

## **"Enhancing Sea Grant Climate Extension Capabilities through Training and Increased Interaction with NOAA Scientists"**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Sea Grant outreach community, consisting of extension agents and specialists, communicators and educators with diverse backgrounds are constantly responding to stakeholders with concerns about potential impacts of climate change in coastal areas. Numerous state Sea Grant programs are funding research, outreach and education projects in climate change and the newly-developed Sea Grant strategic plan for 2009-13 targets climate change as an overarching concern for its four areas of concentration during this period. At the same time, various NOAA Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) laboratories house many of the world's leading experts in global and regional climate change. However, at this time, there few opportunities for climate training for the Sea Grant network so that they may deliver consistent, state-of-the-science-based messages regarding the likely impacts of climate change in coastal areas. Nor is there a convenient way for NOAA, Sea Grant and other climate research scientists to interact with the outreach community to bring current climate science to coastal stakeholders.

The Co-Principal Investigators propose a two-phased approach to address climate training needs in the Sea Grant Network. First, UCAR COMET and Wisconsin Sea Grant, in collaboration with an Advisory Committee consisting of selected NOAA climate scientists and Sea Grant network personnel, as well as one or more National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) climate researchers, will develop a 2-2 1/2 hour online training course for coastal extension agents. Second, an interactive Web site will be developed to serve as a portal for the training course and selected additional COMET products to provide Sea Grant network, Sea Grant climate researchers and NOAA climate scientists the ability to interact and develop a climate-based "wiki." Our wiki, a collection of topical climate Web pages designed to enable individuals who access the pages to contribute or modify content, serves as a means to disseminate timely coastal climate information (research results, impacts, reports, publications, etc.), and will continue to grow as new knowledge and information becomes available. The gated wiki will increase the interaction between key NOAA scientists and coastal stakeholders through the Sea Grant network and provide a forum for current climate science discussions. Public access to the site will allow coastal stakeholders to view all wiki content (without the ability to edit), locate key Sea Grant and NOAA climate personnel, submit suggestions and request information.