1) administration/management and (2) programmatic efforts. Key measures employed in administration/management include revenue growth, staffing levels, and the relationship between administrative (grant management) staff and volume of grants being administered. These are developed primarily by the Agency Head and Assistant Director. The Assistant Director is in charge of administration and management, following guidelines established by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program and the State of South Carolina.

Programmatic measures are more difficult to establish and tie to concrete outcomes. The goal of the Consortium's program elements – research, extension, education and communication – is to provide science-based information to individuals, families, businesses, communities, organizations, and governments for the purpose of informing and enhancing their decision making processes. Key measures include conveyance of information, the creation of partnerships/collaborations, government or community action to address a problem, and changes in law and policy. These are all measures/benchmarks in the process of gathering and communicating science information to Consortium audiences (see section III.7).

Four major performance measures are evaluated by the National Office; within those four measures there are 14 specific metrics that are assessed, as discussed previously. While these measures are currently being re-evaluated by the National Sea Grant Office, the Consortium has adopted the measures, listed below, in its goal of becoming the top Sea Grant College program in the nation:

- Organizing and Managing the Program. Metrics: (a) Leadership of the Program, (b) Institutional Setting and Support, (c) Project Selection, (d) Recruiting Talent Effective and (e) Integrated Program Components
- Connecting Sea Grant with Users. Metrics: (a) Engagement with Appropriate User Communities and (b) Partnerships
- Effective & Aggressive Long-Range Planning. Metrics: (a) Strategic Planning Process, (b) Strategic Plan Quality, and (c) Implementation Planning
- Producing Significant Results. Metrics: (a) Contributions to Science and Technology, (b) Contributions to Extension, Communications and Education, (c) Impact on Society, Economy, and Environment, and (d) Success in Achieving Planned Program Outcomes

Further, the Consortium has identified a series of performance measures within its Agency Activity Inventory (see section III.1.5 for an itemized list); Section III.7 provides actual results.

4.4. Select and Use of Key Comparative Data and Information

The selection and use of comparative data for program evaluation and performance is determined primarily by the guidance the Consortium receives from the National Sea Grant Office. Sources of this guidance include the NOAA and NOAA Sea Grant strategic plans, and the formal Sea Grant Program Assessment guidelines. The former helps to set the broad parameters within which the Consortium builds a program that serves South Carolina. The latter contains specific criteria and standards (including program metrics) against which the Consortium is evaluated and ranked relative to the other Sea Grant programs nationwide (see section III.4.3).

4.5. Data Integrity, Timeliness, Accuracy, Security and Availability

Quality Assurance/Quality Control Process. The Consortium manages three types of program proposals: (1) full Sea Grant proposals, (2) development proposals, and (3) extramural multi-

disciplinary/multi-institutional projects. For Sea Grant, the Consortium issues a biennial “request for proposals” to the faculty and staff of all of its member institutions. When proposals are received, the Consortium distributes them to scientists and experts nationwide for *written peer reviews* (see form in section III.4.2). Agency staff maintains a database of experts in scientific fields relevant to the diverse range of research and outreach projects the Consortium considers for funding. Those experts are called upon to evaluate proposals that fit within their areas of expertise. The objective of this review process is to obtain at least three detailed, written reviews of every proposal. An additional on-site Proposal Panel Review is also conducted, and includes a group of six to eight professionals (from out-of-state or Federal agencies) who examine the proposals in light of the written reviews and provide advice to the Agency Head, who makes the final decisions about which proposals to include in the agency’s Program Plan proposal submission to the National Sea Grant Office.

In addition to full-proposals, development proposals (also called “seed proposals”) are submitted by faculty or staff to conduct work over shorter periods of time and for modest funding to respond to immediate needs and initiate research along promising avenues. These proposals are also evaluated through written reviews and by members of the agency “Core Group,” which form the basis for funding decisions.

Frequently, formal technical panels are convened to review major, multi-institutional research and outreach efforts (often funded from agencies such as USGS, Centers for Disease Control, and non-Sea Grant NOAA agencies). In these cases, a very similar review process applies but is administered by the funding agency, and consists of written peer reviews and specially formed technical review panels.

Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Another important feature of the Consortium’s review process is its Conflict of Interest Policy, which is designed to protect the integrity of all proposal writers and peer reviewers. The policy requires that potential reviewers recuse themselves if they have (1) a major professor/student relationship with the Principal Investigator (PI), (2) published with the PI in the last five years, (3) been a colleague of the PI in the same academic department or served directly or indirectly in a supervisory role over the PI in the last year, (4) grants, contracts, or any financial interest with a PI, and/or (5) a relationship (by blood or by marriage) to the PI. Each reviewer is required to read and agree to these provisions, and sign the form.

4.6 Organizational Performance Review Findings into Priorities for Improvement

Organizational review findings from the agency’s 2004 National Sea Grant Program Assessment review, input from its Program Advisory Board meetings, and guidance provided by the Board of Directors are integrated into agency strategic planning (see section III.2) and into the agency’s program proposal process. The Consortium feels these reviews are instrumental in our goal of meeting our constituency needs.

4.7. Maintaining and Using Knowledge Assets

The Consortium’s Management Information System (MIS) addresses one of the Consortium’s major management objectives – the evaluation of organizational performance against goals and

standards. The Consortium's primary archival management systems consist of MIS, its previous Omnibus proposals, and the briefing materials the agency prepares for its National Sea Grant Performance Assessment. Materials are also archived on the Consortium's Web site, including research reports, Requests for Proposals, Strategic Plans, Consortium publications, and back issues of the Consortium's magazine, *Coastal Heritage*. Appropriate publications are archived at the state library in Columbia.

The Consortium marked its 28-year anniversary in 2008. The Consortium has had only three Agency Heads (including the present one) during its existence. It is becoming critically important to the agency that organizational knowledge be identified, collected, and passed on to future agency leaders and staff. Continuous interaction between the agency's leadership and staff – through monthly meetings and “managing by walking around” does provide a way in which information is transferred. The preparation and review – by agency leadership and all staff – of detailed “briefing books” for use by the external review panelists serving on the National Sea Grant Program Assessment Teams every four years represents an accumulation of much of the agency's administrative records, program activities, results, and accomplishments.

The Consortium has formally recognized in its 2006-2010 Strategic Plan that it is becoming critically important that organizational knowledge be identified, collected, and passed on to future agency leaders and staff. Among the mechanisms being used and/or planned to ensure a continuity of collective knowledge into the future include (1) formal and informal leadership training, (2) consistent and regular intra-agency communications, (3) professional development activities, and (4) cross- and succession training. Three Consortium leaders are alumni of Leadership South Carolina, and additional nominations are planned for additional staff. Professional development activities are a part of each Consortium Extension staff member's annual plan of work; more recently, administrative staff have been attending training to diversify their skill sets and provide the agency with a number of cross-trained staff. Consortium staff members are also encouraged to take leadership roles in professional organizations, as well as program-related groups (including interagency task forces), and coordinating and conference planning committees. Senior extension staff plays a large role in orienting, mentoring, and partnering with newer extension specialists in program efforts. In addition, monthly staff meetings, the PAT review materials, and the agency's internal and external administrative manuals are important resources for maintaining knowledge assets.

Category 5 – Workforce Focus

5.1. How Management Organizes and Measures Work

The Consortium is organized and managed based on programmatic/administrative components as outlined in the agency's strategic plan. The agency has an established Core Group which facilitates communication and information exchange among the agency's on-site and off-site staff members. Using this “team” approach, the Agency Head and senior leadership ensures that agency policies, programs, and activities are focused on priority needs. The Core Group is responsible for setting the short and long-term directions and transmission of pertinent

information to members of their respective staffs. Overall, two-year implementation plans outline work tasks to be accomplished over that time frame.

5.2. Effective Communications and Knowledge-Sharing Across the Organization

The monthly staff meetings serve as one example of how the Consortium exchanges knowledge and best management practices across the organization. Knowledge-sharing also is facilitated by staff meetings within functional groups within the agency; for example, quarterly extension program staff meetings. Since most of the staff are located within one facility, the Agency head and Assistant Director are in constant communication with Consortium staff.

5.3. Recruiting and Retaining Employees

The Consortium is a small agency and many of its employees wear more than “one hat.” Therefore, in many instances, employees must be cross-trained to be able to perform job functions in more than one program division (administration, communications, education, program research, program development, and extension services) of the office. New employees are given an overview of the agency policies and procedures during the interview stage, and the agency’s *South Carolina Grant Consortium Handbook: A Staff Guide to the Internal Operations of the Agency* is made available for their use. New employees are also oriented by the agency’s Assistant Director. Employees, as stated before, are informed of training and professional development opportunities to enhance their job skills and knowledge through training at the state, federal, and/or national levels. Consortium staff is encouraged to engage in at least one professional development activity each year.

Employees are recruited through traditional means as well as word of mouth since the marine sciences field is relatively small. In-person interview and references are heavily relied upon in making selection decisions. The Consortium’s main barriers to hiring the very best employees are the limited compensation that is allowed for many jobs. The nature of the agency’s work tends to compensate for that and it is rare that we do not recruit the best possible candidates. If anything, the process takes longer than we would like.

The Agency Head takes an active role in looking for job enrichment opportunities for staff as an important way to increase job satisfaction, thereby having a positive influence on employee retention.

5.4. Assessing Workforce Capability

The Consortium uses a variety of processes to assess workforce capability, capacity needs, competencies and staffing levels. For example, the Consortium’s PAT (Performance Assessment Team) process identified the need for an assistant director of research and development at the doctoral level, and such an individual was hired in 2006. Staffing levels are mainly determined by the needs of our constituencies and the scope of funding the agency receives from extramural sources.

Employees are not only rated annually through the Employee Performance Management System, but are assessed throughout the year to keep their performance level as high as possible. They are encouraged to talk to their manager any time they have questions, problems, or concerns. Employees are encouraged to bring their ideas and problems to their supervisor. If their supervisor cannot help with their problems or are unable to give them adequate guidance, they are encouraged to talk to the Assistant Director or to the Agency Head, if necessary. The agency finds that these open lines of communication foster enhanced performance and help to promote idea-sharing, enhance teamwork, and foster problem-solving.

5.5. Workforce Assessment and Feedback Processes

Monthly or quarterly meetings with and among the workforce within and across divisions are held regularly. In addition, the Agency Head chairs a monthly staff meeting in which employees share their accomplishments and needs, and inform staff of what is going on within their programs. These meetings help managers assess employee problems and successes. Additionally, the Agency Head and managers are in constant communication and contact with all staff on a daily basis (“managing by walking around”), and use these opportunities to assess staff morale, and to provide and encourage excellence. This provides direct and constant means by which agency managers can determine whether the workforce is motivated and satisfied with their jobs and working conditions.

5.6. Development and Learning Systems for Leaders

5.6.a. Several key agency personnel have successfully completed Leadership South Carolina. In turn, those individuals develop leadership skills among the workforce “by example.” The national Sea Grant Extension network has instituted the Sea Grant Extension Academy, which promotes leadership skills among the extension workforce. One Consortium extension specialist has completed the Academy program (located at NOAA headquarters in Silver Spring, MD).

5.6.b. At its monthly staff meetings the topic of organizational knowledge is typically covered at almost all staff meetings by the Agency Head and assistant director. In this way the agency workforce is kept abreast of changes that will impact how effectively they do their jobs.

5.6.c. Ethical standards, updated regularly, are posted in the employee’s *South Carolina Grant Consortium Handbook: A Staff Guide to the Internal Operations of the Agency*.

5.6.d. The Core management group identifies and shares the agency’s strategic challenges and through a bottom-up management approach develops implementation plans that reflect the input of all employees based upon their core competencies and how those competencies can best address the Consortium’s strategic goals. Most recently, the agency workforce was provided a finalized 2006-2010 strategic plan accompanied by two-year implementation plans which identify activities by individual.

5.7. Workforce Training Needs

Work force training needs have been addresses in other sub-sections of Category 5.

5.8. Using Knowledge and Skills

When new knowledge skills are identified, employees are encouraged to use them in their respective jobs, and training opportunities are provided for those in the workforce who require it. For example, the Consortium is developing a new Management Information System based on Microsoft Access database software, and employees who will use this system have, or will, receive appropriate training.

5.9. Training and Achievement

Employee training contributes by increasing staff competencies and thereby improving efficiency while limiting mistakes.

5.10 Evaluating Workforce and Effective Leadership

Primarily, evaluation is accomplished by assessing feedback from our various constituencies on a continuing basis, and also through more formal mechanisms such as Monkey Survey, which was used to develop the agency's strategic plan. The Agency Head looks to the Board of Directors as well as the PAB (Program Advisory Board) for input on the agency's performance. This is done periodically throughout the fiscal year.

5.11. Motivating the Workforce

First and foremost, in the hiring process the agency looks for highly motivated individuals who will actively seek opportunities to reach their full potential on their own initiative. In addition, the agency head sets a standard for the entire workforce to be the best that they can be. Training opportunities are made available to facilitate the success of employees.

5.12. Workforce Well-being

Informal assessment methods are used to determine workforce well-being. The Agency Head is in daily contact with all employees, other than the few who are housed outside Charleston. The Agency Head has an "open door" policy allowing for employees to discuss their concerns.

Managers formally meet with their staff on a monthly or quarterly basis. Employees are encouraged to participate in these meetings and to voice their opinions and ideas that may improve their efficiency and that of the agency. Employees are also strongly encouraged to join state, regional, and national organizations to enhance their professional development, further develop and sharpen their skills and knowledge, and build leadership capabilities. Each staff member is given the opportunity, at least once a year and if funds are available, to attend a workshop or conference of their choice to enhance his/her job performance and build professional skills. Priority determinations for improvement are made throughout the year during the 6 and 12 month review process as well as anytime during the year that standards of work production would fall below the acceptable minimum.

In 28 years as a State agency, the Consortium has had only one employee grievance which was settled satisfactorily without going outside of the agency.

5.13. Managing Succession and Effective Career Progression

How the agency manages progression and succession has been addressed in other subsections of Category 5, as well as elsewhere in the document. Furthermore, hiring decisions have been made with these two issues being part of the equation. An individual's potential to progress and succeed to higher responsibilities in the organization is afforded considerable weight in the hiring selection process and ongoing management of the agency. The Agency Head is nearing retirement age (although has no plans on retiring at this time) and the Assistant Director was rehired after her TERI period; succession plans for both have already been put into place.

5.14. A Safe, Secure and Healthy Work Environment

With regard to safety issues, the agency is located in the Washington Light Infantry building in downtown Charleston, a historic structure that has withstood the ravages of hurricanes, earthquakes, and other natural disasters. The office is equipped with working door alarms on each entrance and safety lights operate outside of each entranceway, and the office is equipped with a security alarm system that includes motion detectors. Employees are encouraged to leave in pairs/groups at the close of business during winter (dark) hours.

The Consortium computer servers are backed up on a daily basis. During an emergency/disaster, the back-up tapes are taken off the premises by a delegated staff member until the emergency/disaster has passed. Two members of the agency staff are delegated as representatives to the State's Emergency Disaster Preparedness team and will serve if called on by the State.

Category 6 – Process Management

6.1. Core Competencies and Relationship to Organizational Mission

Core competencies are determined by senior leaders. Various feedback mechanisms are used to determine the kinds of people and people skills (core competencies) needed for the Consortium to accomplish its mission. The nature of the agency's funding has a major impact on the core competencies required. For example, global climate change has become a major cause of concern and necessitated the need for a staff person with competency in this area. The agency's core competencies include the following:

- Leadership skills (ability to plan; determine vision and mission; develop strategic plan; and oversee implementation of that plan)
- Knowledge of accounting, administration, and granting procedures
- Knowledge-currency related to marine sciences, marine policy and resource management, coastal ecology, and coastal development/demographic issues
- Knowledge and communications skills of extension specialists and communications professionals in order to serve constituencies

Communicating with External Constituencies. While the Consortium has always made it a priority to focus its process management around the needs of its constituencies, there are always

opportunities for improvement, particularly in the Internet Information Age. The Consortium's staff continues to upgrade the agency's Web site (www.scseagrant.org) by enhancing its interactive features, making the site more assessable to people with disabilities, and keeping the information current. The Web site features information about coastal and marine issues for scientists, educators, students, business and industry, and the public (see section III.7.2).

Communicating with Institutional Constituencies. The Consortium is transitioning its research/outreach proposal submission and its review and project reporting processes from hard copy to electronic format. Submission of the 2008-2010 Sea Grant Omnibus proposals was done entirely electronically, and project reporting for 2008 through 2010 will be done electronically. In a major step forward, the Consortium is now submitting, as required, grant proposals online through the federal **grants.gov** Web site portal.

Effective September 19, 2008, the SC Sea Grant Consortium will engage in a new way of reporting progress to the National Sea Grant College Program office. The Sea Grant network has developed a new National Information Management System (NIMS) which involved considerable input from the various Sea Grant programs. The goal of NIMS is to streamline reporting procedures, increase the timeliness of reporting, and generate efficiencies. NIMS will be referenced in greater detail in the 2008-09 State Accountability Report once the Consortium has submitted its annual progress report in September 2008.

The goal of the Consortium's communications program is to place information produced by research, education, and extension activities into the hands of those who manage and use South Carolina's coastal and marine resources. To facilitate that effort, a *S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Communication Support Guidelines* booklet is now in use. The guide advises Sea Grant-sponsored investigators, extension specialists, and others of the procedures and opportunities available for publication and dissemination of information derived from their work.

Furthermore, the Consortium has Institutional Liaisons to provide a direct administrative link between the Consortium and each of its member institutions. The Consortium's also has updated its external procedures handbook titled *A Faculty and Institutional Guide for Consortium Proposals and Projects*, which was approved by the Consortium Board of Directors on September 12, 2007; it is available on the Consortium's Web site.

Vehicles for Ensuring that Management Processes are Used. The accountability requirements set forth in our legislative mandate, and guidance provided by our Board of Directors, the National Sea Grant Program Assessment review process (see section III.1.5), and the Program Advisory Board (see section III.2.1), are instrumental in ensuring that agency management processes are used.

6.2. Key Work Processes and Relationship to Core Competencies

The primary mechanisms the Consortium uses to incorporate improvements in effectiveness and efficiency factors are our institutional and external communication linkages. The Consortium Core Group meets monthly to review Consortium programs and activities and address needs related to product design and delivery. The Consortium utilizes its program advisory committees

and convenes specialized program area advisory groups to solicit ideas and input that is used by the agency to improve its products and services. The National Sea Grant Program Assessment review is also instrumental in identifying the Consortium's "best practices" and areas of excellence and offering concrete suggestions to the agency for improving performance, service, and product delivery. With regard to "cycle time," the agency establishes a defined calendar of milestones for soliciting, reviewing, selecting, and funding proposals submitted by Consortium members.

6.3. Incorporation of Efficiency/Effectiveness factors into Design and Delivery

As noted elsewhere in this report, the Consortium uses a continuous two-way information loop among and between all employees, including monthly staff meetings as a major vehicle, for incorporating efficiency and effectiveness factors into its day-to-day operations. The Strategic Plan and implementation plans accomplish this goal (Section III, 6.3) as they too are shared with the entire workforce. Duties with regard to implementing goals are clearly identified within the implementation plan by employee. Cost-saving measures are discussed in meetings as appropriate. One recent example is the switch the Consortium made to use Advanced Documents for purposes of shredding and recycling all Consortium paper. The company parks right at our door and shreds the paper on-site. It has freed up employees' time because they no longer have to collect recycled paper bins and bring them to a recycling center). Advanced Documents also does this service at a reduced cost to us.

6.4. Meeting Key Performance Requirements

Administrative and Financial Performance. The principal investigators of all Consortium funded projects are responsible for all technical reporting and, in conjunction with their business office, all fiscal reporting to the Consortium. In turn, the Consortium is responsible for technical and fiscal reporting to its funding agencies. Consortium professional staff frequently visits with investigators on campus to discuss project progress and needs. Project investigators are required to submit formal requests for budget changes, time extensions, and changes in project scope to the Agency Head for approval, through the institution's Office of Sponsored Programs, at least 60 days prior to the end of a grant period.

Start dates for Consortium-funded projects and programs vary throughout the year, but in all cases, the agency issues formal award announcements that are mailed to the investigator. Under separate notification, the respective institution's business office is provided with two copies of the Consortium Award Agreement, which includes all performance and reporting requirements. The institutional representatives must read, agree to, and endorse the Award Agreement. The institution must then forward one signed original back to the Consortium for its records.

In addition to the Agreement, fiscal reporting forms that reflect the approved budgets are mailed to investigators and their respective institutional fiscal officers. The "Federal and Match Expenditure Report" is used to reflect expenditures and is sent quarterly to the Consortium's Assistant Director by the institutional business office, with the appropriate endorsement.

The policy and procedures set forth in the DOC regulations (37 CFR 401), “Rights to Inventions made by Nonprofit Organizations and Small Business Firms Under Government Grants, Contracts, and Cooperative Agreements,” published in the Federal Register on March 18, 1987, apply to all grants and cooperative agreements made for which the purpose is experimental, developmental, or research work. The Consortium’s Assistant Director receives with the final expenditure report a completed “Final Invention Statement” if any patents were developed.

Programmatic Performance. There are three categories of project reports required by the Consortium:

1. *Progress Reports* are prepared by the Consortium staff 90 days prior to the end of a project year, that briefly summarize project progress for the current effort;
2. *Annual Reports* are prepared by all principal investigators; they summarize annual progress of a project which is proposed for continuation; and
3. *Final Reports* are prepared by principal investigators at the end of a project. These reports provide a detailed but concise summary of results of the entire project.

These reports are used to ensure that all projects are achieving their stated goals within the timeframes and budgets established for them. The Consortium may delay final reimbursements for those projects for which Project Reports are not received or deemed not acceptable by the Consortium; reimbursement is made once the deficiencies are addressed. During the reporting period the Consortium made further changes to its reporting requirements to encourage timelier reporting. One change: even if a project is granted an extension, the principal investigator must submit a progress report, followed by a completion report at the end of the extension.

In addition, the Consortium is responsible for assembling a number of agency-wide reports on a regular basis. Included in these are the State Agency Activity Inventory, the State Accountability Report, the National Sea Grant Annual Progress Report, the Clemson Faculty Activity System (FAS), the Clemson University Management Information System, Annual Progress Reports, Sea Grant Omnibus Program Plan, Program Area Fact Sheets, Biennial Implementation Plan, and the Performance Assessment Review Briefing Book.

6.5. Evaluation and Improvement of Key Product and Services Processes

Processes are typically shared with the Consortium’s Board of Directors, and their insight is always a valuable tool for initiating refinements or improvements where necessary. On a day-to-day basis, the Core Group regularly evaluates and improves key product and service-related processes. We typically seek input from our various constituents as part of this process. We also rely upon the quadrennial National Sea Grant Program Assessment review for evaluation and recommendations for improvement. On-going review of the Consortium’s Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan by Consortium staff and the agency Program Advisory Board serves as a means to determine if our activities are aligned with our strategic goals and mission.

6.6. Key Support Processes and Means for Improvement

Our key support processes, each of which has been identified and defined earlier in this report, include (1) project management, (2) administration and management, (3) Consortium

Management Information System, (4) Communications and Information Services, and (5) S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program. The primary means of improving and updating these processes is by providing opportunities for staff to attend training and educational sessions that allow them to stay current on emerging developments in their areas of responsibility. These opportunities include sessions offered by the State of South Carolina, the Federal government, state universities, other Sea Grant College Programs, and through private organizations that are relevant to the needs of the agency. In addition, the agency seeks greater efficiencies by undergoing continuous evaluation. These evaluations include updating our strategic and implementation plans, and reporting on the outcomes of the indicators and metrics identified by these plans. This includes the engagement of partners to leverage resources and time to achieve greater performance and efficiency.

6.7. Determination of Resources Needed

To meet projected budget and financial obligations, the Consortium relies upon assiduous accounting and guidance from its current strategic and implementation plans. The accounting component lets the organization know where it stands in terms of financials and budgets; and the strategic component provides a platform upon which prioritization decisions can be made in order to meet fiscal obligations.

Category 7 – Business Results

Results Summary. The following represent a summary of numerical results for FY07-08, compared to FY03-04, FY04-05, FY05-06, and FY06-07, based on the measures that are described in section III.4.3. Selected achievements from this table are expanded upon later in this category.

Table 7.1.A. Trends in Performance Measures

MEASURE	FY03-04	FY04-05	FY05-06	FY06-07	FY07-08
Mission Accomplishment					
National Sea Grant Performance Rating	Excellent	High Performance	High Performance	High Performance	High Performance
Communications Awards (#)	3	5	5	6	4
Research/Education Proposals Submitted	49	47	53	52	34
Research/Education Proposals Funded (#)	32	28	31	34	28
Faculty Supported - SC Universities	ND	80	85	108	42
Graduate/Undergrad Students Supported	ND	35	54	62	44
K-12 Teachers Trained in Ocean Sciences	35	50	120	690	345
K-12 Students Reached (<i>New category</i>)					600
Customer Satisfaction					
Extension Workshops	ND	102	81	76	236
Participants - Extension Workshops	ND	1,500	2,000	>1,900	4,785
Publications/Products - Extension	~25	30	22	18	57
Publications/Products - Communications	35	32	45	41	35
Responses to Requests for Publications	1,478	4,125	4,859	4,468	4,828

News Releases (#)	14	18	11	12	10
Media Placements due to News Releases	131	130	142	128	210
Unsolicited Media Placements	91	95	39	37	45
Agency Web Site - Hits	843,900	1,328,515	1,607,461	1,883,119	2,374,584
Agency Web Site - Unique Visits	76,600	142,450	235,188	292,331	295,890
Agency Web Site - Downloads	ND	ND	ND	1,102,333	1,280,173
Volunteer Site Captains (#) Beach Sweep	~75	~100	>100	116	110
Volunteers (#) Beach Sweep	~3,000	>2,500	>3,500	3,200	4,500
Financial Performance					
State Recurring Funding	\$ 440,505	\$ 354,164	\$ 545,748	\$ 452,308	\$ 615,836
Extramural Funding	~\$5,500,000	~\$6,009,000	~\$5,500,000	~\$5,280,000	~ \$4,120,000
Return on (State) Investment	1,249%	1,696%	1,216%	967%	669%
Single Agency Audit	No Findings	No Findings	No Findings	No Findings	No Findings
Human Resource Results					
Staff Training Opportunities	ND	4	10	15	15
Staff Retention/Rehiring	7 Vacancies	4 Vacancies	Fully Staffed	2 Vacancies	Fully Staffed

7.1. Performance Levels for Mission Accomplishment and Process Effectiveness

The Consortium’s External Performance Assessment Review. The Consortium undergoes an assessment of its performance every four years by the National Sea Grant College Program in accordance with the requirements of the National Sea Grant College Program Act of 1988 (PL105-160). As noted in a previous Accountability Report, an external Performance Assessment Team (PAT), comprised of internationally recognized leaders in academia, business and industry, spent several days onsite with the agency in June 2004 evaluating its performance in four major categories. The Consortium’s final results were made official in the Consortium’s FY04-05 State Accountability Report. To briefly summarize, in the fourteen sub-elements, the Consortium scored ratings of ‘Highest Performance’ for seven sub-elements and ‘Exceeds Benchmark’ for seven sub-elements. The Program Assessment evaluation process and associated metrics are covered in more detail in Category 4.

Biennial National Sea Grant Omnibus Program. The Consortium receives its base federal funding support from the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program. The agency’s most recent Sea Grant Proposal solicitation and review process occurred in the spring and summer, 2007.

The Consortium received \$1,231,670 in Sea Grant core funding to support 13 research and education projects, its program management and development activities, its Communications and Information Services program, and the S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program (managed jointly by the Consortium and Clemson Cooperative Extension Service).

National Sea Grant Research Competitions. The National Sea Grant College program also issues nationwide calls for proposals on issues of larger-scale importance. Over the last nine years, the Consortium has submitted a total of 50 full proposals to the Sea Grant National Strategic Investment (NSI) competitions. Nineteen proposals were funded; a 38% success rate (Table 7.1.B.). Proposals were funded in the areas of Marine Aquaculture, Oyster Disease, Gulf

of Mexico Oyster Industry, Marine Biotechnology, Applied Marine Technology, Fisheries Extension and Minority Serving Institutions.

Table 7.1.B. National Competition Funding – Proposals Submitted vs. Funded *

Name	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	Totals
Marine Aquaculture			2/2				4/3	2/2	3/0	11/7
Aquatic Nuisance Species			2/0			2/0				4/0
Applied Technology			1/1		2/1					3/2
Marine/Envir. Biotechnology	6/2			4/0						10/2
Fisheries Extension				1/1						1/1
Fisheries Habitat	5/0									5/0
Minority Serving Institutions		1/1								1/1
Oyster Disease			4/1	1/0		1/0				6/1
Gulf Oyster Industry Program					1/1	3/2	3/2	2/0		9/5
TOTAL	11/2	1/1	9/4	6/1	3/2	6/2	7/5	4/2	3/0	50/19

*S.C. Sea Grant Consortium’s NSI funding success rate is 38% over nine years.

Extramural Programs. The Consortium continues to seek and receive funding from a number of non-state sources. Appendix 2 lists all major grants secured during the FY07-08 fiscal year.

Administration: During the reporting period, the Consortium administered research, education, and extension projects involving over 150 grant actions, continuing a trend of growth of this metric. This number does not include grant administration activity associated with ongoing research projects. It is important to point out that as the agency expands through increased extramural funding, the Consortium’s administrative resources have been stretched thin while its level of activities and community involvement continue to grow. All grant award and interagency billing and accounting processes are processed within a two-week timeframe.

Communications Awards and Recognition. Each issue of the Consortium’s *Coastal Heritage* quarterly magazine focuses public attention on a coastal theme selected in accordance with the Consortium’s program areas and current events on a state or national level. The Consortium receives regular feedback, both written and oral, on the magazine. Among those who have noted the valuable contribution *Coastal Heritage* makes toward raising public awareness and understanding are civic/business groups, the news media, educators, and other agencies involved in managing natural resources.

Four issues of *Coastal Heritage*, the Consortium’s premier publication, were produced. Major topics included climate change and property insurance; waterfront access; a retrospective on the African slave trade; and stormwater best management practices. The magazine has won numerous awards in past years and, in FY07-08, the magazine received the following four awards:

- Distinguished Award from the Society for Technical Communication (STC) – Carolina Chapter
- Distinguished Award from the Society for Technical Communication (STC) – International competition. Here are several quotes from the judges:
- APEX Award of Excellence
- One award in the 2007 Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District III competition: an Award of Excellence in the Low Budget Publication category.

Student Fellowships. The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium provides high level, competitive fellowship opportunities for graduate students enrolled in marine-related curricula in South Carolina's universities. Table 7.1.C. lists the South Carolina-based students that have secured these very competitive professional development opportunities

Table 7.1.C. Placement of South Carolina graduate students in fellowship programs over the past 23 years.

Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships			
Initiation Date	Name	Institution	Degree
1984	David Pyoas	CofC	M.A. Public Administration
1986	Stephanie Sanzone	USC	M.S. Marine Science
1989	Grant Cunningham	Clemson	Ph.D. Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Mgmt.
1990	Paul Scholz	USC	M.S. Marine Science
1990	Frances Eargle	USC	M.S. Biology
1991	Edward Cyr	USC	Ph.D. Marine Science
1992	Wendy Whitlock	Clemson	M.S. Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Mgmt.
1993	Erik Zobrist	USC	Ph.D. Biology
1993	Jenny Plummer	Clemson	M.A. City and Regional Plan.
1994	Ellen Hawes	CofC	M.A. Public Administration
1996	Lisa DiPinto	USC	Ph.D. Marine Science
1998	Mara Hogan	CofC/MUSC	M.S. Environmental Policy
1999	Elizabeth Day	USC	Ph.D. Marine Science
	Robyn Wingrove	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2000	Barbara Bach	USC	M.S. Earth and Environ. Resource
2001	Julianna Weir	USC	M.S. Marine Science
2002	Kathy Tedesco	USC	Ph.D. Geological Sciences
	Elizabeth Fairey	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2003	Jennifer Jefferies	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2004	Susannah Sheldon	CofC	M.S. Environmental Studies
	Rebecca Shuford	USC	Ph.D. Marine Biology
	Noel Turner	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2006	Kristine Hiltunen	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Liza Johnson	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2007	Martha McConnell	USC	Ph.D. Geological Sciences
	Kathleen Semon	USC	M.S. Earth & Environmental Resource Management
2008	Amanda McCarty	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Luis Leandro	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Courtney Arthur	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
	Jessica Berrio	CofC	M.S. Environmental Studies
	Emily McDonald	USC	M.S. Environmental Health

Coastal Management Fellowships

Initiation Date	Name	Institution	Degree
1997	Doug Marcy	UNC-Wilmington	M.S. Geology
	Brian Voight	Clemson	M.A. City and Regional Plan.
1998	Katherine Busse	Oregon State	M.S. Marine Resource Management
2001	Peter Slovinsky	USC	M.S. Geological Sciences
	Bonnie Willis	USC	M.S. Marine Science
	Kate Ardizone	Indiana University	M.A. Public Affairs
2002	Susan Fox	CofC	M.S. Environmental Policy
2004	Amy Filipowicz	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2005	Jacqueline Shapo	CofC	M.S. Marine Biology
2008	Gabrielle Lyons	USC	M.S. Geological Sciences

Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship. The National Sea Grant College Program sponsors the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program to advance marine-related educational and career goals of participating students and to increase partnerships between universities and government. The fellowship provides a unique educational experience to students who have an interest in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources in the national policy decisions affecting those resources. Each year, fellowships are awarded on a competitive basis at the national level. Selected Knauss Fellows are hosted by the legislative and executive branches of federal government. For FY07-08, the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium submitted five qualified graduate students, and all five were selected as finalists; one in the executive branch of government, and the other four in the legislative branch. Placing five students from South Carolina (out of 51 selected nation-wide) was a first in the Consortium’s 24 years of involvement in the John Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship program, and reflects the very high quality of graduate student education in South Carolina.

NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Management Fellowship provides on-the-job education and training opportunities for postgraduate students in coastal resource management policy and also provides specific technical assistance for state coastal resource management programs. The program matches highly qualified students with hosts around the United States in state coastal zone management (CZM) programs. For FY07-08, the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium submitted one applicant in a nationwide competition. Gabrielle Lyons (University of South Carolina) was selected as a fellow for a project in the state of Delaware.

K-12 Education. Consortium support was provided to many faculty and staff, as well as 51 BS, MS, PhD and professional school college students at our eight member institutions.

The Consortium’s COASTeam education and outreach program achieved the following results during the reporting period:

- COASTeam provided education programs to 600 K-12 students.
- Four editions of *Coastal Heritage Curriculum Connections* were published on the Consortium’s Web site, which provide supplemental classroom resources for South Carolina K-12 students. The *Curriculum Connection* is written for both middle- and high-school students and is aligned with the S.C. state standards for the grade levels.

- *Of Sand and Sea*, a popular textbook for teachers, remains available on line at the Consortium's web site.

Partners and Collaborating Organizations. During the reporting period the Consortium worked with numerous individuals representing over 100 federal, state and local agencies, county and municipal governments, K-12 schools, universities, businesses, and industry (see Appendix 1).

7.2. Performance Levels and Trends for Customer Satisfaction

Communications and Information Services

Publications and Products - 2007-2008. The Consortium's extension and communications staff produced 92 publications in FY07-08 (~100% increase), which informed our constituents about coastal issues and facilitated the transfer and exchange of information. From July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, the Consortium responded to requests for 4,828 Sea Grant publications, a level similar to the previous reporting period. In 2007-2008, the Consortium's Communications and Information Services (CIS) program generated the following:

Table 7.2.A. Productivity of Consortium Communications efforts.

CIS Statistics	Number
Publications Requested	4,828
Media Requests	15
Media Placements	255
Number of Web site hits (see Figure 7.2.A.)	2,374,584
Number of Web site unique visits	295,890
Number of PDF Downloads of Consortium publications from National Sea Grant Library Web site	3,118
Publications and Information Products (Note: Information products are listed below according to the strategic plan objectives they support.)	35

S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Web site. The Consortium continues to enhance its Web site (www.scseagrant.org) by expanding its interactive features, making the site more assessable to people with disabilities, and keeping the information current. The site features an array of information about coastal and marine issues for researchers, educators, students, and the public. Compared to the last biennium, the Consortium Web site played an even more prominent role in the Consortium's FY08-10 request for proposals, making it easier for researchers to do business with the agency. In 2009, the Web site will become more interactive so that grant proposals and requisite reports can be submitted over the Internet. From July 1, 2001 through the current reporting period, the trend in unique visits, the more relevant measure of Web success, shows that the visits have grown by ten-fold. Usage over this time frame can be found in Figure 7.2.A.

Consortium staff have taken a leadership role to accomplish this transition, and the Web developer is one of the founding board members of the S.C. Government Webmasters Association (SCGWA). This organization plans meetings and free technical training on a quarterly basis for all South Carolina state government web developers. Our Web Developer also built and continues to maintain the SCGWA web site. Total hits for FY07-08 were

2,374,584; unique visits totaled 295,890. A new indicator (downloads) was added in FY06-07 to identify proactive use of Consortium Web site information; during the current reporting period, 1,280,173 files were downloaded (see Figure 7.2.B). However, because a significant percentage of households do not have Internet access, traditional means of communication are still extremely important for information delivery and continue to be utilized by the Consortium.

The state of South Carolina mandated that all state government Web sites would be 508 Compliant and meet the accessibility standards by July 21, 2006. Due to the number and sizes of the Consortium's Web sites, this has been a major undertaking. Of the over 1,500 static html pages and seven sites to convert into our newly created data-driven custom web application built using the .NET framework, we are more than half-way finished with the conversion of html pages to our main Web site, and will be working on converting a few of our other sites into this new technology in the coming year. Progress will be reported to the state CIO office in 2009. Other improvements to the Consortium's Web site were made during the reporting period:

- **ICSR '08 Abstract Submittal Form.** An online form to collect abstracts and associated authors for the 2008 International Conference on Shellfish Restoration was implemented, making the process more streamlined and efficient. All entries are now stored in a database for future mailings and other communication needs.

- **Content Management System.** Improvements to the functionality and accessibility have been made to the existing Content Management System (CMS), including:
 - Collection all publication requests for data analysis and reporting
 - Comments, suggestions and other requests will be collected in the database instead of emails for better record keeping and analysis
 - Secure access to SC Sea Grant staff to the CMS to maintain specific content areas they are responsible for. A user-friendly interface (GUI) is now available to three levels of users: Administrator, Publisher, Author/Editor. Authors and Editors are able to create new pages and edit existing pages. Publishers are responsible for approving or rejecting content provided by Authors/Editors. Administrators have overall access to the CMS.

- **Data Backup Plans.** Local computers and Web/database servers will have adequate backups and hurricane preparedness plans.

- **Google Analytics.** During the reporting period, the Consortium Web group began implementing code for Google Analytics into the sseagrant.org .NET pages. Beta testing of the Google Analytics interface and functionality is underway. Google Analytics will be accessible from anywhere by all Consortium staff and is designed to be easy to use and understood. Google Analytics offers great help features and explanations of terminology. Some useful features of Google Analytics include:
 - Help in understanding how visitors navigate throughout our website
 - Determining which marketing initiatives are the most effective
 - Identifying where are our site visitors are coming from
 - Outlining what do people do while visiting our site
 - Separately track multiple websites
 - Identify keywords people use to find the site from search engines (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
 - Help in tracking what visitors are looking for from our internal site search

These major changes significantly improve some of the agency’s key management processes, and contribute to customer satisfaction.

Figure 7.2.A. Trend for monthly total hits and unique visits to the SCSGC Web site. Total Hits = a hit is a single request made to a web server for an object on a web site (e.g., image, page). Unique Visits = a visit to a web site represents one unique viewer who has visited the site.

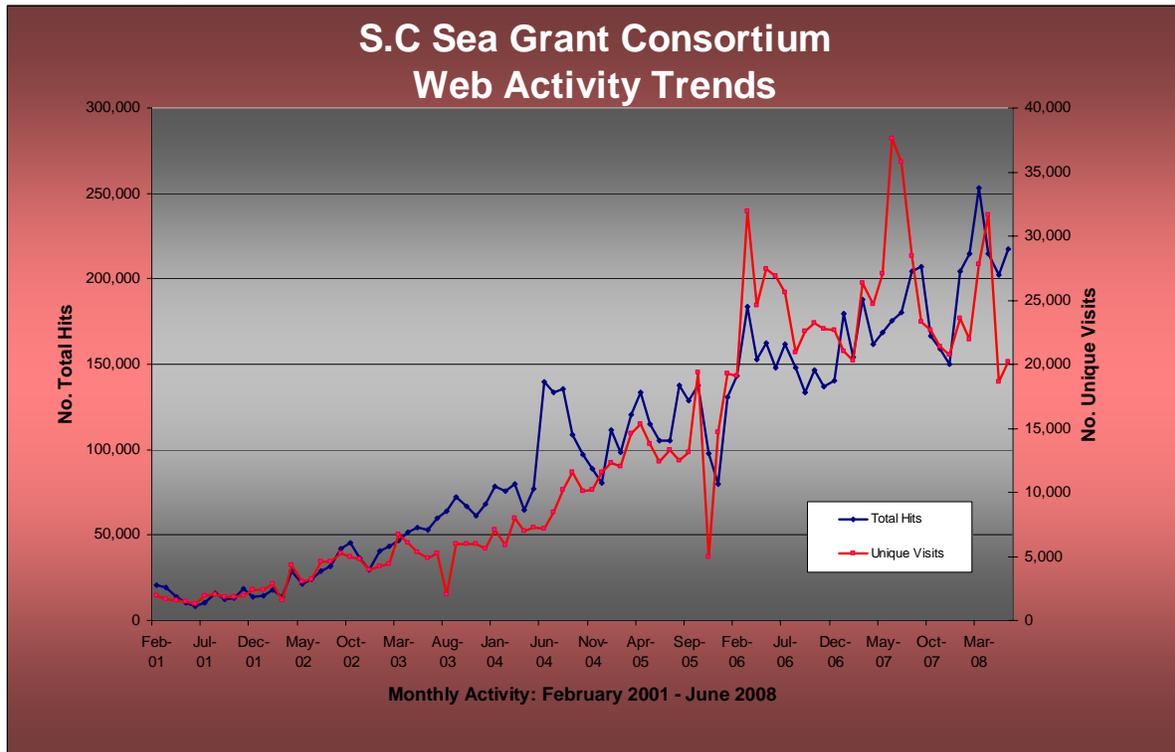
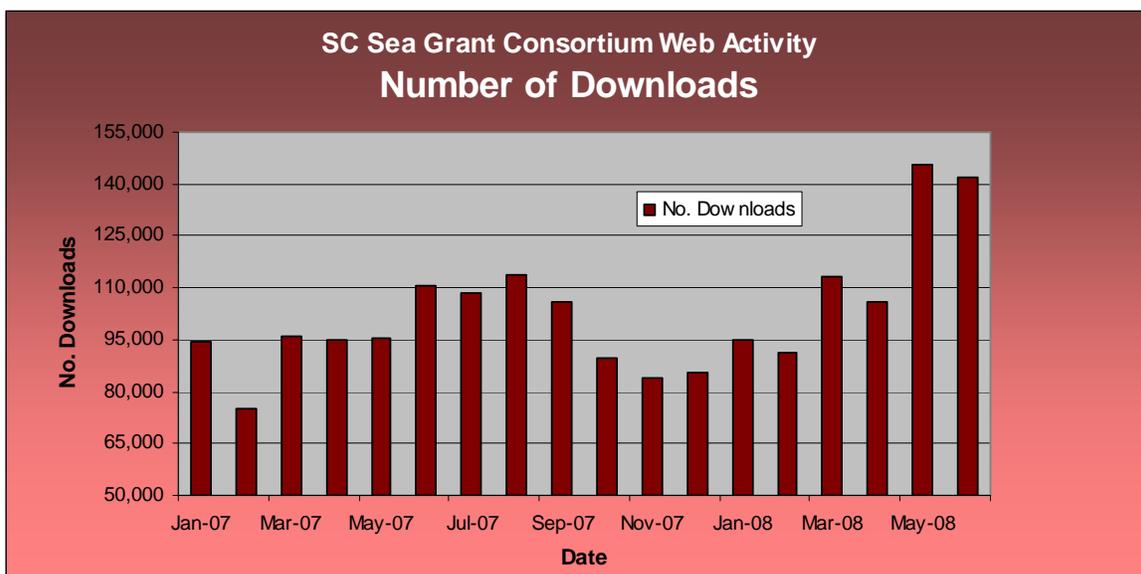


Figure 7.2.B. Trend for download activity – another measure of a Web site’s interest and utility to Internet browsers.



Beach Sweep/River Sweep. The 19th annual Beach Sweep/River Sweep was held September 15, 2007, and over 6,000 volunteers across South Carolina joined forces to rid beaches, marshes, and waterways of unsightly, and sometimes dangerous, debris. The litter cleanup, supported primarily with donations from the private sector, is organized by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, and is held in conjunction with The Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup.

Covering over 1,345 miles, cleanup crews removed 57 tons of trash, recycling much of what was collected. On the coast, volunteers tackled over 100 sites - from North Myrtle Beach to Daufuskie Island - that were made safer, healthier, and more beautiful for all to enjoy. Major sponsors of the 2007 Beach Sweep/River Sweep were Applied Technology and Management, BP Cooper River Plant, Ben and Jerry's of Charleston, Charleston City Marina, Coastal Expeditions, Duke Power, HDR Engineering, Hilex Poly Co., Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, Marine Terminals of S.C., Mount Pleasant Waterworks, Osprey Marina, Piggly Wiggly Carolina Co., South Carolina Ports Universal Data Solutions.

Addressing Stakeholder Needs through Strategic Planning. The agency's strategic plan is a process – it is dynamic – and therefore the Consortium's strategic planning for 2006-2010 is focusing on the “changing face” of the South Carolina coast and the ever-increasing demands by the agency's constituencies for its products and services. During the last reporting period, and continued into this period, the Consortium initiated efforts to improve the focus and responsiveness of its future programmatic activities. The Consortium's Core Group conducted an internal planning process to review its programmatic areas and update the entire Strategic Plan. Previous program area designations were evaluated and reorganized into a performance-based set of strategic goals. These goals reflect the Consortium's desire that it address the relevant and pressing coastal and marine resource needs of South Carolina.

The Consortium conducted an on-line survey of its constituencies, as noted in last year's report, concerning the proposed 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. The Consortium also e-mailed the survey to an in-house contact list of approximately 1,500 individuals. Responses were analyzed by the Consortium's Core management group and the results were incorporated into its 2006-2010 Strategic Plan.

The Core Group conducted the following activities to accomplish update the Strategic Plan:

- Core group meetings to discuss and revise plan; primarily adjusting, and in some cases setting, implementation action items for the 2008-2010 period of the plan
- Program Advisory Board (PAB) meeting on May 1, 2007 where the PAB endorsed the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan
- Consortium Board of Directors meeting on September 12, 2007 where the plan was approved
- Adjustments to the implementation plan as needed according to constituents' changing needs

The 2006-2010 Strategic Plan was revised to include an Administrative component and Programmatic components. The Administrative component includes an emphasis on maintaining and enhancing a viable administrative, management, and financial system and encouraging an “environment of excellence” by supporting the development of leadership skills among staff. This includes focusing efforts to strengthen the Consortium's administrative

process and eliminate any weaknesses that are identified. It also ensures that the Consortium remains current regarding the technology being used in the State for administrative procedures. The Programmatic components focus on key issues on which the Consortium will direct its research, education and outreach programs.

Plan of Action

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium has identified a plan of action in the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan for the next four years and in the 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 Implementation Plans to address contemporary coastal and marine resource issues facing South Carolina. These goals and objectives will serve as a guide and filter for the activities that the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium will undertake over the next two years of the Strategic Plan, and they will also provide guidance when the Consortium releases its biennial 2010-2012 Request for Proposals (February 2009), ensuring that Sea Grant researchers address the priority goals of the Consortium and its South Carolina constituencies. The agency's Strategic Plan is divided into two sections: Programmatic and Management. The Programmatic section includes the Consortium's plans for research, education and outreach-based activities. The Management section includes administrative and program management activities which identify how the Consortium will support its mission, assess customer satisfaction, ensure financial performance, and document human resource activities.

The Consortium's revised 2006-10 Strategic Plan will serve as the template for future strategic plans. The strategic areas, goals, and objectives are expected to continue to be relevant for a number of years to come. The strategies the Consortium utilizes to achieve these goals and objectives are expected to be reevaluated during every subsequent revision of the Plan. New strategies will be included as current strategies are addressed and new issues arise. The outcomes and indicators sections will be assessed on two-year cycles; however, there are short-term and long-term indicators included in the plan. The actions are identified in the Consortium's two-year Implementation Plan to identify specific activities that will be undertaken to achieve success.

7.3. Performance Levels and Trends for Financial Performance

Consortium Funding Trends. For the reporting period, the Consortium received more than \$4,177,769 in non-state funding, representing approximately a \$1,118,702 decrease from FY06-07. Overall, the Consortium's total annual budget for FY07-08 was \$4,793,605, an 18% decrease when compared with FY06-07.

While the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium has been very effective in securing non-state funding in support of its strategic program areas around which it organizes its research, education, and extension activities, we are beginning to see a further constriction of available federal funds for these activities. Budget trends covering the period 1988-2008 are found in Table 7.3.A and Figure 7.3.A. The sources of funding for the current fiscal year (FY07-08) are shown in Figure 7.3.B. Budget trends for the period 2001 through 2008 are shown in Figure 7.3.C.

To address this issue, the Consortium’s Program Advisory Board established a Finance Committee during the reporting period to investigate new sources of and mechanisms for funding, such as foundations. The committee’s first formal meeting occurred just after the reporting period, on August 22, 2008.

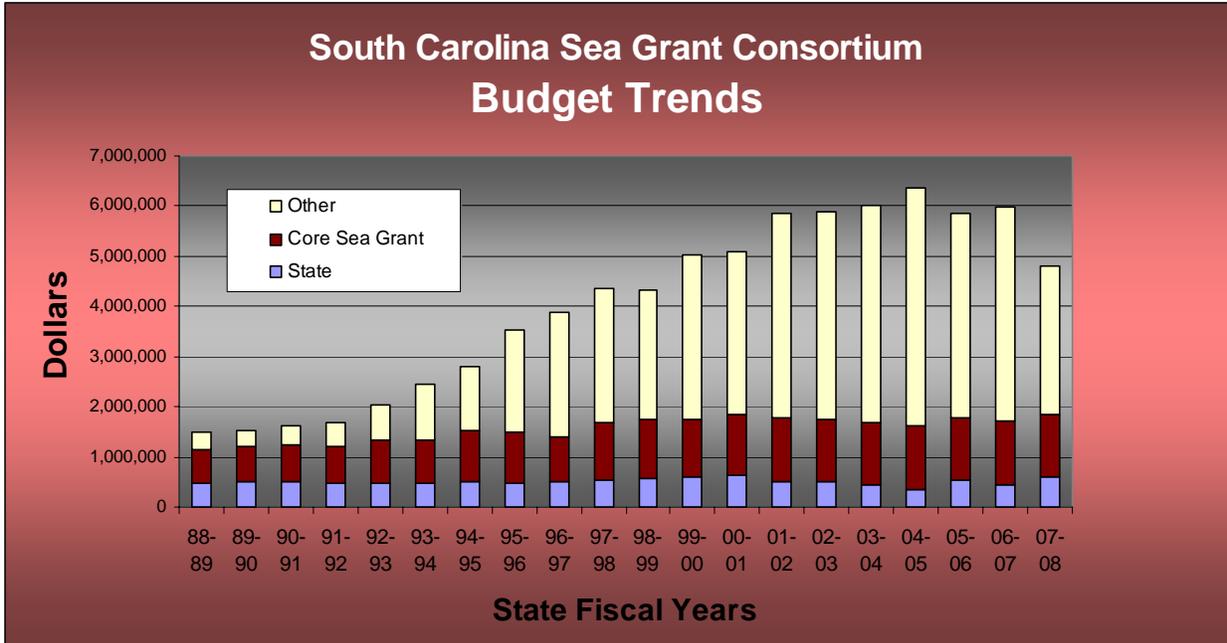


Figure 7.3.A. Year-to-year comparisons of Consortium funding by source of funds.

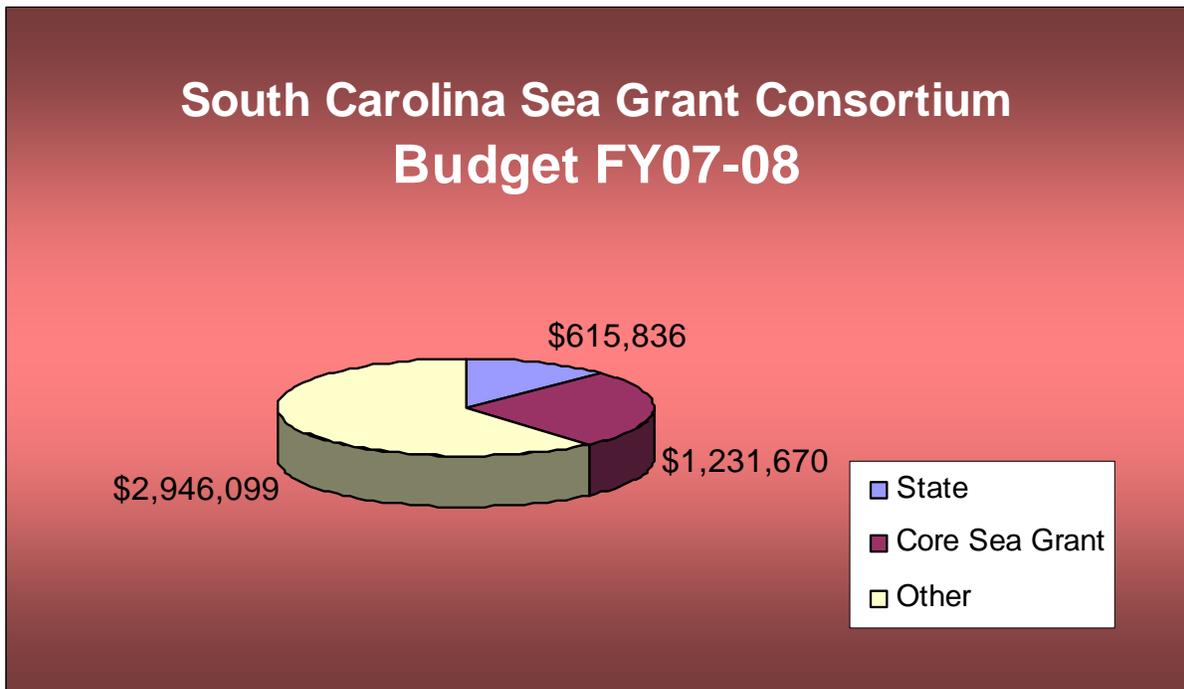


Figure 7.3.B. Breakout of Consortium FY07-08 budget.

**Table 7.3.A. Annual SCSGC budgets by funding source.
South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
BUDGET TRENDS 1988-2008**

Year	State¹	Core Sea Grant	Other²	Total
1989-90	510,400	705,000	310,300	1,525,700
1990-91	518,100	725,000	386,200	1,629,300
1991-92	492,100	705,000	497,000	1,694,100
1992-93	482,400	845,000	705,300	2,032,700
1993-94	490,900	845,000	1,123,400	2,459,300
1994-95	503,900	1,015,000	1,283,100	2,802,000
1995-96	487,400	1,015,000	2,033,000	3,535,400
1996-97	496,500	896,500 ³	2,498,800	3,891,800
1997-98	528,300	1,169,000	2,654,500	4,351,800
1998-99	575,200	1,169,000	2,597,100	4,341,300
1999-00	591,500	1,169,000	3,252,400	5,012,900
2000-01	650,800	1,191,200	3,259,700	5,101,700
2001-02	524,638	1,254,000	4,072,798	5,851,436
2002-03	499,873	1,260,000	4,125,300	5,885,173
2003-04	440,505	1,260,000	4,326,481	6,026,986
2004-05	354,164	1,261,670	4,748,159	6,634,180
2005-06	452,308	1,261,670	4,279,311	5,993,289
2006-07	545,748	1,236,670	4,059,801	5,842,219
2007-08	615,836	1,231,670	2,946,099	4,793,605

Note: Figures do not include institutional cost shares.

¹ State appropriations include B&CB-mandated reductions and B&CB adjustments such as BPI, FB, bonus and annualizations.

² Other funds include support provided by local, state, federal (other than core Sea Grant) and private sources.

³ Reduced Sea Grant core funding due to a six-month administrative budget as per National Office transition of grant start dates.

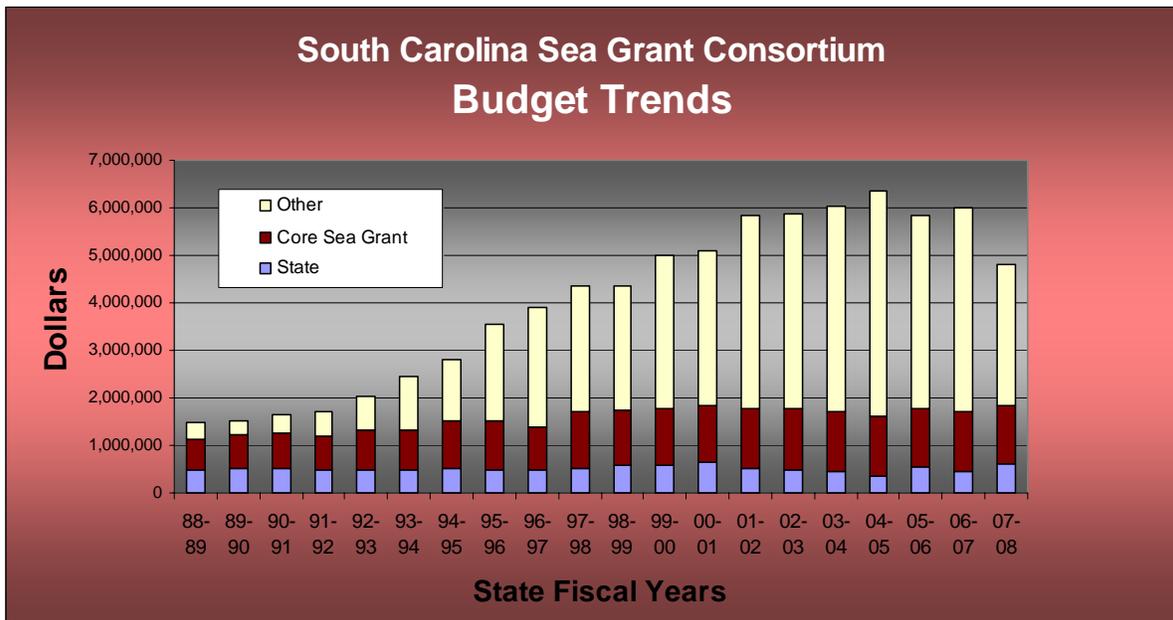


Figure 7.3.C. Eight-year budget trends, FY01 through FY08.

Consortium Funding - Coming Year. The Consortium requested an additional \$81,250 in recurring state appropriations for FY08-09, a potential increase of 13.2 percent over FY07-08. The Consortium’s request was not approved by the State legislature, primarily because of the current state budget climate. The Consortium received a state appropriation of \$608,714 in state recurring funds for FY08-09, a small reduction of \$7,122.

On the federal side, the House Appropriations Committee on Commerce, Justice, and Science approved a budget for the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) of \$59.997 million, a \$5 million increase over the President’s request. The full House has yet to take up this bill. The Senate Appropriations Committee on Commerce, Justice, and Science approved a budget for NSGCP of \$57.1 million (a \$3 million increase over the President’s budget). However, the Committee earmarked \$2 million of this increase to establish a new Alabama Sea Grant College Program at Auburn University. The full Senate has yet to take up this bill. Regardless, Hill pundits are suggesting that a Continuing Resolution will again be passed to cover the FY09 budget until next spring, given the fact that this is a Presidential transition year, with the possibility that an omnibus appropriations bill might be passed soon thereafter.

The Agency Head was invited to testify before the subcommittees of the U.S. Congress on behalf of Sea Grant appropriations and reauthorization. Mr. DeVoe was an invited witness (on behalf of the Sea Grant Association) before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives regarding the National Sea Grant College Program on April 2, 2008. He was also invited to testify as an invited witness on behalf of the Sea Grant Association before the Subcommittee on Fisheries Wildlife and Oceans, Committee on Natural Resources, United States House of Representatives, regarding the reauthorization of the National Sea Grant College Program on April 3, 2008, and on behalf of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium before the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, Committee

on Science and Technology, United States House of Representatives, regarding the reauthorization of the National Sea Grant College Program on May 21, 2008.

Fiscal Analysis: Finally, fiscal responsibility is the keystone of any state agency because of its fiduciary responsibility to the state's citizens and to the taxpayers it serves. The Office of the State Auditor performed an FY07 audit in April 2008. The final audit report found no significant findings. The Consortium's Assistant Director is responsible for the financial administration of the agency on a day-to-day basis.

7.4. Performance Levels and Trends for Workforce-Focused Results

The Consortium's fourteen full-time equivalents are evenly divided among the Consortium's Outreach, Program Administration, and Program Management activities (Figure 7.4.A). Of these FTEs, 7.14 are state slots, and 6.86 are Federal slots. The total number of Consortium's FTEs has remained constant over time, even though Consortium activities have significantly increased.

While the Consortium's programmatic activities continue to increase, administration costs remained level over time until state fiscal difficulties and budget cuts affected the agency in the first half of the present decade. Since FY00-01, the Consortium has had to absorb severe budget reductions, thus, administration costs decreased by almost 50 percent through fiscal year 04-05. The Consortium received increases in FY05-06, FY06-07, and FY07-08 (Figure 7.4.B), but the volatility in state revenues year-to-year remains a concern.

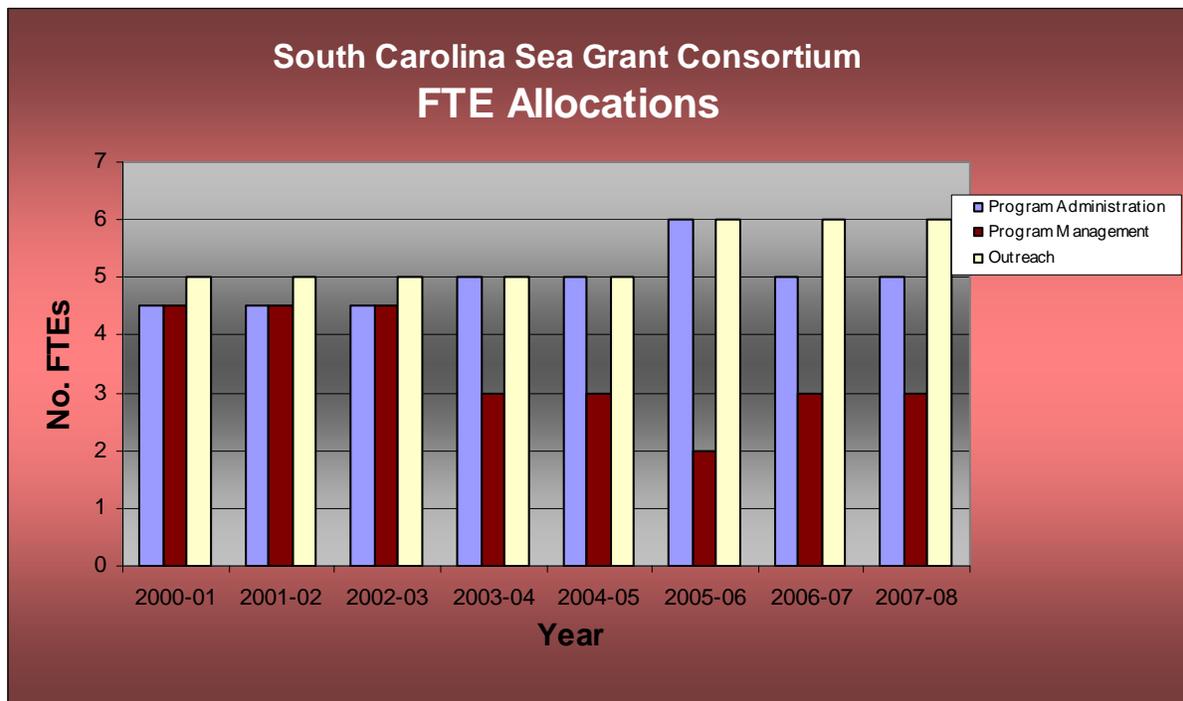


Figure 7.4.A. SCSGC full-time equivalents (FTEs) by function. Consortium FTEs have remained fairly constant over a seven-year period.

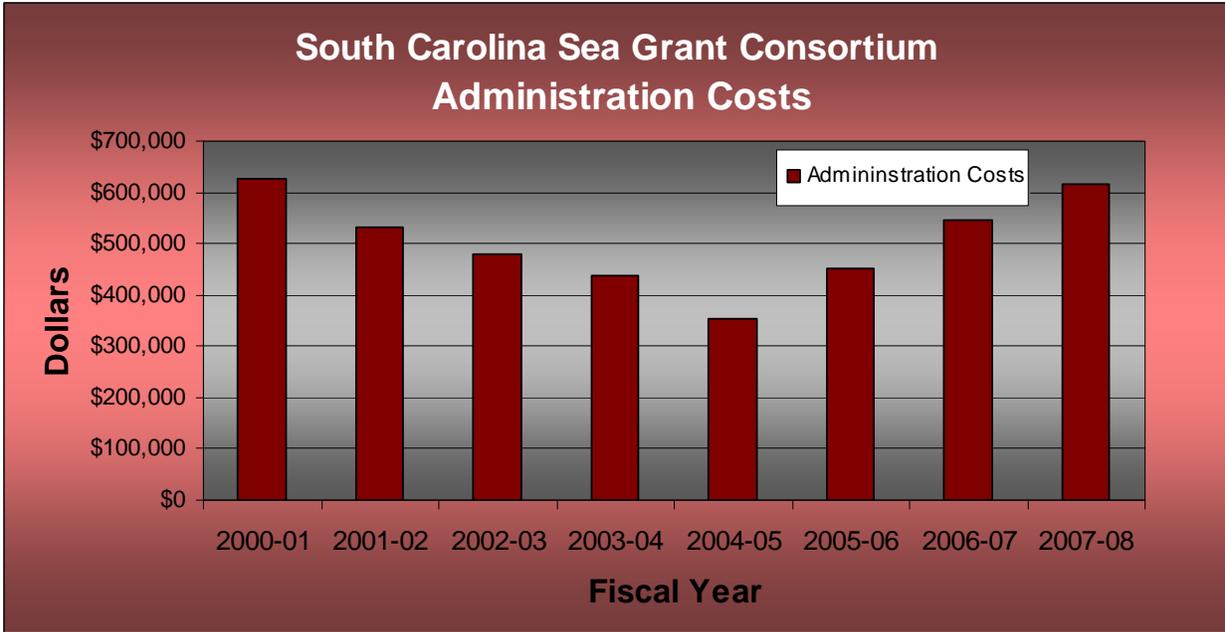


Figure 7.4.B. Comparison of current period state administration costs to previous years. The severe downward trend as the result of state budget cuts has been reversed in the past three fiscal years, but remains volatile due to fluctuations in state revenues.

7.5. Performance Levels and Trends for Workforce Efficiency

As referenced earlier in the report, these types of questions are more appropriate for an organization making “widgets,” or large service organizations such as the Department of Motor Vehicles or the Department of Detention. The Consortium’s performance levels are primarily qualitative in nature, although we do track items such as grant actions handled per year and Web activity on a monthly basis. Some of these measures are found throughout Category 7.

7.6. Performance Levels and Trends – Regulatory/Legal Compliance

The Consortium does not have any legal or regulatory mandates that require its attention. The agency, by definition, is non-regulatory and does not have resource management responsibilities.

Appendix 1. Selected organizations with which the Consortium has developed partnership, collaborative, and joint efforts or activities, or for which the Consortium has designed and delivered program activities and information.

Federal/National	State/Local NGOs
NOAA Climate Program Office NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory NOAA National Ocean Service NOAA Hollings Marine Laboratory NOAA Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research NOAA Oceanic and Atmospheric Research NOAA National Sea Grant College Program NOAA National Undersea Research Centers NOAA National Weather Service NOAA Fisheries NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration NOAA Office of Education U.S. Department of the Interior U.S. Geological Survey U.S. National Park Service National Science Foundation U.S. Department of Agriculture U.S. Department of Homeland Security U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention U.S. Environmental Protection Agency U.S. Army Corps of Engineers U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (Region IV) National Marine Educators Association National Non-Point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Network The Coastal Society National Federation of Regional Associations for Ocean Observing Consortium for Ocean Leadership Sea Grant Association	Ashley Scenic River Advisory Council Beaufort County Open Land Trust Beaufort County Water Quality Task Force Keep South Carolina Beautiful Low Country Institute (Spring Island, S.C.) Maritime Association of the Port of Charleston S.C. African-American Heritage Council S.C. Aquaculture Association S.C. Coastal Conservation League S.C. Downtown Development Association/Community Builders S.C. Economic Developers Association S.C. Nature-Based Tourism Association S.C. Wildlife Federation Spring Island Trust The Nature Conservancy The 113 Calhoun Street Foundation Friends of the Rivers Michaux Conservancy Lowcountry Earthforce Center for Watershed Protection The Sustainability Institute Urban Land Institute-South Carolina SC Chapter of the American Planning Association United States Lifeguard Association Southern Shrimp Alliance SC Marine Association Environmental Defense Fund S.C. Marine Educators Association
Regional	Industry and Business
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Georgia Department of Natural Resources SouthEast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) SouthEast Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE-SE) Carolinas Coastal Ocean Observing and Prediction System (Caro-COOPS) Ocean Sciences Bowl, South Carolina/Georgia Region (Annual) NOAA in the Carolinas Southeast Regional Resiliency Initiative (SERRI) Community and Regional Resiliency Initiative (CARRI)	S.C. Chamber of Commerce Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce Applied Phytogenetics, Inc. Dewees Island Development Institute of Business and Home Safety (IBHS) Noisette Company Santee Cooper SCANA Corporation Southland Fisheries Corporation Swimming Rock Fish & Shrimp Farm Universal Data Solutions Design Works Lack's Beach Lifeguards Midway Fire Department Geodynamics, Inc. S.C. Seafood Alliance

	<p>S.C. Shrimpers Association Applied Technology & Management BP Cooper River Plant Ben & Jerry's of Charleston Wild American Shrimp, Inc. Southeast Biodiesel, Inc. Charleston City Marina Coastal Expeditions Duke Energy Foundation HDR Engineering Hilex Poly Co., LLC Magnolia Plantation and Gardens Marine Terminals of SC Middleton Place Mount Pleasant Waterworks Osprey Marina Piggly Wiggly Carolina Co.</p>
Academic Institutions	International
<p>Consortium Member Universities University of Florida VIMS – William and Mary College Dartmouth University SUNY-Albany University of NC - Chapel Hill Georgia Institute of Technology North Carolina State University Skidaway Institute of Oceanography University of Massachusetts – Dartmouth University of North Carolina – Wilmington University of Rhode Island</p>	<p>International Conference on Shellfish Restoration Aquatic Plant Management Society (International)</p>
State and Local Government	Other Organizations
<p>S.C. Department of Natural Resources ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Program North Inlet/Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Program S.C. Department of Education S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, OCRM S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism S.C. Department of Agriculture S.C. Emergency Management Division S.C. State Ports Authority City of Charleston City of Georgetown City of Hardeeville City of Isle of Palms City of Myrtle Beach City of North Myrtle Beach City of Folly Beach City of Sullivan's Island Town of Briarcliff Acres Town of Seabrook Island Town of Edisto</p>	<p>Hilton Head Sportfishing Club Georgia Aquarium North Carolina Aquarium Fernbank Science Center Kiawah Island Community Association Edisto Beach Community Waccamaw Watershed Academy Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium Ashley-Cooper Stormwater Education Consortium SC Coastal Information Network S.C. Task Group on Harmful Algae</p>

Town of Hilton Head Island Town of Kiawah Island Town of Port Royal DeBordieu Colony Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments South Carolina Aquarium Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission S.C. Government Webmasters Association	
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Appendix 2. The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium secured the following coastal and marine research, education, and extension grants from non-state sources (new grant starts indicated by italics):

Program Management

- “S.C. Sea Grant College Core Program” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$1,136,670 - February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 (continuing) - M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).
- “S.C. Sea Grant College Program - Merit Funding” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$95,000 - February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 (Year 1 of 5) - M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).

Humans and the Coastal Landscape

- “SouthEast Coastal Ocean Observations Regional Association (SECOORA): Building a Regional Association Framework for the Coastal Ocean Observing System of the Southeastern United States” – NOAA Coastal Services Center - \$394,546 – May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2009 – NOAA Coastal Services Center - (Year 3 of 3) – M. Richard DeVoe and Parker Lumpkin (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).
- “*SouthEast Coastal Ocean Observations Regional Association (SECOORA): Developing the Regional Coastal Ocean Observing System*” – NOAA Coastal Services Center - \$750,000 – May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2009 – NOAA Coastal Services Center - (Year 1 of 1) – M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium) and Harvey Seim (UNC-Chapel Hill).
- “Enhancing Communications and Coordinating Outreach Activities throughout the IOOS Community: The NFRA Contribution” - NOAA Coastal Services Center - \$50,000 – August 1, 2007 to July 31, 2008 (Year 3 of 3) – M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium) and Josie Quintrell (National Federation of Regional Associations).
- “Expanding Existing Surveillance Systems to Include *Pfeisteria*, Other Harmful Algal Blooms, and Marine Toxins in South Carolina” – Centers for Disease Control - \$180,000 – September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008 (Year 5 of 5) – M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium). Involves faculty and students from Marine Resources Division-SCDNR, University of South Carolina, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, NOAA-NOS Charleston Laboratory, and Medical University of South Carolina.
- “Providing Ocean and Human Health Research, Education, and Training to Appropriate Audiences – a HML-SCSGC MOA Initiative” – NOAA Hollings Marine Laboratory - \$508,052 – August 1, 2007 to present – M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).

Humans and the Risks of Coastal Natural Hazards

- “CI-FLOW” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program – National Strategic Investment Program - \$50,000 – February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 - Robert H. Bacon (S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program).
- “The Carolinas Coastal Climate Outreach Initiative” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program – National Strategic Investment Program - \$100,000 – February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008 (Year 2 of 3) - M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium) and Robert H. Bacon (S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program).

Coastal Dependent Economy

- “S.C. Sea Grant Fisheries Extension Enhancement Program” – NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$78,254 – June 1, 2007 to April 30, 2008 (Year 4 of 5) – M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium) and Robert H. Bacon (S.C. Sea Grant Extension Program).
- “Addressing the Challenges of Coastal Growth in South Carolina: A S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Initiative” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$50,000 - February 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008 (continuing) - M. Richard DeVoe and April Turner (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).

Scientific Literacy and Workforce Development

- “Support for Beach Sweep/River Sweep '07 Activities” - Private Cash Donations - ~\$20,000 - September 2007 – Susan Ferris Hill (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).
- “Southeastern Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE-SE): A Systematic Approach to Forming Ocean Science Education Partnerships” – National Science Foundation (with partial funding provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) – \$505,747 – September 1, 2007 to August 31, 2008 (Year 3 of 5) – L. Lundie Spence (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).
- “*Sea Grant Knauss Fellowships (5)*” - NOAA National Sea Grant College Program - \$207,500 - March 1, 2007 to February 28, 2008 - M. Richard DeVoe (S.C. Sea Grant Consortium).