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Coastal Resources Management Center



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### **National Governors Association Releases Report on the Coastal and Ocean Economy**

The [National Governors Association](#) Center for Best Practices (“NGA”) held a recent conference to examine the role of states in advancing a sound and comprehensive policy on ocean and coastal management, with specific emphasis on the changing ocean and coastal economy. Dr. Charles S. Colgan, a professor at the University of Southern Maine and Chief Economist with the National Ocean Economics Project, an independent research project funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, prepared a report entitled *The Changing Ocean and Coastal Economy of the United States*.

Dr. Colgan’s report, which was presented at NGA’s [Conference of Ocean Policy](#), specifically examined key demographic and socio-economic factors influencing the national coastal and ocean economy. Dr. Colgan’s analysis revealed 10 important conclusions:

1. The "coast" or the "coastal economy" is not a single entity, but is comprised of four distinct socio-economic regions: coastal states, coastal watershed counties, coastal zone counties and the nearshore.
2. The pressure of population growth in coastal regions comes from the increasing size of the population within a fixed coastal geographic area rather than people "moving to the coast."
3. Employment and economic growth, specifically within nearshore areas, have been significant. Data indicates that on a national basis, employment growth within coastal areas was nearly three times the population growth.
4. The coastal and ocean economies are interrelated, but not identical so future policies must address their similarities and differences.
5. Economic activity in coastal regions is great. Seventy-five percent of the nation’s Gross State Product came from coastal states in 2000. Close to 50% of the national economy was generated from coastal watershed counties. Although comprising only 4% of the nation’s land area, nearshore areas produced approximately 11% of the nation’s economic output.
6. The ocean economy is significant, with approximately 2.3 million jobs and \$117 billion

in output in 2000.

7. The ocean economy has undergone significant changes over the past 10 years. Traditional ocean economic sectors such as living resources (i.e., fishing), minerals and oil, ship and boat building, and transportation have declined. Only marine construction grew during this period. In contrast, coastal tourism and recreation provided significant job growth.

8. Ocean transportation, mineral extraction, and ship and boat building, although a small percentage of the changing ocean economy, are important economic sectors due their high wages and skilled labor force.

9. More than 90% of employment in the ocean economy is located in urban areas.

10. More economic data and analysis is required to better understand the ocean and coastal economy before a comprehensive coastal and ocean policy can be developed and implemented.

Click [here](#) to access the report.

*Keane Callahan is an environmental analyst with the firm's LandLaw Section and a member of the Coastal Resources Management Center. Please email [Keane](#) if you have any questions about this article.*

#### **Coastal eNews and Notes**

### **Rhode Island Creates Habitat Restoration Web Portal**

Coastal resource managers in the State of Rhode Island have created a Web site that provides information about the state's habitat restoration efforts. The [Rhode Island Habitat Restoration Portal](#) has information on habitat descriptions, maps, spatial data, and permitting and funding information. The site also has three "decision-support tools" that assist in evaluating potential habitat restoration projects, with the primary focus on anadromous fish runs, seagrass, and salt marshes. The tools use "GIS" or Geographic Information Systems along with socio-economic and ecological data to identify and prioritize potential restoration sites. The Coastal Services Center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) assisted in developing this project. Contact [Linda Rowe](#) of NOAA for more information.

### **EPA Issues NPDES Implementation Guidance for Watersheds**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) last month issued a guidance document describing recommendations for watershed-based permitting under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. Watershed-based NPDES permitting attempts to coordinate all point sources within a drainage basin rather than regulating individual discharges. Watershed-based permitting can encompass a variety of activities that include "synchronized permits" within a basin, and permitting activity will vary

depending on the unique characteristics of the watershed and the nature of discharges. The ultimate goal of this guidance is to issue NPDES permits that regulate discharges based on watershed management criteria. Click [here](#) for a copy of the guidance.

### **ASMFC Launches New Website**

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) has a created new website. The website features (1) updated information and data on species, fisheries research and habitat, (2) forums on fisheries management, (3) information on law enforcement and protected species, (4) opportunities to provide comments on proposed fishery management measures, and (5) background information on the ASMFC. Click [here](#) to access the website.

This is an archive of past issues. As a result, it may contain information that is not current.



