

A *Web-Based* REPORTING SYSTEM

FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING
A LAND GRANT OR SEA GRANT
RESEARCH AND EXTENSION PROGRAM

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A Web-Based Reporting System for Monitoring and Evaluating A Land Grant or Sea Grant Research and Extension Program

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Abstract: University-based research and extension programs are increasingly being required by administrators and funding sources to justify their support through enhanced planning, monitoring of activities and the reporting of outcomes and impacts. Florida Sea Grant (FSG), a program hosted by the University of Florida that receives funding from the U.S. National Oceanographic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to operate statewide coastal and marine research and extension programs is no exception. This publication describes a new web-based system developed by FSG and Dacing Tree, Inc. to standardize the collection, management, and reporting of information required of affiliated researchers, specialists, and agents. The goal of the new Online Activity Reporting System (OARS) is to optimize the monitoring and reporting of funded research projects and extension activities and products. The primary objectives were to design a system that was first and foremost easy to use; second, allowed for the recognition of individual achievement; and third, allowed for a compilation and summary of the collective contribution of program staff and affiliates towards meeting FSG and National Sea Grant Program strategic planning priorities and performance benchmarks.

The National Sea Grant Program

A brief background of FSG's extension and research mission places programmatic reporting functions within state and national contexts. FSG is one of 33 programs. Each program is hosted by the primary land grant university in coastal and Great Lakes states. These 33 programs make up the National Sea Grant Program, which was established by federal legislation in 1966 within NOAA. The core mission of FSG is to advance the stewardship of marine and coastal resources through targeted research and extension programming. FSG organizes its programming according to input from local and statewide advisory councils and through alignment with National Sea Grant Program strategic planning, implementation and evaluation (PIE) processes.

Florida Sea Grant's Extension Program

FSG leverages NOAA funds with state and county dollars to support 21 marine agents and specialists who are part of the state's Cooperative Extension Service headquartered at the University of Florida. In coastal counties throughout Florida, FSG's marine agents are an integral part of the local extension team, which typically consists of specialists in agriculture and natural resources, horticulture and gardening, family and consumer science, and 4-H youth development. FSG's marine agents target their programming in five general areas: (1) marine science education, (2) sustainable angling and fishing, (3) volunteer-based habitat enhancement, (4) assistance to commercial fishing, seafood, and aquaculture industries, and (5) support for water-dependent businesses and communities. FSG's coastal and marine extension programming is directed by local advisory committees and supported by University of Florida-based statewide specialists with expertise in the areas of (1) aquaculture and fisheries management, (2) seafood safety, (3) community hazard resiliency, (4) waterways and waterfronts planning, (5) coastal conservation law, and (6) marine economics.

Florida Sea Grant's Research Program

FSG funds faculty affiliated with Florida's Universities through a competitive biennial grant process. Every two years, FSG issues a request for proposals for projects that align with program strategic planning themes and stakeholder priorities. Since its establishment as a program at the University of Florida, FSG has funded more than 200 coastal and ocean-related research projects totaling about \$30 million. This translates to support for more than 400 university faculty and 2,000 students, each of whom must be tracked to satisfy National Sea Grant Program reporting metrics. An important criterion used by FSG to fund research proposals is the incorporation of an outreach component, required to strengthen the relevance and practical application of the proposed research among end-users. Along these lines, a stronger emphasis is now being placed on the identification of accomplishments and impacts (e.g., jobs and businesses created and sustained; economic benefits; number of acres of habitats enhanced; etc.). This has necessitated greater input from research investigators and their collaborators (i.e. industry, agencies) to quantify the benefits derived from FSG funded projects.


Tracking Activities, Communications, Accomplishments and Impacts

For many years, FSG employed different systems to track, monitor and report activities, accomplishments and impacts from extension-based and research-based programming. For example, marine agents listed and characterized their activities and target audiences using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet platform. Over time, the spreadsheet form grew in complexity and became inadequate to accommodate the increasingly more intricate data queries, manipulations and information needed to satisfy National Sea Grant reporting metrics.

Researchers, on the other hand, submitted project reports using a Microsoft Word template that solicited information regarding the attainment of technical objectives; advancement of the field; problems encountered; accomplishments, students supported, extramural funds, prizes and honors, publications; presentations and meetings organized; and benefits resulting from the project. Stronger emphasis is now being placed on the reporting of outreach events associated with extension and applied research projects. This necessitated the development of a system that could integrate information reported from both research and extension programming. To this end, the OARS system can quickly generate summary reports and statistics for a variety of extension activities, modes of communicating and target audiences reached.

OARS Functions

FSG's Online Activity Reporting System (OARS) was developed to more efficiently capture, integrate, and summarize activities, outcomes, and impacts derived from research and extension programming. OARS was designed to serve three functions: (1) to simplify and standardize data entry and reporting required of university faculty who are the recipients of FSG research funding and of extension specialists and county-based marine agents who must complete annual extension, education, and events reports (EEE's); (2) to quickly and consistently generate summary statistics required by the National Sea Grant Program's Planning Implementation and Evaluation Report (PIER) ; and (3) to allow FSG to gauge how well the program is meeting performance measure benchmarks established in its four-year Strategic Plan.

Sea Grant Florida  *Science Serving Florida's Coast* **O.A.R.S. V2.0**
Florida Sea Grant
Online Activity Reporting System

Welcome to the Florida Sea Grant Online Activity Reporting System!

Florida Sea Grant-funded researchers use this system to file interim and final project report summaries.

Florida Sea Grant extension specialists and agents use this system to enter and summarize their extension and education events (EEE's).

Note: If you need to reference your research projects dated prior to 2014, please [click here](#).

Please Log In:

Username:

Password:

I am logging in:


as an extension agent or specialist for reporting year: 2014

as a researcher; select year the project began: 2014

Figure 1. OARS Login page

The OARS website consists of three functions (1) an access portal and data entry interface, (2) a site managers page, and (3) an information output and database query page. OARS is integrated within the FSG website allowing affiliated management, staff, research faculty, and extension agents to submit progress reports and activity updates via a password protected access portal (Figure 1).

The OARS data entry interface consists of seven independent reporting modules (Research Project Status; Research Project Objectives; Students Supported; Leveraged Funding; Outreach Activities; Communications Products; and Accomplishments and Impacts) that incorporate simple-to-use text boxes, information icons, and drop-down menu-option formats. Researchers have access to each of the seven reporting modules. Extension specialists and agents have access to a subset of the modules consistent with their reporting requirements. Identification at login (researcher versus extension agent or specialist) activates access to the appropriate reporting modules. A status bar on the left portion of the home page summarizes entries made for the seven reporting modules, which are displayed on the top banner (Figure 2).

Sea Grant Florida  *Science Serving Florida's Coast*

O.A.R.S. V2.0
Florida Sea Grant
Online Activity Reporting System

Home Project Status Objectives Students Supported Leveraged Funding
Outreach Activities Communications Products Accomplishments & Impacts **Log Out**

Visitor
Researcher
Project: TEST
Type: Interim
Reporting period:
-
Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 5
Students supported: 0
Leveraged funding: 0
Outreach events/activities: 0
Communications products: 0
Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

Welcome to the Florida Sea Grant Online Activity Reporting System (O.A.R.S.)

- ▶ [Help](#)
- ▶ [Change my password](#)
- ▶ [Create module reports](#)
- ▶ [Archive my modules](#)

OARS consists of seven reporting modules (project status, objectives, students supported, leveraged funding, outreach activities, communications products, accomplishments and impacts) accessed as menu options in the banner at the top of this "Home Page." These modules allow researchers, extension specialists, and marine agents affiliated with the FSG to summarize and characterize research-related and/or outreach-related activities, communications products, and accomplishments and impacts.

Please complete **ALL** data entry options provided (as applicable) under each module. This will ensure that all of your activities and accomplishments are accounted for and included in the FSG annual report to the NSGO.

You may log in and out of the OARS data entry modules as many times as you like. Just click the 'SAVE' button to save your progress prior to leaving a reporting module.

Most importantly, Florida Sea Grant will review the information submitted by researchers and reserves the right to withhold funding until reporting is satisfactory. OARS project summaries satisfy technical reporting requirements.

Figure 2. OARS Home page

OARS Site Management Page

The OARS site management page allows the administrator to generate reports, add users and assign access permissions, assign projects to users and add site administration capabilities (Figure 3).

The site management page allows annual or monthly research and extension reports to be exported and printed for each researcher, specialist or marine agent. Reports can be exported individually (e.g., for a particular agent) or in batch (e.g., for several agents or research projects). In addition, the SQL database structure behind the OARS system can accommodate complex data sorts, queries, and export functionality that counts the number of different types of outreach activities and communications products. Furthermore, counts of different audiences that attend outreach activities can also be summarized in table form.

**OARS Site Management
Admin Menu**

<p>Generate Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• View list of research submissions so far this year• View list of extension submissions so far this year• Monthly project synopsis• Monthly extension reports• Yearly extension reports• Performance measures <p>Assign Projects to Users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add a new user• Manage existing users and project assignments <p>Add Users and Assign Access Permissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add a new project• Manage existing projects	<p>Add Administrators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add a new admin user• Manage existing admin users <p>OARS web site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change web site settings• View application documentation <p>Links</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. OARS login page
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Figure 3. OARS Site Management Page

A standard set of database queries have been incorporated into the management page to allow for the generation of summary statistics that support each of FSG’s reporting metrics, according to areas of strategic focus. Check-boxes for activity types, audience types and program themes add additional reporting flexibility to the standard set of queries (Figure 4).

Type of Event or Outreach:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Camps, Clubs	<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> Class Trip	<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Facilitation
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Consultation, Advisory	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Presentation
<input type="checkbox"/> Formal Education (K-12)	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio
<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat Restoration, Enhancement:	<input type="checkbox"/> Television
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Education Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Webinar
<input type="checkbox"/> Large Event, Festival, Tournament	<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop
Outreach Theme(s):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Aquaculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries
<input type="checkbox"/> Boating and Waterway Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Invasive Species
<input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Seafood Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Community Resilience	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Biotechnology
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Habitats and Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil Spill
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Natural Hazards	<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Waterfront Planning	
Outreach Audience Count(s) Requested:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Agencies/Resource Managers	<input type="checkbox"/> Informal Teachers/Educators
<input type="checkbox"/> Boaters	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Professionals
<input type="checkbox"/> Children and Families	<input type="checkbox"/> Planners/Local Government Staff /Industry
<input type="checkbox"/> Decision Makers	<input type="checkbox"/> Retailers
<input type="checkbox"/> Fishers	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific Academic
<input type="checkbox"/> Formal Teachers/Educators:	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth
<input type="checkbox"/> General Public (Adults)	<input type="checkbox"/> Acres of Habitat Enhanced

Figure 4. OARS Database Query Options.

A Closer Look at the OARS Reporting Modules

OARS has seven reporting modules that were designed to support planning metrics identified by the National Sea Grant office and FSG’s four-year strategic plan. FSG researchers are required to complete forms for each of the seven reporting modules; extension agents and specialists are required to complete a subset of the modules. A listing of the reporting modules and data form questions is provided in Table 1. Each module has two functions. The first allows users to input and save new information into the data templates. The second allows users to view, edit and copy information entered into the system.

Reporting Module	Information Requested
Project Status For Researchers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Type of report (interim or final) 2. Reporting period (MM/DD/YY)
Objectives – For Researchers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summary of how project objectives were attained
Students Supported For Researchers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name 2. Institution and Department 3. Major professor 4. Status (undergrad, grad student) 5. Anticipated graduation date 6. Student’s email 7. Status (new or continuing student) 8. Graduation status 9. Current employer 10. Job title and area of specialization
Leveraged Funding For Researchers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project title 2. Funding amount 3. Project completion date (MM/DD/YY) 4. Project sponsor
Outreach Activities For Researchers, Extension Agents and Specialists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description 2. Program focus area (select from list) 3. Type of event or activity (select from list) 4. Number of attendees (by type from list) 5. Date of activity (can span multiple days) 6. Did Sea Grant sponsor the event or activity 7. Number of volunteers assisting 8. Increase hazard resiliency? (list communities) 9. Promote sustainable development? (list communities) 10. Enhance habitats? (select type; list communities)
Communications Products For Researchers, Extension Agents and Specialists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Type (select from list) 2. Citation 3. Status (select type from list)
Accomplishments and Impacts For Researchers, Extension Agents and Specialists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Title 2. Type of accomplishment or impact (checkbox options) 3. Relevance, Response, Results 4. Identify partners

Table 1. Reporting Modules and Information

Project Status Module

The Project Status module allows researchers to identify the type of report (i.e., interim or final) and the reporting period for their project (Figure 5).

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Florida Sea Grant
Online Activity Reporting System

Home **Project Status** **Objectives** **Students Supported** **Leveraged Funding**
Outreach Activities **Communications Products** **Accomplishments & Impacts** **Log Out**

Visitor
Researcher

Project: TEST

Type: Interim

Reporting period:
-

Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 5

Students supported: 0

Leveraged funding: 0

Outreach events/activities: 0

Communications products: 0

Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

Research Project Status

This module allows you to indicate the status of your research project report.

Project Number: TEST

Project Title: TEST

Project Dates: 01/01/2014 to 01/01/2015

Investigators: Sidman, Charles UF
Visitor

Type of Report:

Indicate if the report is Interim or Final. An interim report is the only report required until the end of the project and it covers the most recent 12 months of the project. A Final report covers the entire life of the project and serves as the executive summary for the project.

Note: When selecting the "final" project report option the system will automatically generate an archive of the interim report and allow you to finalize the information contained in your interim report.

Reporting Period:

Indicate the time period covered for the report (e.g. the entire life of the project for final report). If this is a final report see research project status above for the project duration.

From: ,

To: ,

Figure 5. Project Status Module


Project Objectives Module

The Project Objectives module allows researchers to summarize results related to each objective proposed. An information pop-up provides a description and example of the level of reporting detail required (Figure 6).

The screenshot displays the 'Project Objectives Module' interface. At the top, there is a header with the 'Sea Grant Florida' logo, the NOAA logo, and the text 'Science Serving Florida's Coast'. On the right side of the header, it says 'O.A.R.S. V2.0 Florida Sea Grant Online Activity Reporting System'. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: 'Home', 'Project Status', 'Objectives', 'Students Supported', 'Leveraged Funding', 'Outreach Activities', 'Communications Products', 'Accomplishments & Impacts', and a 'Log Out' button.

The main content area is titled 'Attainment of Research Project Objectives (1 of 2) Summarize Project Results'. It contains the following text:

Please use the text box below to summarize your project results to date related to each objective. The project results summary is limited to 2,500 words, so project statements should be informative yet concise.

Note: While it is important to be informative, please try to complete the sections of the summary report in language that a lay person can understand. Please refer to the information icon for instructions on how to complete this reporting requirement. 

Summary: (word count: 0)

Below this text is a large yellow text area for entering the summary. At the bottom of the page are two buttons: 'Save' and 'Cancel'.


The left sidebar contains the following information:

- Visitor**
Researcher
- Project: TEST
- Type: Interim
- Reporting period:
-
- Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 0
- Students supported: 0
- Leveraged funding: 0
- Outreach events/activities: 0
- Communications products: 0
- Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

Figure 6. Objectives Module 1

Student Supported Module

The Students Supported module allows researchers to identify students who are being funded by the project. Types of information requested include the student's name, department affiliation, major professor, status, anticipated graduation date, thesis title, contact information, graduation status, degree conferred, and current employer and job title if the student had graduated during the reporting period (Figure 7).

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Florida Sea Grant
Online Activity Reporting System

Home **Project Status** **Objectives** **Students Supported** **Leveraged Funding** **Outreach Activities** **Log Out**
Communications Products **Accomplishments & Impacts**

Visitor
Researcher

Project: TEST
Type: Interim
Reporting period: -
Objectives narrative: Summary word ct: 0
Students supported: 0
Leveraged funding: 0
Outreach events/activities: 0
Communications products: 0
Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

Add Project Supported Student

Please complete the following form for each student supported by your research project (e.g., research assistantship).

Name:

Institution:

Department:

Major Professor:

Status: Undergraduate

Anticipated Graduation Date: August , 18 , 2014

Thesis Title:

Student's email:

New or Continuing?: New for this reporting period

Graduation Status: Student has not graduated during this reporting period

If the student has graduated, which Degree was conferred?

Please complete the following if your Florida Sea Grant project-supported student graduated during the reporting period:

Current employer:

Job title or area of specialization:

Figure 7. Student Supported Module 1

Leveraged Funding Module

The Leveraged Funding module allows researchers to identify extramural funding obtained as the result of their FSG project. Information requested includes the project title, funding amount, project completion date and the project sponsor (Figure 8).

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Florida Sea Grant Online Activity Reporting System

Home **Project Status** **Objectives** **Students Supported** **Leveraged Funding** **Log Out**
Outreach Activities **Communications Products** **Accomplishments & Impacts**

Visitor
Researcher
Project: TEST
Type: Interim
Reporting period:
-
Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 0
Students supported: 0
Leveraged funding: 0
Outreach events/activities: 0
Communications products: 0
Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

New Leveraged Funding Based on the Project

Please list the title, funding amount, duration and primary sponsor of all grants and contracts that were secured as a follow-up or adjunct to this Sea Grant project. The intent is to determine activity in leveraging Sea Grant support to obtain additional funding. You need not report grants and contracts that are not linked to the Sea Grant project in some way.

Title:

Funding Amount:

Project Completion Date: August 18 , 2014

Project Sponsor:

Figure 8. Leveraged Funding Module

Outreach Activities Module

The Outreach Activities module allows researchers, specialists and extension agents to report activities and events that they organized or participated in. The data form consists of nine questions that are completed and saved for each outreach activity or event reported. The data entry template has been designed to capture information on the type of event or activity, the number of different types of stakeholders who attended, the date of the activity, and whether or not FSG sponsored or supported the activity. Last, the form allows users to identify if the activity increased hazard resiliency, promoted sustainable development or resulted in enhanced habitats. If any of these benefits resulted, the user prompted to identify the coastal communities where positive outcomes have occurred (Figure 9).

Visitor

Researcher
Project: TEST
Type: Interim
Reporting period:
-
Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 0
Students supported: 0
Leveraged funding: 0
Outreach events/activities: 0
Communications products: 0
Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

Outreach Events and Activities

Please list only Sea Grant relevant events and activities that you helped to organize or that you actively participated in. You need not report events or activities that you just observed or attended.

1. Please enter a very brief description of the event or activity related to your outreach or research project.

2. Select the Florida Sea Grant program focus area which best fits your event or activity.

- Healthy Oceans and Coasts
- Sustainable Coastal Communities & Economies
- Safe & Sustainable Seafood
- Hazard-Resilient & Climate Ready Coasts
- Education and Workforce Development

3. Select the option that best describes the type of event or outreach activity, and estimate the number of hours you devoted to developing, organizing and/or participating in the activity or event:

Event or Outreach activity:

Estimate the number of hours you devoted to developing, organizing and/or participating in the event or activity:

4. Estimate the number of people in attendance for your event or activity.

Formal Teachers/Educators (K-12):	<input type="text" value="0"/>	
Students reached in classroom or class trip:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Associate with Formal Teachers/Educators (K-12) option.
General Public:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Select for mass-media and large event/festival activity types.
Industry:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Aquaculture, seafood, commercial fishing, marine industries.
Informal Teachers/Educators:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Includes extension faculty.
Legal Professionals:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	
City/County Government:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Includes non-legal staff.
Elected/Appointed Officials:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Includes staff of elected and appointed officials.
Resource Users - Adults:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Informal education such as Master Naturalist Program.
Resource Users - Youth:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Informal education program such as camps, fishing clinics.
Regional/State/Federal Government:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	Includes DCA, DACS, DEP, FWC, Water Management Districts, Planning Councils, Navigation Districts.
Scientific Academic:	<input type="text" value="0"/>	

Total: 0

5. Enter the date that your event or activity occurred:

How to enter activities that occurred over multiple dates or with different participants:

From:
To (optional):

6. Indicate whether or not Florida Sea Grant sponsored the event. Sea Grant sponsored events require that Sea Grant funds the event or is a major organizer for the event.

Florida Sea Grant sponsored the event

7. Enter the number of volunteers who assisted with your event or activity.

8. Estimate the total number of hours volunteered by all people who assisted with your event or activity.

9a. Has your research or outreach activity increased coastal hazard resiliency? If so, please identify the Florida coastal communities (towns or cities), and the county in which they are located.

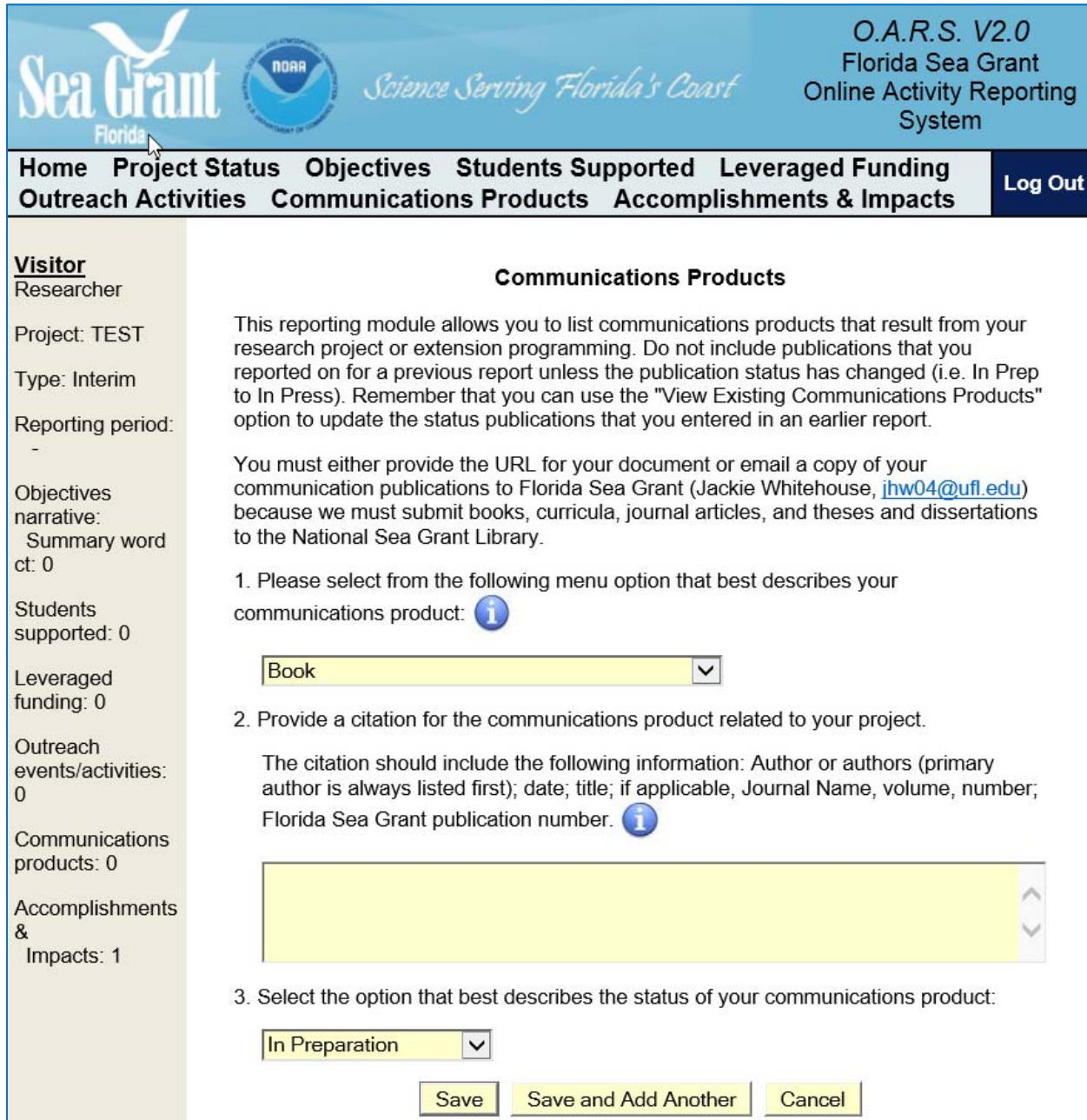
9b. Has your research or outreach activity promoted sustainable coastal development? If so, please identify the Florida coastal communities (towns or cities), and the county in which they are located.


9c. Has your research or outreach restored or enhanced habitats? If so, please identify Florida coastal communities (towns or cities), and the county in which they are located.

Figure 9. Outreach Events and Activities Module

Communications Products Module

The Communications Products module allows researchers, specialists and extension agents to report any books, curricula developed, theses or dissertations, or journal articles. Options include a reference citation and the status (e.g., in preparation, submitted, accepted, published) – Figure 10.



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Florida Sea Grant
Online Activity Reporting System

Home **Project Status** **Objectives** **Students Supported** **Leveraged Funding** **Log Out**
Outreach Activities **Communications Products** **Accomplishments & Impacts**

Visitor
Researcher

Project: TEST

Type: Interim

Reporting period:
-

Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 0

Students supported: 0

Leveraged funding: 0

Outreach events/activities: 0


Communications products: 0

Accomplishments & Impacts: 1


Communications Products

This reporting module allows you to list communications products that result from your research project or extension programming. Do not include publications that you reported on for a previous report unless the publication status has changed (i.e. In Prep to In Press). Remember that you can use the "View Existing Communications Products" option to update the status publications that you entered in an earlier report.

You must either provide the URL for your document or email a copy of your communication publications to Florida Sea Grant (Jackie Whitehouse, jhw04@ufl.edu) because we must submit books, curricula, journal articles, and theses and dissertations to the National Sea Grant Library.

1. Please select from the following menu option that best describes your communications product: 

2. Provide a citation for the communications product related to your project.

The citation should include the following information: Author or authors (primary author is always listed first); date; title; if applicable, Journal Name, volume, number; Florida Sea Grant publication number. 

3. Select the option that best describes the status of your communications product:

Figure 10. Communications Products Module

Accomplishments and Impacts Module

The Accomplishments and Impacts module allows researchers, specialists and extension agents to characterize and describe any accomplishments or impacts that result from specific activities or from a group of related activities (i.e., a program). The data form is made up of five questions that describe and characterize the accomplishment or impact. First, options for characterizing the accomplishment or impact derived from economically-oriented National Sea Grant reporting metrics is presented (e.g., businesses created, economic benefits, workforce development, etc.). Next, the user is prompted to describe the accomplishment or impact in terms of its relevance, response and results. Last, the user is asked to identify up to three partners that have contributed to or benefitted from the accomplishment or impact (Figure 11).

Visitor

Researcher

Project: TEST

Type: Interim

Reporting period:

Objectives narrative:
Summary word ct: 0

Students supported: 0

Leveraged funding: 0

Outreach events/activities: 0

Communications products: 0

Accomplishments & Impacts: 1

Programmatic Accomplishments & Impacts

Please characterize and summarize in language that a lay audience can understand any accomplishments or impacts that have resulted from your research project or extension programming. For extension faculty, if possible, present a comprehensive story that ties together similar activities that contributed to a common accomplishment or impact.

Please refer to the information icons for a definition of accomplishment and an impact; and for specific instructions on how to characterize outcomes and write effective accomplishment and impact statements.

1. Accomplishment or Impact Title:

2. Please characterize the accomplishment or impact resulting from your research project or extension programs. Check as many options as you feel are relevant. You will note that some options require a quantity to be estimated.

<input type="checkbox"/> Habitats Enhanced:	<input type="text"/>	(acres)
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy, Information, Model or Tool Developed:	<input type="text"/>	(number of agencies receiving/using)
	<input type="text"/>	(number of communities receiving/using)
	<input type="text"/>	(number of practitioners receiving/using)
<input type="checkbox"/> Businesses Created/Sustained:	<input type="text"/>	(created)
	<input type="text"/>	(sustained)
<input type="checkbox"/> Jobs Created/Sustained:	<input type="text"/>	(created)
	<input type="text"/>	(sustained)
<input type="checkbox"/> Estimated Economic Benefits:	\$ <input type="text"/>	(dollar amount)
<input type="checkbox"/> Improved Products, Processes or Standards:	<input type="text"/>	(number of practitioners receiving/using)
<input type="checkbox"/> Workforce Development Training:	<input type="text"/>	(number of practitioners receiving/using)
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal & Marine Literacy Enhanced:	<input type="text"/>	(number of people)
<input type="checkbox"/> Patent, Copyright, Disclosure of Invention, Technology Licensing Other (specify):	<input type="text"/>	

3. Please identify the type of outcome that you would like to report:

Accomplishment
 Impact

4. Please briefly describe the "relevance", "response", and "result" of the accomplishment or impact. Responses for each of these statements are limited to 200 words, so please be concise.

4a. Relevance: (word count: 0)

4b. Response: (word count: 0)

4c. Results: (word count: 0)

5. Please identify up to three project partners, if applicable, who contributed to your accomplishment or impact. Project partners can include government agencies, NGOs, businesses or organized groups, but not individuals.

a.

b.

c.

Figure 11. Programmatic Accomplishments and Impacts Module

Implementation Tips

The following are some tips for implementing a similar system. It is recommended that a successful system would (1) be simple to use, (2) incorporate standardized options for reporting, (3) breakdown more complex reporting options into discrete elements, (4) integrate helpful examples and information descriptions, (5) offer options for personalizing output, and (6) offer incentives to increase reporting compliance.

Simplify: OARS was developed to capture only the information that FSG needs to comply with a standard set of reporting metrics identified by the National Sea Grant Office and Florida Sea Grant's four-year strategic plan. In addition, much of the information that extension agents already collect for their annual program reporting is transferable to OARS. Simplifying the reporting reduces the time necessary to complete reports and utilizes information that agents, specialists, and faculty already compile for other reporting requirements.

Standardize: OARS incorporates drop down menus and check-box options for many data forms. This allows the user to easily select from a pre-programmed set of reporting options. This helps to standardize the information input into the system making database queries and summary table output reliable and easy to execute.

Classify: OARS breaks down or classifies more complex reporting options into discrete elements. For example, 'success stories' are captured as three discrete components: relevance – why the activity was needed or important; response – what the agent or faculty member did to respond to the need; and results – what were the specific tangible outcomes or products from the activity. The breakdown of 'success stories' into specific reporting components helps to standardize, to organize and to enhance the detail of information provided. Furthermore, restricting the number of words allowed in the information fields requires that agents and faculty provide concise, accurate and informative success stories.

Exemplify: OARS integrates information pop-ups into the data modules that describe reporting options and provide examples of the types of information requested. This functionality defines reporting options and allows agents to think more broadly about the activities that they undertake as a function of a larger program or longer-term effort, particularly with respect to the development of accomplishment and impact statements. Additional information also helps researchers to summarize the attainment of project objectives in a non-technical and user-friendly format. The web-based format for the system allows helpful information to be accessed by users when needed but otherwise remain hidden. This serves to reduce clutter on the pages and to streamline the OARS reporting forms.

Personalize: The OARS data input forms and menu options were developed with input from several researchers and extension agents to ensure that the various modules accurately reflect the types of activities and audiences that are relevant to FSG research and extension programming. The OARS incorporates functionality that allows the user to archive copies of reports and export and information that they entered in tabular or text-based summary formats. Personalized data export allows for management to more accurately evaluate individual contributions to group or program-wide efforts.

Incentivize: Extension agents, specialists and researchers are encouraged to keep their OARS reporting current throughout the year. Nevertheless, the majority of users wait until the end of the year to input information, drawing content from other required annual reports. FSG has implemented a variety of actions to incentivize timely use of the OARS system. For example, each year OARS awards are given to marine extension agents and specialists who have kept entries current for the year. These awards typically consist of higher-quality work-related apparel. These awards are given at the annual FSG extension program retreat. Recently, FSG has offered \$500 travel awards to agents who stay current with their reporting. These incentives, along with the fact that FSG researchers, specialists and extension agents do take this responsibility seriously have yielded in an annual reporting compliance of virtually 100 percent.

