

May 6, 2014

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean's (MARCO) Management Board is pleased to announce the receipt of a \$2.1 million grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to help address the ocean planning needs of the Mid-Atlantic region.

MARCO is a five-state (NY, NJ, DE, MD, and VA) collaborative that was created to address shared ocean priorities in the Mid-Atlantic: protecting important marine habitats; supporting the sustainable development of offshore renewable energy; preparing communities for the impacts of climate change; and improving ocean water quality. Regional ocean planning is a means to advance MARCO's priorities by working across federal, state, and tribal jurisdictional lines to support activities in these priority areas.

"This generous award provides an unprecedented opportunity to move forward with regional ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic," said Gwynne Schultz, Chair of the MARCO Management Board. "We are excited about having the means to advance such an important initiative in the region."

The Moore Foundation also provided \$1.6 million in funding to Monmouth University to map and assess marine resources; facilitate public dialogue about ocean resources and uses; and further develop the MARCO Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal as a foundation and tool for regional ocean planning. Collectively, these efforts are an essential step forward as MARCO works with tribal and federal partners to plan for new and existing ocean uses in ways that maintain the overall health of the Atlantic Ocean ecosystem.

"This support will ensure close collaboration with MARCO and extensive outreach to ocean users and stakeholder groups to inform development of the Portal," according to Tony MacDonald, Principal Investigator for the Portal team project and Director of the Urban Coast Institute at Monmouth University.

The MARCO activities funded by this grant will significantly enhance and expand the role of the five states in the ocean planning process in the Mid-Atlantic region. However, there are still needs to be met. The breadth and diversity of involved state and federal partners has been essential to building momentum for the regional ocean planning progress to date; their continued engagement and commitment of time, energy, and resources will be an important complement to this funding, and to the continued success of ocean planning in the region.

For more information on MARCO and to visit the online Data Portal, please visit our website: www.MidAtlanticOcean.org.

For more information on the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, please visit: www.Moore.org.