



FELLOW NEWS

News for and about the NOAA Fellows

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FOCUS ON FELLOWS

Daniella Hirschfeld



CLASS OF
2008-2010

A denizen of the big city becomes a nature lover, an admirer of philosophy turns protector of the coastal environment—at first glance, the life of Coastal Fellow Daniella Hirschfeld is a study in contrasts. Only later is it evident that Daniella has absorbed the lesson in each experience, and her outlook is all the better for it.

Born and bred in New York City, Daniella remembers that as a kindergartner she trailed behind her parents in their 14th floor apartment, methodically turning off the lights they had left on. “Despite my city background, I had an environmentalist in me,” she says. During her summers at Long Island’s Southampton Beach, Daniella used trash she found on the beach to decorate her sand castles.

As an undergrad at Dartmouth College, Daniella received a combined B.A. in psychology and philosophy. Even before graduation, however, she found herself increasingly drawn to learning more about the natural world. A quarter spent backpacking in Australia as a participant in the National Outdoor Leadership School was a life-changing lesson in how to live a low-impact existence in a natural area.

Still, says Daniella, her studies in the humanities will continue to inform her environmental pursuits. “Philosophy permeates my life, because I’m always interested in what defines an environmental ethic,” says Daniella. “That perspective—creating questions and exploring—is always present, and my interest in psychology comes into play because I’m fascinated by how people interact with nature.”

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After college, Daniella spent two years with AmeriCorps focusing on special environmental projects. Perhaps her most gratifying project was creating a backpacking program that made use of the Tahoe Rim Trail in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. “I worked through the local Boys and Girls Club with many children who had never really explored natural areas before. We’d hike to the top and see a spectacular view of the lake, which inspired the kids and gave them such a feeling of accomplishment,” says Daniella.

After AmeriCorps, Daniella attended Duke University’s Nicholas School of the Environment to complete her master’s degree in environmental management. She loved grad school and says it was there that she became fascinated with the study of climate change impacts and with strategies for increasing the adaptive capacity of communities.

“I was excited to be matched with the coastal fellowship at the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM). With my interest in climate change adaptation, it made for very good chemistry,” says Daniella of her work as program manager for the agency’s StormSmart Coasts program.

In its initial phase, StormSmart Coasts launched

a website with tools that help local officials address erosion, flooding, storms, and sea level rise. Daniella is in charge of the second phase. She has assisted in the selection of five StormSmart Coasts pilot projects and works closely with these communities to put the tools into practice and see how they can be implemented locally.

“One thing we’ve found is that it’s easier for communities to address the uncertainty of climate change data when they can visualize the range and plan for different scenarios,” notes Daniella.

“Other strategies that work are incentive options. One of our biggest successes is in the pilot community of Hull, Massachusetts. The community passed a measure that gives a \$500 credit on permit fees to builders who set building elevation levels higher than the base flood elevation standard established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On top of that, FEMA offers reduced flood insurance rates to the homeowner, which is a powerful added incentive.”

Daniella has truly enjoyed learning from the staff members at Massachusetts CZM. “Andrea Cooper, the agency’s shoreline and floodplain management coordinator, has done a great job teaching me



Daniella is a frequent triathlete and runner. She is currently training for the 2010 Boston Marathon.

the ins and outs of regulatory language and local rules,” she says. “Julia Knisel, the coastal resilience specialist, has taught me a tremendous amount about the scientific and policy aspects of coastal hazards. She also helps me to communicate hard scientific information accurately, finding ways to translate the information into a local perspective.”

The fellowship experience has convinced Daniella to remain involved in climate change adaptation work. And, true to her humanities background, Daniella remains fascinated by human responses to environmental change. “After the fellowship ends, I want to continue to engage people at the community level, not as an official but as someone who can take scientific information about climate change and help communities take proactive steps.” 



FOCUS ON FELLOWS

Matt Nixon

Coastal Fellow Matt Nixon has cultivated a great enthusiasm for New England maritime history, both in his studies and in real-life adventures. It is fitting, then, that this particular coastal fellow should gain a crow's-nest view of New England's maritime future—harnessing the power of the Gulf of Maine through the wind, tides, and other forms of energy.

For Matt, who grew up in rural Connecticut, that love of maritime history and culture began in summers spent in North Haven, an island town on Penobscot Bay. It's a place he describes as "quintessential Maine," with its simple colonial-era architecture and 18th-century waterfront of creaky wooden wharves.

Later, as an undergrad at the University of Maine in Orono, Matt interned for Connecticut's Mystic Seaport historical complex. "I learned so much at the maritime museum, and I also was taught traditional boatbuilding and rigging techniques," he says. "It was a fantastic experience,

and when I got back to school I switched my major from wildlife ecology to American history with a concentration in maritime history."

Following graduation, Matt and his wife, Jessica, lived on Maine's Mount Desert Island. "We experienced everything Acadia National Park had to offer while I worked as a deckhand on a schooner," says Matt. After two years, Matt moved back to Connecticut so that he could pursue full-time work at the Mystic Seaport museum as first mate on a sail-training schooner. "I taught adults and high school kids sailing skills, roaming the New England coast for up to a month at a time. On those trips I had quite a few experiences that made me think about water access issues and environmental justice."

Matt decided to pursue a master's degree in marine affairs at the University of Rhode Island. "My undergrad studies in the natural sciences came in handy when I worked at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Narragansett field laboratory during my graduate work. Our work dealt with water quality and nutrient loading, and while there I learned a lot about watershed mapping."

Why did Matt decide to apply for the coastal fellowship offered

by Maine's State Planning Office and Department of Marine Resources Office? "I was excited by the ecosystem-based management project they had planned. An extra incentive—my wife is a Maine native and we were both eager to move back there!"

Soon after arriving, Matt's fellowship project changed course when the governor of Maine announced the formation of an ocean energy task force. "The purpose of the task force is to explore how the power and resources of the Gulf of Maine can be used to lessen the state's dependence on foreign oil," says Matt. His work in support of the task force has two phases: determining strategies for jump-starting the offshore wind industry; and establishing policies and procedures for commercial-scale wind energy.

"One of my jobs is to reach out to local fishermen," says Matt. "Fisheries and the lobster industry have dealt with lots of challenges over the years, and the fishing community is concerned about how wind demonstration sites will affect their livelihood. We're conducting lots of regional and scoping meetings where we ask fishermen to rate grid cells on a map as a good or bad place for a wind energy site. Then we digitize

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Focus on Fellows (continued)

their choices on the map, which helps us to choose the demo sites they find the least objectionable," he says. "We're also including environmental considerations and gathering information from officials and other stakeholders."

Matt has found this project to be a terrific experience, and he credits three colleagues with easing a steep learning curve. "Kathleen Leyden, the director of the Maine Coastal Program and my mentor, has taught me a lot about public outreach and state processes, and she is very supportive when things get hectic or controversial. Jim Connors, who is in charge of access to working waterfronts, has been a great sounding board. And Todd Burrows, our policy analyst, has filled in all of the policy and regulatory gaps for me," says Matt.

Matt is thoroughly enjoying what he is doing right now in this state so rich in maritime history—and so vital to New England's maritime future. "I love what I'm doing," says Matt, "and I love where I'm doing it—in Maine." 



Matt in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, on the sailboat that he shares with his mentor.

FOCUS ON THE COASTAL FELLOWSHIP 2010 State Projects Selected

Six exciting new projects have been selected for the 2010-2012 Coastal Management Fellowship. Below is a summary of each of these projects for the coming year. Recruiting efforts are well underway, but we need your help to spread the word to eligible applicants. Remember, applications should be submitted to area Sea Grant directors and are due no later than January 29, 2010.

- Host Agency:** Maine Coastal Program
Location: Augusta, Maine
Project Goal: Develop a robust marine spatial planning approach for ocean management in Maine
- Host Agency:** Michigan Coastal Management Program
Location: Lansing, Michigan
Project Goal: Develop metrics, tools, and plans to address competing uses in Michigan's working waterfronts
- Host Agency:** New York Department of State Division of Coastal Resources
Location: Albany, New York
Project Goal: Develop an offshore spatial plan for managing competing uses in a crowded offshore environment
- Host Agency:** Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources Coastal Zone Management Office
Location: San Juan, Puerto Rico
Project Goal: Assess sea level rise and coastal hazards vulnerability as a part of the island-wide climate change adaptation strategy
- Host Agency:** Washington State Department of Ecology
Location: Olympia, Washington
Project Goal: Provide tools and guidance to local governments to help them plan for rising sea level in Washington
- Host Agency:** Wisconsin Coastal Management Program
Location: Madison, Wisconsin
Project Goal: Build a Great Lakes spatial decision-support toolbox to address comprehensive plan implementation and coastal hazards resilience

For more information on the 2010 state projects, please visit the fellowship website at www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows/stateprojects.html or contact the fellowship coordinator at csc.fellowships@noaa.gov.

FOCUS ON THE CENTER

Marine Spatial Planning in the Spotlight

Not long ago, vast areas of the ocean were largely unclaimable for human use. But times are changing, as developers of renewable wind and water technologies compete for segments of marine space alongside offshore interests in shipping, cable siting, conventional hydropower, and oil and gas extraction. Conservationists and coastal stakeholders are also entering the fray to protect scenic and ecological resources.

In addition, as this issue went to press, the Obama administration's Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force was preparing to recommend a national framework for coastal and marine spatial planning of the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

These developments usher in an exciting, albeit challenging, time for the nation's coastal resource managers. While enthusiasm about wind energy is driving the current interest in marine spatial planning, other sectors need to be involved, too—coastal community developers, national security interests, officials leasing submerged lands, the fishing industry, and agencies protecting critical habitat, to mention just a few.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center has supported or developed resources that give coastal professionals the marine spatial planning tools they will need in the coming months and years.

NOAA's Marine Spatial Planning Website – The marine spatial planning process identifies areas most suitable for human uses in order to sustain our economic, ecological, and cultural resources. This portal at www.msp.noaa.gov highlights resources and happenings on the marine spatial planning front:

- Explanations of marine spatial planning concepts
- Tools and guidance

- Access to commonly used data
- Real-world examples
- The latest ocean-planning news

Multipurpose Marine Cadastre – The traditional definition of “cadastre”—a public register displaying information on property ownership and rights—describes just one aspect of the Multipurpose Marine Cadastre. (The cadastre is located at www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/mmc/support.html.) This tool, developed by the Center and the Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service, aids marine spatial planning in several ways:

- It features cadastral data for the U.S. outer continental shelf and state waters, plus relevant ecological, physical, cultural, and human-use data and information
- It helps users locate the best information for planning and mapping of the marine space
- It enables users to share that information very quickly with stakeholders and other agencies

Marine Spatial Planning in Your Region – Five entities will be using marine spatial planning as an aid in crafting ocean-related decisions and managing marine areas:

- Gulf of Mexico Alliance
www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org
- West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health
www.westcoastoceans.gov
- Northeast Regional Ocean Council
<http://community.csc.noaa.gov/nroc/>
- Governors' South Atlantic Alliance
www.southatlanticalliance.org
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean
www.midatlanticocean.org

NOAA Coastal Services Center
2234 South Hobson Avenue
Charleston, SC 29405-2413



UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

JANUARY

17 to 21: **2010 American Meteorological Society Annual Meeting**
Atlanta, Georgia
www.ametsoc.org/MEET/annual/

FEBRUARY

22 to 26: **2010 Ocean Sciences Meeting**
Portland, Oregon
www.agu.org/meetings/os10/

MARCH

1 to 3: **Sea Level Rise 2010 Conference**
Corpus Christi, Texas
www.sealevelrise2010.org

1 to 5: **Aquaculture 2010**
San Diego, California
www.was.org/WasMeetings/meetings/Default.aspx?code=AQ2010

For more information on upcoming events, please visit
www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/conferences.html.

NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER TRAINING

Coastal Community Planning and Development
January 13 to 14
Morro Bay, California

February 2 to 3
Grays Harbor, Washington

Planning for Meaningful Evaluation
February 17 to 18
Tuckerton, New Jersey

March 17 to 18
Charleston, South Carolina

Public Issues and Conflict Management
February 9 to 11
Naples, Florida

For more information on virtual and site-specific trainings,
visit www.csc.noaa.gov/training/.

CREDITS AND INFORMATION

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Please send your questions and suggestions for future editions to csc.fellowships@noaa.gov

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