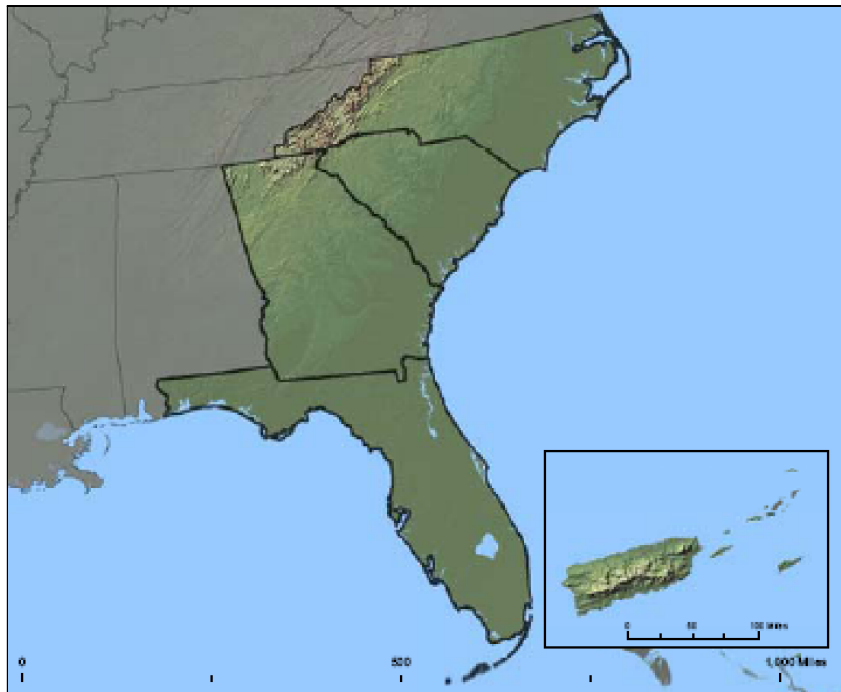


# FY 2022 Activity Plan

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## Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team



*North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia,  
Florida, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands*

October 2021

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# I. Introduction

NOAA's Regional Collaboration Network seeks to improve NOAA's productivity and value to customers by articulating and acting on the broader NOAA goals in terms of priority regional needs and regional contributions.

The network comprises eight regional teams plus support/engagement through NOAA Headquarters and Line Offices. The Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) covers NC, SC, GA, FL, PR, and USVI. The team is currently composed of 21 members representing geographic and topical diversity of NOAA staff and partners within the region (Appendix 1).

## Department and Agency Priorities

As an agency within the US Department of Commerce (DoC), activities of NOAA fall within and support the Department's [FY18-22 Strategic Plan](#).

NOAA's Mission is: Science, Service, and Stewardship

- To understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans and coasts;
- To share that knowledge and information with others; and
- To conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.

## Regional Collaboration Strategy

The Regional Collaboration Network completed a revised "strategy map" in 2016 to articulate its vision, mission, goals, and strategies to meet its objective in the NOAA Strategy: "Integrated services meeting the evolving demands of regional stakeholders." The Regional Collaboration Network's Strategy map is included in this document as Appendix 2.

## SECART Priorities

NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) has identified its priorities for FY19-22. These priorities are consistent with NOAA Goals and Regional Collaboration priorities but focus on current issues in the Southeast and Caribbean Region. These are:

### **Priority: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission-execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA offices and with partners.**

- Goal: Address current and emerging regional priorities by connecting people and resources
- Goal: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Goal: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work

### **Priority: Improve Economic, Environmental and Social Resilience of Communities to Weather, Water, and Climate Impacts**

- Goal: Facilitate the development of emerging science and technology, enabling regional stakeholders to better plan for, respond, and adapt to the risks posed by extreme weather, water, and climate hazards and impacts.
- Goal: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the

capacity of communities to understand, plan for, adapt and respond to risks posed by extreme weather at different time scales.

- Goal: Enhance organizational awareness and coordination within the region to improve preparation for and response to disasters.

**Priority: Promote the sustainability of the region’s living marine resources and habitats as key contributors to the nation’s economy**

- Goal: Increase the effectiveness of coastal and marine habitat conservation and restoration
- Goal: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats

The full SECART FY19-22 Strategy is presented as Appendix 3.

**Annual Activity Plan Purpose and Organization**

The purpose of the SECART Annual Activity Plan (AAP) is to document and guide team activities during the fiscal year. The AAP also serves as a tool for communicating regionally-informed priorities and collaborative approaches.

This AAP for FY2022 addresses national and regional priorities by utilizing an integrative, cross-line office approach, with an emphasis on enhancing coordination and communication within the region. The priority activities of SECART are organized according to the three SECART priorities mentioned above. Activities may address multiple priorities and goals, but are organized within a single priority for the purposes of the AAP. Activity descriptions and milestones provide information about the purpose, scope, partners, budget, and expected results.

Regional Collaboration funding from NOAA (\$50K) has been allocated to enable SECART to address these priorities. Annual funding for SECART work has been, and will continue to be augmented and leveraged through other programs and funding opportunities. SECART’s FY2022 spend plan is presented in Appendix 4.

## **II. Team Activities**

### **SECART Priority: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission-execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA offices and with partners**

**Activity A1. Enhance NOAA's mission execution through strategic engagement - learning from, informing, and connecting NOAA offices and regional partners to address regional issues.**

#### **Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

#### **Leads:**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Richard Okulski (SECART Team Lead), Chip Kasper (SECART Vice-lead)
- Beth Dieveney, Dana Wusinich-Mendez, Shirley Murillo (Workgroup leads)

#### **Key Participants:**

- State and federal agencies and programs;
- Sea Grant programs in the region (NC, SC, GA, FL, PR)
- Southeast Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS)
- Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy
- Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) and the Caribbean Coastal Ocean Observing System (CARICOOS)
- The Nature Conservancy and other non-governmental organizations
- Habitat Focus Areas in Biscayne Bay, FL and Northeast Reserves/Culebra, PR

#### **Situation/problem this project will address:**

NOAA has many formal and informal partners in the region who share NOAA's issues and priorities. Addressing these issues in an effective and efficient manner requires regular contact and coordination. SECART leverages and supports NOAA's programmatic investments in regional networks, including NOAA/NESDIS/NCEI Regional Climate Services, OAR/CPO/NIDIS, and NOS/Office of Coastal Management relationships with states and other partners on the topics of

climate, drought, and coastal resiliency. SECART is also one of several NOAA representatives on interagency teams that work in the region, including the SE Federal Partners, and others.

**Target audience:**

Primary audiences include NOAA staff in the region and long-term NOAA partners such as state Coastal Zone Management Programs (CZMP), National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs), Sea Grant programs, Cooperative Institutes, Regional Climate Centers, Regional Integrated Science Assessments (RISA), and more. NOAA also works with other federal agencies to accomplish shared objectives.

**Anticipated outcomes/benefits:**

- Increase the level of understanding of NOAA products and services in the region
- Respond to region-wide needs through a variety of partnerships
- Advance regional and internal collaboration with regional partnerships
- Serve on steering committees, technical teams, and other collaborations as appropriate in support of regional partnerships
- Monitor progress of regional partnerships, and identify appropriate opportunities for engagement, addressing NOAA priorities, and responding to region-wide needs
- Utilize SECART’s collaborative network to enhance the success of the regional partners

**Approach:**

The mission of NOAA's Regional Collaboration Network is to identify and address regional issues through enhanced awareness, communication, and collaboration among NOAA offices and partners. SECART will work with NOAA offices and partners in the region to share information and address problems that might be solved through an interdisciplinary (cross office) approach. Multi-partner coordination activities are occurring in the region focused on ecosystems, sustainability, and economic development integration. These partnerships provide ready opportunities for inter-agency and state-federal collaborations on issues of mutual interest. NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative is proposed as a separate project in this work plan.

SECART will work to share information among NOAA offices and partners, identify key issues in the region, and bring together the "right" people to collaborate to more efficiently tackle the problem. Some of this work is accomplished through the two SECART Workgroups, but often this activity is generic engagement and sharing of information to enhance awareness and understanding. Objectives include: 1) improving awareness of NOAA and partner programs and projects; 2) representing "One NOAA" with partners and other NOAA programmatic leads; 3) supporting relevant NOAA entities on regional issues; 4) supporting NOAA offices and partners in the shared execution of NOAA's mission; and 5) working with Ecosystem and Resilience Workgroups to promote and share information and opportunities in the region.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$1500

\$1500 of SECART funds to support travel for Regional Coordinator and/or team member(s) to travel to regional workshops and/or partner meetings.

If travel is curtailed into/through FY22 because of COVID-19, SECART will need to connect with staff and partners through remote means and reallocate travel funds to other useful purposes.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- SECART members will participate in these partnerships as appropriate, and look to identify opportunities for engagement, if beneficial to NOAA’s mission in the region (Q1-4).
- Effectively communicate activities, projects, and opportunities to relevant NOAA programs and offices (Q1-4).
- Work with NOAA offices and partners to identify emerging issues and opportunities for enhanced collaboration (Q1-4).
- Meet with NOAA staff and partners in the region to enhance awareness of NOAA’s responsibilities and capabilities within the region (Q1-4).
- Increase engagement with the Biscayne Bay Habitat Focus Area Implementation Team and the Northeast Reserves and Culebra Habitat Focus Area in Puerto Rico (Q 1-4).
- Serve as a NOAA contact for Sea Grant Programs in the region (Q1-4), including on the SC Sea Grant Program Advisory Board.

**Activity A2. Advance NOAA’s mission through engagement with the NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**Leads:**

- Lisamarie Carrubba (NOAA/NMFS)
- Makeda Okolo (NOAA/OCM)
- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Samantha Dowdell (International Affairs)
- Kenneth Erickson (NOAA OLIA)

- Trika Gerard (NMFS/SEFSC)

**Key Participants:**

The NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative (NOAA Carib) Steering Committee consists of members from across NOAA LOs, Staff Offices, and partners in the US Caribbean, including Puerto Rico & USVI Coastal Management Programs, Caribbean Fisheries Management Council, The Nature Conservancy, and others.

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

U.S. Caribbean territories (Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands) have differences in culture, resources, and issues from the rest of the Southeast United States. Therefore, it is important to strategically engage with partners to better understand their particular issues and needs and to enhance their understanding of NOAA products and services.

**Target audience:**

The purpose of this activity is to improve communication and coordination across NOAA offices and with our partners in the U.S. Caribbean. The target audience is therefore, NOAA staff in the Caribbean and partners including territorial agencies, other federal agencies, and not-for-profit groups.

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

The NOAA Carib facilitates improved communication, coordination, and collaboration with NOAA offices and partners in the US Caribbean and broader Caribbean basin.

**Approach:**

The NOAA Carib facilitates improved communication and collaboration with NOAA offices and partners in the US Caribbean and broader Caribbean basin. The NOAA Carib Newsletter reaches a wide audience and highlights NOAA products and services in the region.

SECART will continue to support the efforts of NOAA Carib through monetary and intellectual contributions. SECART will assist the NOAA Carib Steering Committee with the development and delivery of four issues of the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter through participation on the editorial committee and funding of Spanish translation services; assist in planning, funding, and execution of a 2022 NOAA Partners meeting in the U.S. Caribbean; and continue participation on NOAA Carib Steering Committee and Executive Committee to maintain communication and direction for the group.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on



the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership. Key outcomes will also be reported through the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter.

**Cost/Funding Source: \$2300**

\$2300 of SECART funds for RC travel to the 2022 Partners Meeting.

Supplementary funding: SECART provided \$9600 of FY21 funds to CIMAS to work with us on planning and execution of the 2022 Partner Meeting, and provided \$3500 of FY21 funds via the National Sea Grant Office to Puerto Rico Sea Grant Program for working with NOAA Carib on the NOAA Carib Newsletter.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Assist the NOAA Carib Steering Committee with the development and delivery of four issues of the NOAA in the Caribbean Newsletter (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) through participation on the editorial committee and funding of Spanish translation services.
- Review outcomes from the SECART/OCM meeting (June 2019) on specific actions of interest to PR and USVI.
- Continue participation on NOAA Carib Steering Committee and Executive Committee (Q1-4) to maintain communication, and chart a path forward for the group.
- Participate with the NOAA in the Caribbean Steering Committee to identify strategies for enhancing value of NOAA Carib to our NOAA staff and partners in the region.
- Plan and execute a Partner Meeting in the US Caribbean in 2022 (Q2-3).

**Activity A3. Represent NOAA’s broad mission capabilities and accomplishments in the region and facilitate two-way flow of information between the region and NOAA leadership.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

**Leaders:**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Richard Okulski (NOAA/NWS, SECART Team Lead)

**Key Participants:**

- All SECART members

- ReCo HQ
- Individual NOAA Offices and partners as appropriate

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

To the extent that NOAA employees better understand the totality of NOAA’s mission and what other NOAA staff in the region are doing, the better equipped they are to represent NOAA. Similarly, it is to NOAA’s benefit that our partners and stakeholders are more aware of how NOAA works to improve their lives. In addition, a key role of Regional Collaboration Teams is to understand and communicate regional priorities to NOAA leadership. Essentially this activity is to enhance communication - up, down, and across. Also as part of this activity, SECART will assist with NOAA leadership and other VIP visits to the region by providing “local knowledge” and logistics support.

**Target audience:**

The target audience includes those benefiting from or affected by NOAA's products and services (e.g., NOAA staff, partners, and the general public). An additional target audience for “informing up” is NOAA leadership.

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

This activity should improve the awareness and understanding of, and appreciation for, NOAA’s products and services in the region and NOAA’s appreciation for regional issues and needs.

**Approach:**

The Regional Collaboration Network (RCN) is a catalyst for cross-Line Office communication and coordination to enhance integration of products and services internally and among NOAA’s regional and national stakeholders and constituents. A role of SECART is to expand awareness of NOAA’s mission responsibilities, capabilities, and accomplishments, as an agency, not just for a particular office. Specific activities to help accomplish this objective:

- Provide updates to ReCo HQ through the weekly reporting mechanism.
- Contribute to the ReCo annual accomplishments report.
- Work with activity leads and Workgroup leads to capture and disseminate accomplishments and products from SECART activities.
- Update the SECART website to provide highlights of accomplishments.
- The “NOAA in the Southeast and Caribbean” 2-pager will be updated in content and format.
- Produce the weekly news of interest to NOAA in the region.
- Host 1-3 webinars that help improve the understanding of staff and partners of the work being conducted in the region by NOAA and partners.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** This activity is entirely about communications and outreach. Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly

reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$1400

\$1400 to support RC travel to NOAA offices and in support of leadership visits.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Develop/update “NOAA in the Region” communication pieces, implementing the ReCo branding styles/formats (Q1-4).
  - Update 2-pager
  - Maintain and update website
  - Update presentations
  - Possibly create a SECART annual report (2-pager)
- Continue producing the weekly news for the region (Q1-4).
- Occasional updates to HQ for accomplishments, regional news, and upcoming events (Q1-4).
- Enhance NOAA leadership visits to the region by working with the Program Coordination Office (PCO) and Line Office staff and providing “local” intelligence (as needed, Q1-4).
- Respond to specific requests for information or support from NOAA HQ or DOC (Q1-4).
- Meet with NOAA staff and partners in the region to enhance awareness of NOAA’s responsibilities and capabilities within the region (Q1-4).
- Monitor and assist SECART working groups with outreach support as needed (Q1 – Q4).

**Activity A4. Promote an informed, skilled, and diverse NOAA workforce in the region.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

**Leaders:**

- Activity Team: Geno Olmi, Beth Dieveney, Chip Kasper, Makeda Okolo, Todd Kellison, Kyla Breland

**Key Participants:**

- All SECART members
- Individual NOAA Offices and partners as appropriate

- Possibly Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in region

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

LOs typically work independently, including to train and diversify their workforce. SECART can serve to facilitate connections, information sharing, and collaboration across the region.

Additionally, SECART may be able to bring training and recruitment to the region to benefit all LO offices/staff in that region.

**Target audience:**

The target audience is twofold: First is NOAA staff, as we provide opportunities for NOAA staff to become more cognizant of the breadth and reach of NOAA activities. Second, is potential NOAA employees - recruiting talented individuals of various backgrounds.

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

This activity should improve the awareness and understanding of, and appreciation for, NOAA and partners' products and services in the region.

**Approach:**

This activity has two main components - increasing "One NOAA" awareness among NOAA staff in the region, and reaching out to minority/underrepresented populations to improve awareness of NOAA as a potential workplace.

We will work with ReCo HQ and a comms contractor (MCCI) to develop a regional NOAA video which can be used to inform existing NOAA staff and also to recruit new talent. This video can be used in "brown bag" seminars at various NOAA offices and at universities (including HBCUs) to attract talent. Develop slides/handouts that highlight in the region opportunities, such as internships, fellowships, work-study programs, etc.

Recognize and confirm ties between this activity and the NOAA Ambassador Program, including use of materials developed by that program.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** This activity is entirely about communications and outreach.

Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$1500

\$1500 for within the region travel for the project team.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Create a Regional “One NOAA” video (Q1-Q3).
- Create an outreach plan for the video (Q2).
- NOAA in the Region lightning talk webinar series (Q1-4).
- Hold brown bag presentations at NOAA Offices (if travel allowed) (Q2-4).
- Diversity and inclusion efforts - “One NOAA” presentations to HBCUs (Q2-3).

**Activity A5. Engage with Congressional Staff to Convey the Value of NOAA and Partner Activities.****Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**Leaders:**

- Activity Team: Rich Okulski, Debra Hernandez, Susan White, Kenneth Erickson, Chris Taylor, Makeda Okolo, Geno Olmi, Ellen Mecray

**Key Participants:**

- All SECART members
- Individual NOAA Offices, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA), and partners as appropriate

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

Congressional members and their staff are often not aware of the benefits to “their” constituents provided by the products and services of NOAA and partners.

**Target audience:**

The target audience is Congressional District Staff in the region and, hopefully by extension, congressional members. NOAA staff and partners are themselves a secondary audience by building relationships and learning from each other.

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

This activity should improve the awareness and understanding of, and appreciation for, NOAA and partner’s products and services in the region.

**Approach:**

The purpose of congressional engagement is to inform district staff of the work being done by

NOAA and partners that benefits the citizens of the state. In FY20, SECART developed a congressional engagement strategy. The strategy provides guidance on determining why, how, and when to conduct congressional engagement events. It also calls for two in-region congressional engagement events each year. Given COVID-19 considerations, we will assess the value of holding one or more events as virtual. In FY21, we held two “meet and greet” calls with district staff. In FY22 we will expand our engagement with congressional district staff.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** This activity is entirely about communications and outreach. Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$1800

\$1800 for meeting room space (if needed) and to support travel of participants, as needed.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Following the congressional engagement strategy, refine the approach for conducting congressional engagements in FY22, including locations, partners, target staff, etc. (Q1).
- Conduct virtual engagements (Q1 and Q2).
- Prepare summary report of event and highlight in communications (Q2).
- Conduct an in-person engagement session (Q3-4).
- Prepare summary report of event and highlight in communications (Q3-4).

**Activity A6. Provide organization, coordination, and leadership for SECART to be effective in accomplishing its mission.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**Activity Lead(s):**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Rich Okulski (NWS, SECART Lead)
- Dana Wusinich-Mendez (NOAA/NOS)
- Beth Dieveney (NOAA NOAA/NMFS)
- Chip Kasper (NOAA/NWS)
- Shirley Murillo (NOAA/OAR)

**Key participants:**

SECART members and collaborators on specific activities

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

SECART, as with all the NOAA Regional Collaboration Teams, has a goal of improving communication and collaboration across NOAA offices and with NOAA's partners to tackle issues of importance to the region. For SECART to be successful in meeting that goal, there must be organization and communication within the team to ensure that opportunities within the region are identified and pursued.

**Target audience:**

The first order target audience is the team members, but ultimately the target audience is constituents that benefit from NOAA's products and services in the region.

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

This activity will result in SECART accomplishing the vision of regional collaboration and thereby NOAA providing more effective and efficient services.

**Approach:**

For regional collaboration teams to be effective, they must have regular and effective coordination and communication. This activity is the nurturing of SECART, including planning and organizing team meetings and calls, development and execution of annual operating plan, preparing and tracking the budget and spend plans, and regularly communicating with the SECART Leadership Team. SECART continues to refine the purpose and format of meetings to be more productive and efficient. This particular activity is about the organization and business of SECART but touches on all the other elements in this operating plan.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$7,400

\$7,400 to support team member travel to one in-person SECART meetings in the region (if their LO is unable to cover travel costs).

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Complete FY22 Annual Activity Plan with spend plan (Q1).
- Present AAP to the Advisory Group (Q1 or Q2).
- Host one virtual and one in-person team meeting (Q2, Q4).
- Convene monthly team calls and distribute notes (Q1 – Q4).

- Accomplish FY22 Activity Plan (Q1 – Q4).
- Update our “FY19-22 Strategic Direction” document for FY23-26 (Q2-3)
- Draft FY23 Annual Activity Plan with spend plan (Q4).

## **Activity A7. Improve the capacity of NOAA’s inter-regional and national integrated services.**

### **Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

### **Activity Lead(s):**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Richard Okulski (NOAA/NWS, SECART Team Lead)
- Louisa Koch (ReCo National Team Lead)
- Meredith Cameron (ReCo HQ Liaison)

### **Key Participants:**

- Regional Team Leads and Coordinators
- ReCo HQ
- NOAA Regional Collaboration Council

### **Situation/problem this project will address:**

SECART is one of eight NOAA Regional Collaboration Teams. For the broader network to be successful, there must be organization and communication to ensure that regions are addressing NOAA priorities and that best practices within regions are shared among regions.

### **Target audience:**

The target audience for this activity is the Regional Collaboration Network, including ReCo HQ and the other Regional Collaboration Teams. NOAA Leadership is also an audience of this activity.

### **Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

This activity will result in the Regional Collaboration Network being an effective mechanism to enhance NOAA’s services regionally and nationally.

### **Approach:**

SECART will remain active in bi-weekly Regional Coordinator calls, monthly Regional



Collaboration Council calls, and other activities that serve to coordinate and integrate the network. The SECART RC will help plan and participate in the annual RC meeting. Finally, SECART will explore opportunities to work with the North Atlantic Regional Team and the Gulf of Mexico Regional Team to identify fruitful areas of integration.

The objectives of this activity are to:

- Improve inter-regional coordination and identify any regional emerging issues that SECART can help address
- Support the NOAA Regional Collaboration Council and ReCo HQ in oversight responsibilities, and influence strategic direction setting, for NOAA regional collaboration
- Participate in the annual Regional Coordinator meeting (June)
- Continue participation in network-wide coordination activities (calls, meetings, etc.)
- Pursue opportunities for cross-regional coordination on topics of mutual interest
- Plan and execute 2022 Regional Collaboration Network Workshop in March 2022 in Charleston (Q1-3)

**Comms / Outreach Plan:** Accomplishments achieved through this activity will be reported to ReCo HQ via the weekly reporting mechanism, and if sufficiently significant, will be highlighted on the SECART website and included in the annual ReCo report to leadership.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$2600

\$1000 for Team Lead to travel to Network Workshop (March 2022, Charleston); \$1600 for RC travel to annual RC meeting (June 2022, Mass).

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Participate in the Regional Coordinator annual meeting (Q3).
- Plan and host National Regional Collaboration Workshop (Q1-3).
- Annual report of ReCo accomplishments (Q1 for previous year).
- Participate in bi-weekly Regional Coordinator calls (Q1 – Q4).
- Participate in monthly Regional Collaboration Council calls (Q1 – Q4).
- Support ReCo HQ as needed to further regional collaboration (Q1 – Q4).
- Contribute to weekly reporting as appropriate (Q1-4).
- Explore opportunities with the NART and GoMRCT for better coordination on topics of mutual interest.

# **SECART Priority: Improve Economic, Environmental and Social Resilience of Communities to Weather, Water and Climate Impacts.**

## **Activity B1. Resilience Webinar Series.**

### **Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

### **Project Lead(s):**

Shirley Murillo  
Chip Kasper

### **Key Participants:**

Dan Brown (NOAA/NWS National Hurricane Center)  
Roberto Garcia (NOAA/NWS, WFO San Juan)  
John Schmidt (NOAA/NWS/SERFC)  
Other participants as appropriate for particular webinars

### **Situation/problem this project will address:**

The understanding of, and forecast products for, tropical cyclones and their impacts are constantly evolving. Emergency management officials and broadcast media need to be able to access and understand these advancements so that they can properly use and relay critical information to their constituents. In addition, there is an identified need to raise awareness and educate NOAA staff and partners about NOAA work related to hurricanes, extreme weather events, and other hazards, and NOAA efforts to enhance resilience to those events. While many NOAA offices have experts with the capability to describe resilience to severe events and weather, they lack the infrastructure and staff time to coordinate, advertise, and execute webinars to a large audience of NOAA staff and key partners.

### **Target audience:**

Emergency managers, state and community resilience managers, broadcast meteorologists, those responsible for hurricane preparations within organizations, nongovernmental organizations, coastal managers, and other NOAA employees in the region.

### **Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

Through this webinar series, SECART facilitates the understanding of the latest products, services, and research NOAA produces to enhance the capacity of communities to plan for, and respond to risks posed by hurricanes, flooding, and other events. Targeted outreach and communication efforts facilitate delivery of resilience-relevant information to populations at risk to hurricane hazards and impacts.

### **Approach:**

Webinars are a cost-effective tool to educate key partners and constituents on a range of resilience related activities. For FY22, we will continue to provide hurricane related webinars and as well as expanding to include additional resilience related webinars (quarterly), to better reflect the contributions of multiple line offices and partners that culminate in improved NOAA products and services.

The Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series is targeted to Emergency Managers and Broadcast Media to inform them of the latest products and services from NOAA related to tropical cyclones. The series has been extremely popular - for the target audience as well as others. We have in the past expanded our offerings to topics in addition to tropical cyclones and plan to do so again in FY22. All webinars will be regionally-relevant and focus on products and services of NOAA and partners in the region.

Objectives include:

- (1) Keep Hurricane Awareness Webinar Series" - Planning five webinars plus a summary webinar in Spanish;
- (2) Encourage/plan/host webinars on other topics such as: Hazardous environmental outlooks (e.g., spring flood, hurricane, drought, fire weather), resilience financing, environmental health, HABs, and other extreme events; possibly sharing lessons learned from hurricanes; sharing roles and responsibilities of programs; resilience activities of offices, webinar on FEMA speak;
- (3) Coordinate with Meredith Muth on SE Climate Webinar Series.

### **Comms / Outreach Plan:**

To continue reaching and expanding the audience we will (1) advertise the hurricane webinars through the North Atlantic, Gulf and the SECART regions, as hurricanes affect the entire east coast and Gulf of the United States, (2) continue to provide a Spanish language version of select webinars; and (3) advertise the webinar series through SECART networks (including Weather Forecast Offices, Sea Grant, the ONE NOAA Science Seminars). Webinars will be recorded and subsequently posted on the SECART website, along with presentation materials, as a resource.

### **Cost/Funding Source: \$1200**

\$1200 Rev.com fee for subtitles in English and Spanish for Hurricane Webinars.

**Key Milestones/Deliverables:**

- Finalize list of webinar topics (Q1).
- Hold Hurricane Awareness Webinar series April-June (Q3).
- Host other resilience webinars - perhaps one in each of Q1, Q2 and Q4.

**Activity B2. Build regional resilience through the Southeast and Caribbean Disaster Resilience Partnership.****Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

**Activity Lead(s):**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Debra Hernandez (SECOORA)
- Lindy Betzhold (NOAA/OCM, and Chair of Advisory Board)

**Key Participants:**

SCDRP Members

Adam Stein (NOS/OCM)

Ellen Mecray (NESDIS/NCEI)

Meredith Muth (NIDIS)

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

The Southeast and Caribbean Region has experienced several significant weather and climate-related events over the past six years, and the capabilities of NOAA and its various components have been at the forefront of planning, prediction, assessing, responding, and mitigating for each. For a community to be disaster-resilient, planning and partnerships with all sectors of society to develop comprehensive approaches to disaster preparedness and recovery are necessary.

**Target audience:**

Under the SCDRP, the target audience is beneficially expanded to include more private sector participation while also including the “traditional” audiences of the CCOP: Climate and resilience practitioners in the region, NERRs, local communities, states, small business, Sea Grant Programs, Universities, etc - anyone working to improve resilience to climate change and extreme events.

### **Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

The SCDRP provides a forum for climate/disaster resilience practitioners to share information and assist our region in becoming more resilient.

### **Approach:**

The "Southeast Disaster Recovery Partnership" started as a NOAA Coastal Resilience Grant and subsequently added the Caribbean to its name and changed from "Recovery" to "Resilience". In FY20, the long-time SECART-supported Southeast and Caribbean Climate Community of Practice merged with the SCDRP, so as not to have two entities in the region trying to accomplish the same objectives. The SCDRP is a forum for climate and disaster professionals to exchange information on topics of response, recovery, adaptation, and planning related to short and long-term disasters. Members include local, state and federal government agencies, non-profits, and the private sector.

The SCDRP is working to complete a strategic plan which will guide its activities for the next few years. SECART will support the SCDRP to be an inclusive forum for sharing information to support disaster (short and long-term) resilience in the region. The SCDRP hosts an annual meeting which allows in-person exchange of information and development of relationships. The annual meeting will be virtual (again) in late January 2022. All of the proposed leads are members of the SCDRP Advisory Board.

### **Cost/Funding Source: \$3800**

\$800 for RC travel to engage in discussions and advisory board meetings as needed. \$3000 to support outreach activities of the SCDRP.

### **Key Milestones/Deliverables:**

- Serve on the SCDRP Advisory Board to help guide the direction of the Partnership (Q1-Q4).
- Q1: Complete Membership Model
- Q2: Host annual meeting (virtual)
- Q2: Distribute notes, slides, from meeting

## **Activity B3. Disaster Resilience: Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region.**

### **Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

**Leader(s):**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Chip Kasper (NOAA/NWS, WFO Key West, FL)
- Shirley Murillo (NOAA/OAR/AOML)
- Merritt Ryan (Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, Univ. Miami)
- Emily Becker (Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, Univ. Miami)
- Rich Okulski (NOAA/NWS, WFO Columbia, SC)

**Key Participants:**

All NOAA Offices.

Engaging NOAA partners to be sure the product is useful to them also.

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

NOAA staff, partners, and stakeholders all have identified a need to better understand the roles, capabilities, and responsibilities of NOAA offices, across the Southeast and Caribbean Region. This need has been expressed during workshops, training sessions, and before, during, and following recent disasters (e.g., Hurricane Matthew in 2016, Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, Hurricanes Michael and Florence in 2018, and Hurricane Dorian in 2019). NOAA staff, partners, and stakeholders also have identified the need for easy access to contacts at NOAA offices during various stages of the disaster management cycle (i.e., preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation/adaptation).

**Target audience:**

NOAA staff, partners, and stakeholders in the Southeast and Caribbean Region.

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

- Potential lives saved and mitigation of impacts through improved coordination among NOAA staff, and between NOAA staff and their partners and stakeholders.
- Leveraging resources among NOAA offices and between NOAA offices and its partner organizations in the Southeast and Caribbean Region through more efficient and effective collaboration, facilitated by the Guide and improved communication and new opportunities.

**Approach:**

During the first three Disaster Resilience (aka Emergency Response Posture, aka All Hazards) Workshops, participants were highly enthusiastic about creating a NOAA Disaster Resource Guide for the region. Utilizing an NRAP in 2019 and a CIMAS student in 2021, we have made considerable progress in developing the guide. By late August 2021 we are ready to send a draft version out for review. Unlikely that we will complete the guide by the end of FY21.

Complete development of the Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region. Work to be done includes:

- 1) receive and adjudicate comments from reviewers,
- 2) complete "final" version,
- 3) Develop and execute dissemination outreach plan, and
- 4) draft "field cards" for rapid lookup of authority and contacts.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:**

A review plan was developed and will likely form the basis of the dissemination plan. The status and completion of the Guide will be communicated to the team and to ReCo HQ.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$5000.

\$3000 to support travel of two activity leads to work with faculty and a student at CIMAS. \$800 for supplies, printing, etc as needed to complete and distribute the guide.

Supplemental funding; \$10,000 in FY20 funds was included in the CIMAS award (from NOAA) to provide an opportunity for a student to work with NOAA on completion of the guide.

**Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Complete and distribute final guide in Q1.
- Complete and distribute field cards in Q2 .

**B4. Improving Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region:  
Exercise with Partners for Large-Scale Disasters.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**Leader(s):**

- Mike Proud (NOAA/NWS, WFO Columbia, SC)
- Rich Okulski (NOAA/NWS, WFO Columbia, SC)

**Key Participants:**

NWS, NOS, NMFS, NOS Disaster Preparedness Program, SC Div Emergency Management, US Coast Guard

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

The Southeast and Caribbean Region has experienced several significant weather and climate-related events over the past six years, and the capabilities of NOAA and its various components have been at the forefront of planning, prediction, assessing, responding, and mitigating for each. For a community to be disaster-resilient, planning and partnerships with all sectors of society to develop comprehensive approaches to disaster preparedness and recovery are necessary.

**Target audience:**

The target audience for this activity is NOAA offices and partners involved in emergency management (e.g., state and local emergency management offices, USGS).

**Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

Invited participants would include federal, state, and local emergency response officials who require “environmental intelligence” from NOAA employees to execute their disaster response and recovery mission.

The NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team would incorporate the best practices and lessons learned into the *Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region*.

**Approach:**

Prior Disaster Resilience Workshops (2017, 2018, 2019) focused on gaining a better understanding of NOAA program roles and responsibilities during the preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation phases of disaster management. A workshop planned for March 2020 in Charleston, with an earthquake as the disaster, was postponed/canceled because of the pandemic. We rescheduled for March 2021, however we needed to postpone it again due to pandemic travel restrictions.

We are tentatively planning for the 2022 Workshop to be held in Charleston, Savannah, GA, or Columbia, SC in Q2 or Q3. To reach the widest audience possible, the presentations will be “broadcast” on the web using a platform such as GoToMeeting. This will allow us to reach those unable to attend for all three days as well as those limited by travel funds.

The objective is to hold the workshop planned for 2020 in 2022. Focus on response and or recovery with All-hazards to bring together the NOAA, federal, state and local partners/responders. 2 days of presentations and discussions with a one day exercise/simulation, with a morning response and afternoon recovery type scenario. That would allow everyone to see the capabilities of each other and how we can improve our cooperation during planning, preparation, response and restoration. In addition, we will also consider holding virtual options of such workshops. Virtual options, while



losing some of the in-person benefits, might allow us to reach additional NOAA staff and partners, including more local specificity.

For all agencies in attendance to achieve a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of those in attendance, we plan to:

- Improve abilities to rapidly share information, technology, and equipment in the response and recovery phases across agencies.
- Allow all agencies to promote their abilities, technology, and research as well as partner with agencies which can help further their abilities.
- Increase direct access to a large number of response, recovery, and restoration partners, allowing new relationships to be forged.
- Include university and higher education programs/students to have opportunities to participate and assist agencies with research projects.
- Incorporate the best practices and lessons learned into planning, response, recovery, and restoration phases, as well as the *Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region*.

#### **Comms / Outreach Plan:**

Activity Leads and key partners will promote the workshop by notifying contacts with federal, state, and local agencies. A website will be established to facilitate communication and coordination, and selected agency contacts will be asked to present at the workshop, detailing their agency's mission, expertise, and capacities.

**Cost/Funding Source:** \$5000. \$1000 to be used for a meeting facility for approximately 150 people for three days with room to have breakout sessions and groups for the exercise (inquiring about involving local universities or locations on the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center complex to help lower costs). \$4000 for travel expenses of invited speakers. If a free meeting facility can be found those funds will also be applied to travel support.

#### **Key Milestones/Tasks:**

- Q1: Convene a steering committee to guide FY22 efforts.
- Q1-Q2 planning workshop.
- Q3 Workshop.
- Q4 write up workshop report.

## **Activity B5. Disaster Resilience: Addressing previously identified needs and sharing NOAA relevant information.**

### **Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's broad mission and regional capabilities

### **Activity Lead(s):**

- Chip Kasper (NOAA/NWS, WFO Key West, FL)
- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Rich Okulski (NOAA/NWS, WFO Columbia, SC)
- Katie Krushinski (DPP)
- Leah Odeneal (DPP)

### **Key Participants:**

- NOAA Offices throughout the region
- Partners (such as CZ and Sea Grant)

### **Situation/problem this project will address:**

We have held three successful workshops largely focusing on increasing NOAA's preparedness for and resilience to disasters. Numerous recommendations emerged from these workshops, only a few of which have been acted on to date. In FY20, we started examining workshop recommendations. In FY22, we will examine these recommendations further, and develop subsequent actions which will achieve additional "follow through" from our prior workshop engagements. In addition, we plan to review suggestions from the resilience conversation at the joint OCM/SECART meeting in 2019, for possible follow-up actions to be taken by SECART (and perhaps, OCM).

### **Target audience:**

NOAA staff, partners, and stakeholders in the Southeast and Caribbean Region.

### **Anticipated Outcomes/Benefits:**

Very useful information and ideas were generated during previous resilience workshops. The purpose of this activity is to capture and share that information and knowledge with colleagues.

### **Approach:**

In FY20, we explored the recommendations and actions resulting from our three previous workshops - in 2017, 2018, and 2019. This activity will be to explore the After Action Reports and workshop notes in more detail, and create a list of tangible recommendations. One such

recommendation from the initial scan is for SECART to provide a site/forum for sharing information and knowledge across the region. With the SECART website transition (from Wordpress to Drupal) now completed, we have the opportunity to share workshop reports, the *Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region*, and other materials. We will coordinate with the NOAA Disaster Preparedness program regarding the types of information being shared (avoid redundancy)

**Cost/Funding Source: \$0**

No funds requested for FY22.

**Key Milestones/Deliverables:**

- Q1 - complete analysis of recommendations and actions and establish reasonable goals.
- Q2 - determine what content to add to the site.
- Q2-Q3 - populate web page.

**Activity B6. Climate and Equity Roundtables.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**Project Lead(s):**

- Geno Olmi (SECART Coordinator)
- Ellen Mecray and Sharon Mesick (NOAA/NESDIS/NCEI Regional Climate Services)
- Rich Okulski (NOAA/NWS, WFO Columbia, SC)
- Susan White

**Key participants:**

NOS/OCM, OAR/CPO, NWS/WFOs, NESDIS/NCEI, SECOORA, Municipalities, and NGOs

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

Underserved communities are often highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Community leaders and groups often do not have the best scientific information to mitigate those adverse impacts on behalf of their constituents.

**Target audience:**

NOAA is the target audience in an effort to learn from partners and stakeholders how the agency

may provide products and services that may be used to reduce risk of underserved populations.

**Anticipated outcomes/benefits:**

The roundtables will give underserved communities and key partner groups the opportunity to highlight local challenges posed by climate change. The roundtables will also provide NOAA with actionable information to develop short and long term plans to enhance climate services to those communities.

**Approach:**

NOAA Leadership requested that Regional Collaboration Teams organize a series of "Climate and Equity Roundtables" to address the administration's priorities. In the Southeast and Caribbean, SECART is working in partnership with Regional Climate Services and with other NOAA staff and partners to organize two roundtable events focusing (separately) on "heat health" and "coastal flooding". In FY21, we held conversations with a few NOAA offices and a few partners to begin scoping a roundtable focused on heat health. The tentative plan is to hold a roundtable in Q1 (November) focusing on heat health in two or three urban areas - Miami, Charleston, and (possibly) Raleigh-Durham. We are tentatively planning to host a second Climate and Equity Roundtable focusing on coastal flooding. This event would be held in Q2 or Q3 and may be virtual or in-person depending on the COVID situation at the time. After each roundtable event, we will capture key points and lessons learned and compile those with outcomes captured by other regional teams.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:**

Information received during the roundtable event(s) will be compiled with information gathered during other roundtable events from other areas. In addition, we will report the occurrence of and results from the roundtable events.

**Cost/Funding Source: \$2500**

Travel assistance for roundtable participants

**Key Milestones/Deliverables:**

- Q1- host "heat health" roundtable virtually in November;
- Q2 - complete "write up" of heat health roundtable;
- Q2 or Q3 - host "coastal flooding" roundtable event (in-person if possible);
- Q3-4 complete write up of coastal flooding roundtable event

# **SECART Priority: Promote the sustainability of the region's living marine resources and the habitats upon which they depend**

## **Activity C1: Connecting NOAA Fellows with SECART.**

### **Regional Collaboration Goal(s) Addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action

### **Lead(s):**

- Rebecca Ellin (NC DEQ)
- Dana Wusinich-Mendez (NOAA Corals)

### **Key Partner(s), Collaborators and Contributors:**

- NOS OCM, NOS NCCOS, NOS ONMS, NMFS SEFSC, OAR, NOAA CRCP, SE and Caribbean State/Territory CZM, Coral and NERR programs

### **Situation or problem that this project will address:**

NOAA sponsors and hosts various fellowship programs that are intended to both provide support to the programs in which fellows are placed, as well as offer professional development and real work experience in marine and coastal ecosystem management and science to the next generation of conservation and management professionals. These fellows and scholars are placed with specific programs and may not have access to many relevant NOAA resources and personnel in the region. This project seeks to better connect NOAA fellows and scholars in the SE and Caribbean Region with a variety of NOAA offices and programs.

### **Target audience:**

- NOAA Fellows (e.g., Corals, Margaret A. Davidson, Coastal Management, Digital Coast, Hollings Scholars), State/ Territory CZ, NERR and Coral programs, ONMS, NMFS SEFSC, NOAA offices in the region hosting Hollings Scholars

### **Desired Outcomes/Benefits:**

- Increased knowledge for NOAA Fellows of and access to NOAA Programs across all LO's in the SE and Caribbean Region
- Increased awareness within SECART of fellowship programs and the work that fellows are conducting in NOAA offices and with State/ Territory partners.

**Approach:**

The goal of this activity is to connect NOAA Fellows (Coral Reef Management, Davidson, Coastal Management, Digital Coast, Hollings Scholars, Nancy Foster Scholars, NMFS SEFSC fellows) with the regional team in meaningful ways to share fellow project information and create networking and professional development opportunities for the fellows. SECART will act as a vehicle to expose NOAA fellows to other NOAA offices, programs and activities in the region. We will facilitate a virtual meet and greet event where fellows learn about SECART and meet (available and interested) SECART members, connect fellows with team members who are interested in engaging with the fellows, invite the fellows to present their work on occasional monthly SECART meetings, support attendance for 1-2 fellows at in-person SECART meetings when they occur in that fellow's state or territory.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:**

Summaries of the meet and greet event, fellow presentations to SECART, and fellow attendance at SECART meetings will be submitted for weekly collaboration stories and shared with NOAA Fellow program leads to utilize per their communications mechanisms. The activity leads will meet with the NOAA Fellow program leads periodically to coordinate communication to fellows and timing of events, and assess impact of the activity.

**Estimated Cost and Funding Source(s):** \$1000

\$1000 to support Fellows' travel to a SECART meeting.

**Key Project Milestones:**

- Q3 - virtual SECART/ NOAA fellows meet and greet event
- Q3, Q4 - invite 2 fellows to present their efforts to SECART
- Q4 - bring 1-2 fellows to in person SECART meeting

**Activity C2. SE States Shellfish Sanitation Forecasting Strategy.****Regional Collaboration Goal(s) Addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**Lead(s):**

- John Schmidt (NOAA/NWS/SERFC)
- David Glenn (NOAA/NWS/WFO Morehead City)
- A.K. Leight (NOAA/NOS/NCCOS)

**Key Participants:**

NCCOS, NWS, FDA, NMFS, SeaGrant, State shellfish sanitation and aquaculture agencies

**Situation or problem that this project will address:**

There is a great range of data analysis capabilities and methodologies employed across the southeast US states in the execution of state shellfish sanitation missions. Recent SECART projects supporting the post-processing of NWS precipitation products for application in this community's decision-making process. In addition, recent interactions with NCCOS/Oxford Lab and the state of NC and the NWS SERFC are highlighting the need for a regional meeting to share best practices and identify gaps such that NOAA entities might provide more effective and efficient support for this community.

**Target audience:**

State shellfish sanitation and aquaculture entities.

**Desired Outcomes/Benefits:**

- Best practices will be shared amongst state officials.
- Gaps in data availability and usage will be identified and addressed.
- Potential decision support tools and datasets will be identified during a gap analysis with action item assignments or small teams established to address.
- Assessment of the feasibility/need of expansion to the aquaculture community in FY22.

**Approach:**

The FY21 virtual meeting was a considerably scaled-back version of the FY20 meeting with the intent to touch base with state shellfish entities and update on the established projects from the FY20 meeting. Due to COVID response and staffing changes, it was good just to reconnect the group. The current plan for the FY22 meeting is to hold an approximately 1.5 day, in-person meeting composed of 1/2 day for sanitation audience/NOAA, 1/2 day for academic research and existing data services/utilities for both sanitation and aquaculture groups, and a final 1/2 day for aquaculture audience/NOAA.

**Comms / Outreach Plan:**

Communicating with constituency groups and federal partners via email, phone call, and conference call in preparation phase. Report of the meeting will be produced, including action items. Outcomes will be shared with the ReCo National Office and posted to the SECART website.

**Estimated Cost and Funding Source(s): \$5500**

Support for participant travel..

Plan B: Move FY22 requested funds to SECOORA. Re-scope this shellfish sanitation/aquaculture assembly to an FY23 meeting.

Plan C: A backup plan in the event of extended COVID-related travel restrictions is to hold another 1/2 to full day virtual meeting with the express goal of providing some demonstration and presentations of existing academic and federal projects to both the sanitation and aquaculture communities for awareness. In essence, just the middle half-day of the proposed 1.5 day meeting.

**Key Project Milestones:**

- Establish Planning Team (Q1).
- Execute meeting (Q2-Q3).
- Produce document of meeting notes and action items (Q4).

**Activity C3. Improve awareness of NOAA resources and capabilities to address ecosystem issues in the SE and Caribbean.**

**Regional Collaboration goals addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Improve the understanding of and respect for NOAA's mission and regional capabilities

**SECART Lead(s):**

- Rebecca Ellin (NC NERR),
- Dana Wusinich-Mendez (NOAA/NOS/OCM),

**Key Participants:**

- Ginny Fay (NOAA/NMFS)
- Scott Cross (NOAA/NESDIS/NCEI)
- Chris Taylor (NOAA/ NCCOS)
- Todd Kellison (NOAA/NMFS/SEFSC)

**Situation/problem this project will address:**

State and Federal resource managers and non-governmental organizations are not aware of the full range of NOAA data resources and expertise available regionally to inform decision making. SECART serves as a conduit to NOAA resources and capabilities including online data portals and inventories relevant to ecosystem management and coastal decision making in the Southeast and Caribbean Region.

**Target audience:**

State Coastal Zone Management Programs (CZMs), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE),



## Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Non-Governmental Organizations

### **Anticipated outcomes/benefits:**

Improve access to NOAA expertise and data resources for decision making related to ecosystem management or coastal natural resources. This project team has identified specific areas for focus in FY2022

- Receive status updates on two Habitat Focus Areas in the SECART region
- Increase awareness of ecosystem-related restoration
- Explore needs and opportunities for regional collaboration to support information sharing on ecosystem-related initiatives and trends in the Southeast and Caribbean
- Share information on the SE US Ecosystem Status Report

### **Approach:**

SECART serves as conduit to NOAA resources and capabilities including online data portals and inventories relevant to ecosystem management and coastal decision making in the Southeast and Caribbean Region. We will maintain and promote awareness of ecosystem and habitat related activities in the region, including: Activities:

- Maintain awareness of habitat mapping activities in the SE and Caribbean region (new: ESRI Caribbean GeoPortal)
- Engage Habitat Focus Areas (FL, PR) to expand awareness of those efforts, track progress, and seek opportunities for collaboration.
- Increase awareness of ecosystem-related restoration (e.g., Everglades restoration, Restoration Center projects) - new efforts to focus on in FY22: sediment availability, dredging and placement, thin layer placement for marsh enhancement w/SLR, resilience planning, sediment availability/dredging related activities
- Support information sharing on ecosystem-related initiatives and trends in the Southeast and Caribbean (e.g., living shorelines (OCM living shorelines inventory), ecosystem-based management, coral reef ecosystem management, marine debris damage and assessment). Promote webinars of interest to the SE&Carib region.
- Maintain awareness and assist with distributing updates (including webinars and draft reports as available) related to NMFS-SEFSC-led:
  - SE US Atlantic Ecosystem Status Report (Todd Kellison)
  - SE US Atlantic Climate Vulnerability Assessment (Todd Kellison)
  - Caribbean Ecosystem Status Report (Mandy Karnauskas)
- Maintain awareness: National Marine Ecosystem Status website / NOAA Ecosystem Indicator Working Group
- Maintain awareness of development of Climate Regional Action Plans 2.0 (Todd Kellison);
- Monitor offshore energy development and shares updates where NOAA is engaged in planning, review or other initiatives (Chris Taylor and Todd Kellison);

- Share research needs and monitoring priorities for HAB monitoring network (SECOORA/NCCOS)
- Monitor progress on 30x30 initiative for opportunities for SECART engagement (Beth)

**Comms / Outreach Plan:**

Outreach from these activities will be communicated through weekly and annual reports to ReCo.

**Cost/Funding Source: \$0**

No SECART funds required for this effort this year.

**Key Milestones:**

These ad hoc activities will not carry key milestones.

**Activity C4. Support for NOAA Response to Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease.**

**Regional Collaboration Goal(s) Addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action

**Lead(s):**

- Dana Wusinich-Mendez (NOAA/NOS/OCM)

**Key Participants:**

OASOA, NOS (OCM, ONMS, NCCOS), NMFS (SERO, PIRO), OAR (AOML), Florida Sea Grant

**Situation or problem that this project will address:**

Coral reefs in Florida, the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico are currently in the midst of an epidemic of a newly identified coral disease referred to as Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD) which is affecting approximately half of the existing hard coral species found in Florida and one third of those found in the wider Caribbean region. This particular disease is characterized by rapid tissue loss and high mortality rates. While the disease was first identified on Florida’s reefs in 2014, there had been no reports of its spread to the wider Caribbean region until early 2018. It has now been reported in Mexico, Belize, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, the US Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, St. Maarten, Saint Martin, St. Eustatius, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, Honduras, Martinique and Dominica.

**Target audience:**

Coral reef research, monitoring, and management partners confronting SCTLD.

**Desired Outcomes/Benefits:**

Support for local SCTLD response efforts in FL, USVI and PR

**Approach:**

NOAA’s Coral Reef Conservation Program and the National Coral Disease Coordinator at Florida Sea Grant are in the process of facilitating a cross LO process to develop a 5-year implementation plan for the [NOAA Strategy for Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Response and Prevention](#) that will guide the agencies efforts to prevent, detect and respond to this new coral disease in U.S. coral reef ecosystems. Florida Sea Grant has developed 2 internship positions to support implementation of the plan in FY22. SECART resources would provide continued financial support for one intern at Florida Sea Grant dedicated to increasing capacity and support for SCTLD response efforts in Florida, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.

A student intern supported by SECART would focus on the following activities:

- Developing, updating, and distributing communications materials, including the SCTLD prospectus funded by SECART in FY 21 and an SCTLD website hosted by Florida Sea Grant.
- Updating and distributing an SCTLD resource list, which provides SCTLD response practitioners with access to key informational and technical support
- Support for coordination and implementation of the annual U.S. Caribbean Regional SCTLD Workshop, focused on collaboration, training, and strategic planning for Puerto Rico and the USVI

**Estimated Cost and Funding Source(s):** \$5000

\$5000 to support an intern at FL Sea Grant to work on SCTLD response efforts.

**Key Milestones:**

- Q3 develop SOW for intern and include in Florida Sea Grant proposal to NOAA;
- Q4 award FY22 funds to Florida Sea Grant, intern to be hired in FY23

**Activity C5. Enhance awareness of and participation in NOAA UxS developments with regional applicability.**

**Regional Collaboration Goal(s) Addressed:**

- Address regional challenges by connecting people and resources
- Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action

**Lead(s):**

- Debra Hernandez (SECOORA)
- Chris Taylor (NOAA/NOS/NCCOS)
- John McCombs (NOAA/NOS/OCM)
- Todd Kellison (NOAA/NMFS/SEFSC)
- Scott Cross (NOAA/NESDIS/NCEI)

**Key Partner(s), Collaborators and Contributors:**

SECOORA, NMFS (SEFSC and SERO), NOS (NCCOS, OCM, ONMS), OAR/AOML, Colleagues in Gulf of Mexico Region

**Situation or problem that this project will address:**

The capability and utility of Uncrewed Aerial and Marine Systems (UxSs) in support of ecosystem research, monitoring, and support for management decisions continues to increase. The [NOAA Uncrewed Systems Strategy](#), which was completed last year, provides a framework for UxS coordination within the regions.

SECART co-hosted a Drones in the Coastal Zone workshop in October 2021 that gathered agency, academic and private industry to understand key gaps and learn new approaches for applying UxS technologies. An outcome from this workshop was a call for a regional UxS community of practice to build upon successes in UxS use in coastal ecosystem management..

Implementation of the UxS strategy can be facilitated by improved communication and collaboration across line and program offices. For example, the NMFS Southeast Regional Strategic Plan includes a priority to work with SECOORA on developing UxS applications to reduce the cost of collecting and processing environmental and habitat data, and produce more accurate and timely scientific products. Similarly, a NERRS Catalyst Grant to incorporate drones into the vegetation/wetland habitat monitoring system has been funded. Drones would fill the gap between quadrat (1-m) mapping and medium resolution full system mapping. The project involving multiple partners will help to define best practices and approaches to bringing in drones to help map and monitor NERRS habitats.

SECART co-hosted a Drones in the Coastal Zone workshop in October 2021 that gathered agency, academic and private industry to understand key gaps and learn new approaches for applying UxS technologies. An outcome from this workshop was a call for a regional UxS community of practice to build upon successes in UxS use in coastal ecosystem management..

**Target audience:**

Scientists, coastal managers, especially habitat managers, shoreline managers. Technical users of the technology and users or decision makers that require data products.

### **Desired Outcomes/Benefits:**

- Enhanced regional awareness of NOAA UxS activities
- Increase awareness of UxS-related efforts across Southeast and Caribbean NOAA entities to increase collaboration and decrease duplication.
- Improved regional understanding for information sharing and networking in UxS across government, academic and industry partnerships

### **Approach:**

The leads for this activity will monitor developments with the NOAA Unmanned Systems Strategy and with UxS application and potential within their respective organizations (including outcomes of the "Drones in the Coastal Zone" workshop: and the "NERRS Catalyst Grant"), and convey updates as appropriate within SECART. The activity leads will explore options for sharing this information in the region and bringing such applications to use.

The activity leads will:

- Promote and distribute the Drones in the Coastal Zone workshop report
- Facilitate scoping meetings to define goals for a regional UAS Community of Practice following recommendations from the workshop report
- Monitor developments with the NOAA Uncrewed Systems Strategy and with UxS application and potential within their respective organizations
- Explore the possibility of scheduling a webinar focused on the NOAA Uncrewed Systems Strategy, and potentially other UxS-related webinars.
- Share updates and webinar opportunities through SECART and partner networks
- Help formalize the best practices documentation from the NERRS Catalyst Grant and assist with outreach beyond the scope of the NERRS. Share results in the region (eg. webinars) highlighting the resulting documents, methodologies, and outcomes.
- Funds will support FTE travel to demonstrations and trainings in UAS applications

### **Comms / Outreach Plan:**

- Provide updates to the SECART team regarding progress on the NERRS Catalyst Grant
- Provide updates to the SECART team regarding regional drone programs or initiatives

**Estimated Cost and Funding Source(s):** \$2500

Support federal travel for drone activities.

### **Key Project Milestones:**

- Quarterly updates from the NERRS Catalyst Grant project will be shared with SECART
- At least one presentation to SECART focused on UxS activities in the Southeast and/or Caribbean.

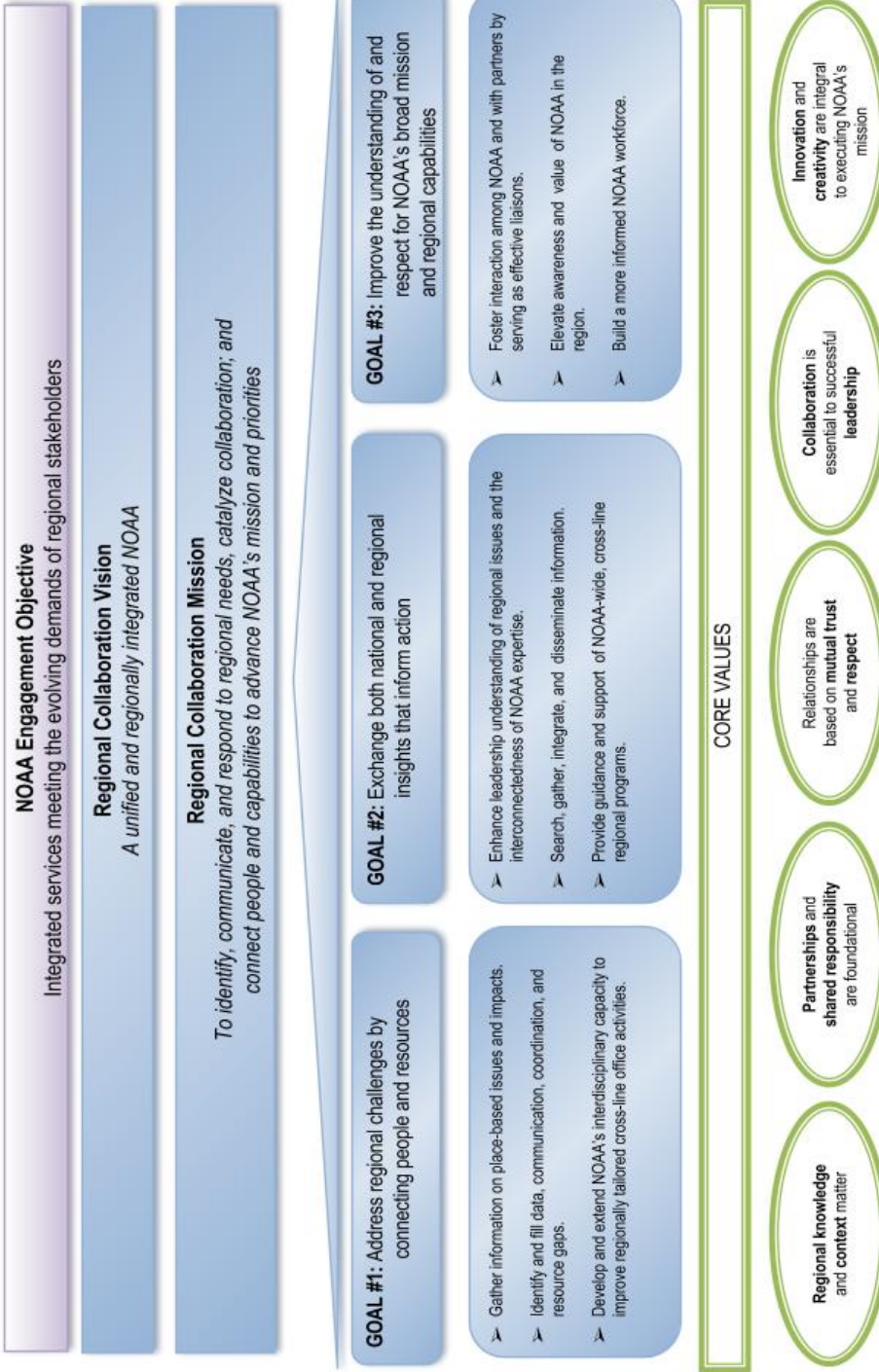
### III. Appendices

#### Appendix 1. Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team Membership (September 2020)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Alvarado, Nic	NOS/OCS	Miami, FL	<a href="mailto:nicholas.alvarado@noaa.gov">nicholas.alvarado@noaa.gov</a>
Becker, Emily	CIMAS/U.Miami	Miami, FL	<a href="mailto:emily.becker@rsmas.miami.edu">emily.becker@rsmas.miami.edu</a>
Cross, Scott	NESDIS/NCDDC	Charleston, SC	<a href="mailto:Scott.Cross@noaa.gov">Scott.Cross@noaa.gov</a>
Dieveney, Beth	NOS/ONMS	Cedar Key, FL	<a href="mailto:Beth.Dieveney@noaa.gov">Beth.Dieveney@noaa.gov</a>
Ellin, Rebecca	NC DEQ	Beaufort, NC	<a href="mailto:Rebecca.Ellin@ncdenr.gov">Rebecca.Ellin@ncdenr.gov</a>
Fay, Ginny	NMFS/SERO	St. Petersburg, FL	<a href="mailto:Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov">Virginia.Fay@noaa.gov</a>
Garcia, Roberto	NWS/WFO	San Juan, PR	<a href="mailto:Roberto.Garcia@noaa.gov">Roberto.Garcia@noaa.gov</a>
Hernandez, Debra	SECOORA	Charleston, SC	<a href="mailto:Debra@secoora.org">Debra@secoora.org</a>
Kasper, Chip	NWS/WFO	Key West, FL	<a href="mailto:kennard.kasper@noaa.gov">kennard.kasper@noaa.gov</a>
Kellison, Todd	NMFS/SEFSC	Beaufort, NC	<a href="mailto:Todd.Kellison@noaa.gov">Todd.Kellison@noaa.gov</a>
AK Leight	NOS/NCCOS	Oxford, MD	<a href="mailto:AK.Leight@noaa.gov">AK.Leight@noaa.gov</a>
Lokken, Scott	NOS/NGS	Raleigh, NC	<a href="mailto:Scott.Lokken@noaa.gov">Scott.Lokken@noaa.gov</a>
Mecray, Ellen	NESDIS/RCS	Norton, MA	<a href="mailto:Ellen.L.Mecray@noaa.gov">Ellen.L.Mecray@noaa.gov</a>
Murillo, Shirley	OAR/AOML	Miami, FL	<a href="mailto:Shirley.Murillo@noaa.gov">Shirley.Murillo@noaa.gov</a>
Okolo, Makeda	NOS/OCM	Silver Spring, MD	<a href="mailto:Makeda.Okolo@noaa.gov">Makeda.Okolo@noaa.gov</a>
Okulski, Rich (Team Lead)	NWS/WFO	Columbia, SC	<a href="mailto:Richard.Okulski@noaa.gov">Richard.Okulski@noaa.gov</a>
Olmi, Geno (Team Coordinator)	NOS	Charleston, SC	<a href="mailto:Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov">Geno.Olmi@noaa.gov</a>
Payne, Jeff	NOS/OCM	Charleston, SC	<a href="mailto:Jeff.Payne@noaa.gov">Jeff.Payne@noaa.gov</a>
Schmidt, John	NWS/SERFC	Peachtree City, GA	<a href="mailto:John.Schmidt@noaa.gov">John.Schmidt@noaa.gov</a>
White, Susan	NC Sea Grant	Raleigh, NC	<a href="mailto:snwhite3@ncsu.edu">snwhite3@ncsu.edu</a>
Wusinich-Mendez, Dana	NOS/OCM	Palm Beach Gardens,, FL	<a href="mailto:Dana.Wushinich-mendez@noaa.gov">Dana.Wushinich-mendez@noaa.gov</a>

# Appendix 2. Regional Collaboration Strategy

## Regional Collaboration Strategy 2016



Updated: July 2016

## **Appendix 3. NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team FY19-FY22 Strategic Priorities**

Through engagement, integration, and innovation, NOAA's Regional Collaboration Network improves cooperation among the NOAA Line Offices and partner entities to more effectively address our shared regional challenges and respond to emerging opportunities. Regional Collaboration expands on existing coordination and communication efforts by enhancing program integration activities to address NOAA's priorities at regional scales, thereby improving productivity and value to constituents. NOAA's Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART) network creates means for people to engage at a regional scale (NC, SC, GA, FL, PR, and USVI) and invites new approaches to develop products and services that are responsive to the region's changing economy and environment. SECART has identified three priority areas for action over the period FY19-22: engaging NOAA staff and partners; improving resilience of communities; and sustaining the region's marine and coastal resources. This strategy is responsive to NOAA's priorities and the Regional Collaboration Network strategy.

**Priority Area: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA's mission execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA line offices and with partners.**

*Goal 1: Address current and emerging regional priorities by connecting people and resources.*

- Identify information, communication, coordination, and resource gaps and identify solutions for closing the gaps;
- Understand the capabilities of NOAA and its partners within the region and facilitate bringing those capabilities to bear on priority regional issues, consistent with NOAA's mission;
- Convene NOAA and partners together to address specific regional priorities;
- Support and engage regional partnerships to efficiently address shared goals.

*Goal 2: Exchange both national and regional insights that inform action.*

- Enhance NOAA leadership's understanding of the region's issues and NOAA capabilities in the region;
- Promote improved understanding of the region's unique needs, capabilities, and contributions as related to NOAA's priorities (Coastal and Ocean Economy, Severe Weather Impacts, and Earth Observations);
- Help regional staff and partners understand NOAA's mission, goals, capabilities and constraints;
- Provide guidance and support in the regional development and implementation of NOAA-wide programs.



***Goal 3: Improve awareness of NOAA's broad mission responsibilities and regional capabilities to achieve an understanding of, and respect for, the totality of NOAA's work.***

- Elevate the awareness and value of NOAA through strategic partnerships, outreach, and communication, including outreach to elected officials and staff;
- Build NOAA's interdisciplinary capacity and organizational integration;
- Assist in developing and tailoring engagement strategies for the regional implementation of national priorities.

**Priority Area: Improve Economic, Environmental, and Social Resilience of Communities to Weather, Water, and Climate Impacts**

***Goal 1: Facilitate development of emerging science and technology, enabling regional stakeholders to better plan for, respond and adapt to the risks posed by extreme weather, water, and climate hazards and impacts.***

- Collect, analyze, and evaluate the resiliency related needs of partners and users in the region to inform and focus research and development efforts to help address the issues;
- Connect people and resources to enhance existing and develop new products and services;
- Encourage and facilitate the transition of research to develop societally relevant applications.

***Goal 2: Facilitate the application of products, services, and knowledge to enhance the capacity of communities to understand, plan for, adapt, and respond to risks posed by extreme weather at different time scales.***

- Support delivery of resilience-relevant information to communities;
- Facilitate the application of science and tools in communities;
- Support opportunities to bring customer needs for risk identification and the development of mitigation and adaptation strategies to the attention of NOAA.

***Goal 3: Enhance internal organizational awareness and coordination within the region to improve preparation and response to disasters.***

- Identify agency capabilities within the region to prepare for and respond to disasters;
- Improve communication among appropriate NOAA entities both within and outside the region building a better understanding of capabilities and roles during a disaster response.

**Priority Area: Promote the sustainability of the region’s living marine resources and habitats as key contributors to the nation’s economy**

***Goal 1: Increase the effectiveness of coastal and marine habitat conservation and restoration.***

- Improve coordination among NOAA entities and partners to identify gaps, capabilities, and efficiencies in achieving regional priorities in resource management and conservation;
- Improve awareness of NOAA’s mapping activities in the region and access to mapping products;
- Promote regional habitat conservation initiatives in the US Southeast and Caribbean (e.g., NOAA’s Habitat Blueprint Framework and NC Sentinel Site Cooperative).

***Goal 2: Enhance awareness of risks to living marine resources and habitats.***

- Improve regional awareness of impacts from human activities and climate variability (including extreme weather events), on natural systems;
- Identify and prioritize emerging regional needs (e.g., marine debris) and promote activities that address risks (e.g., nature-based infrastructure).

## Appendix 4. SECART FY2022 Spend Plan

<b>FY22 SECART Activities</b>		
<b>Priority/Activity</b>	<b>SECART FY22 Funds</b>	<b>Supplemental funds</b>
<b>Priority: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NOAA’s mission execution through enhanced collaboration across NOAA offices and with partners.</b>		
Activity A1. Enhance NOAA’s mission through strategic engagement with regional partners	1500	10,000
Activity A2. Advance NOAA’s mission through engagement with the NOAA in the Caribbean Collaborative	2300	6,100
Activity A3. Represent NOAA’s broad mission capabilities and accomplishments in the region and facilitate two-way flow of information between the region and NOAA leadership.	1400	0
Activity A4. Promote an informed, skilled and diverse NOAA Workforce in the region.	1500	Nat. Comms Contract
Activity A5. Engage with Congressional Staff to convey the value of NOAA and partner activities.	1800	0
Activity A6. Provide organization, coordination, and leadership for SECART to be effective in accomplishing its mission..	7400	Team member office support
Activity A7. Improve the capacity of NOAA’s inter-regional and national integrated services	2600	0
<b>Priority: Improve Economic, Environmental, and Social Resilience of Communities to Weather, Water, and Climate Impacts</b>		
Activity B1. Resilience Webinar Series	1200	0
Activity B2. Build regional resilience through the Southeast and Caribbean Disaster Resilience Partnership	3800	0
Activity B3. Disaster Resilience: Guide to Integrated NOAA Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region	5000	10,000
Activity B4. Improving Disaster Resilience in the Southeast and Caribbean Region: Exercise with Partners for Large Scale Disasters	5000	0
Activity B5. Disaster Resilience: Addressing previously identified needs and sharing NOAA relevant information.	0	0

B6. Climate and Equity Roundtables	2500	0
<b>Priority: Promote the sustainability of the region's living marine resources and the habitats upon which they depend.</b>		
Activity C1. Connecting NOAA Fellows with SECART	1000	
Activity C2. SE States shellfish aquaculture and sanitation data and forecasting strategy.	5500	5500
Activity C3. Improve awareness of NOAA resources and capabilities to address ecosystem issues in the SE and Caribbean	0	0
Activity C4. Support for NOAA Response to Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease	5000	Fl Sea Grant
Activity C5. Enhance awareness of and participation in NOAA UxS developments with regional applicability.	2500	SECOORA
	<b>50,000</b>	<b>31,600</b>
	<b>SECART Funds</b>	<b>Supplemental funds</b>