

NSGD Update

June 1999



Biennial Report
January 1, 1997-December 31, 1998

Collection Management

The NSGD houses the only complete collection of Sea Grant work which now includes 25,587 titles. This collection represents a wealth of information covering just about every discipline of marine science, including oceanography, fisheries, aquaculture, marine education, coastal zone management, marine recreation and law.

The 29 individual Sea Grant programs across the nation are responsible for submitting to the NSGD three copies of every publication (excluding proposals) produced entirely or partially with Sea Grant funds. During the past two years the NSGD collected and processed 5,229 new Sea Grant documents (3 copies of each new title), bringing the total number of documents in the collection to 76,761 (25,587 archive and 51,174 circulating copies). The majority of the collection is comprised of journal reprints (47%), technical reports (14%), and advisory reports (10%).

Proceedings, books, newsletters, handbooks and other miscellaneous reports make up the remainder.

The NSGD offered to revise and clarify the publication distribution guidelines during this grant period. The existing guidelines from the Green Book were extremely outdated and did not include new publication formats, such as videos, CD-ROMs, computer programs, etc., which must be included in the collection in order to maintain an accurate record of Sea Grant's accomplishments. While many programs have been sending copies of these works voluntarily, these works need to be part of the required normal distribution process for all programs. During this revision we are also streamlining the distribution process and reducing the total number of publications programs are required to submit to various offices. This is in part possible because the NSGD is the national archive, database and lending library for all Sea Grant programs. The National Office and the Communicators' Publications Committee are working with the NSGD to review the revised guidelines/distribution table (<http://nsgd.gso.uri.edu/distable.html>). When the draft guidelines become finalized the NSGD will distribute guidelines to all programs and post them on the NSGD website.

User Services

The NSGD collection serves many types of patrons, including researchers, students, teachers, and fishermen. During the 1997/1998 period, the NSGD answered 4,250 requests for information. Of this total, 3,188 were for loans, 345 were for online literature searches, and the remainder were for *Sea Grant Abstracts*, reference and miscellaneous types of information. Loan requests have been growing substantially due to

the NSGD's increased web presence and outreach efforts. The total number of loans for 1998 was 20% higher than the 1997 figures and 30% higher than 1996.

It is interesting to note that the NSGD compares favorably to a marine academic library (Pell Library) in terms of collection size and interlibrary loans, while maintaining services with a staff less than half the size.

	NSGD	Pell
Collection Size	76,761	50,578
Volumes Added	2,802	1,376
Items Loaned to Others	1,750	1,297
Staff	1.7FTE	4.5FTE

A breakdown of the NSGD patrons served during this two year span shows that 13% were from governmental agencies on the local, state and federal levels; 16% were from private industry; 39% from academic institutions; 12% from the general public; and 16% were from other Sea Grant programs.

The Depository provides access to the vast amount of information contained in the collection through (1) the web-searchable database that provides citations, abstracts, and links to digital copies of many documents (see Collection Digitization); (2) the internal publications database; and (3) *Sea Grant Abstracts*, which announces the availability of current documents.

Database Management

The NSGD maintains an internal bibliographic database which represents the only complete index of documents produced with Sea Grant funds. No other scientific or national library

indexes, abstracts and identifies Sea Grant material more comprehensively. Upgrades were made to the existing computer equipment to maintain current versions of software, add database storage space, and comply with hardware evolutions. There are approximately 32,800 entries in the database. A total of 1,743 database entries were added during this grant period including full bibliographic information and abstracts, when available. The database is available for searching via the NSGD website (<http://nsgd.gso.uri.edu>).

NSGD Website

The NSGD website was introduced in 1996 and use continues to increase substantially (during the past two years the number of hits totaled 290,260). The primary feature of the site is a searchable database containing citations for all the publications produced by the National Sea Grant College Program. This system was designed to be efficient, user friendly and compatible with our pre-existing database. From a simple search form one can use a variety of search strategies to identify Sea Grant publications, retrieve abstracts and obtain documents via loan or purchase (links to individual programs are provided). A new link to full-text images of many of the documents has also been made possible with the generous support of another NOAA-funded initiative at the University of Rhode Island (see Collection Digitization). The searchable website has been enthusiastically received and 26,213 searches of the NSGD database have been performed during the past two years (an average of 1,250 searches are performed each month).

Figures 1 and 2 below show the various domains and countries served by this site.

Figure 1.
NSGD searches from within the US

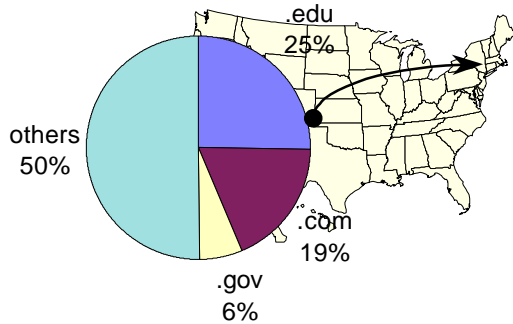
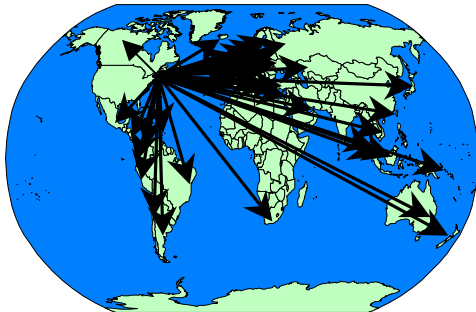


Figure 2.
International searches of the NSGD Database



The NSGD website has several other services that aid Sea Grant programs and other patrons including: a weekly list of all recent Sea Grant publications; links to all individual and national Sea Grant programs' websites; and information on how to purchase or borrow Sea Grant documents.

NSGD Review

A review of the NSGD was conducted on March 26, 1997 by a panel of librarians selected by the National Sea Grant Office to review the value, role, technology and support issues

surrounding the National Sea Grant Depository. The Panel concluded that: (1) the NSGD is a unique resource for the National Sea Grant College Program and the marine/aquatic community; (2) while other libraries collect selected Sea Grant publications, none collects them as comprehensively or maintains an archival copy of all Sea Grant publications; and (3) the collection is invaluable as a national resource of publicly funded marine and freshwater research, and should be treated as such. The Panel further recommended that the Depository, under the guidance of the National Office, become an essential part of the education/outreach mission of the program.

In their written report the Panel emphasized the need to market the services of the Depository and to increase outreach efforts. Marketing had been discouraged in the past so the NSGD welcomed this opportunity and carried out some low-cost web marketing recommendations (see section below). We have addressed several other points raised in the review and will continue to move forward with other Panel recommendations as funding permits.

Outreach

Relevant marine and aquatic online discussion lists were identified from web directories and a letter of introduction was sent to introduce them to the NSGD and its services. The NSGD also contacted webmasters from various sites (marine agencies, libraries and other appropriate groups) that maintain marine science Internet resource directories and asked them to link to the Depository's web page. This is an ongoing process and requests are made as new sites are identified. A recent search indicated that at least 182 sites across the world

currently have links to the NSGD website.

The NSGD also created an easily transportable tabletop display depicting its mission, services and collection. The display and promotional materials were displayed at the RI Aquaculture conference, a RI Legislative Day, and numerous University events. The display may be borrowed by any program or the National Office. Formal presentations about the NSGD--its mission, collections and services--were made to Sea Grant and professional associations (national and international) during the past year. In addition the NSGD entered into a collaborative aquaculture initiative which will enhance coordination of outreach efforts among national sources of aquaculture information (see [Aquaculture Network](#)).

Other low-cost outreach efforts designed to enhance public awareness are being considered for the upcoming grant year.

Collection Digitization

The digitization project under the auspices of the URI Coastal Data and Information Center (CDIC) is now in full swing. A major goal of this separately funded project is to digitize the majority of the existing Sea Grant collection (*with the exception of journal reprints and commercially produced items*) and provide full-text PDF images of the documents over the web. The NSGD (with input from Sea Grant Directors and Communicators) has guided the selection of items being scanned. A "hot topic" approach was taken to meet current patron demand and support regional and national Sea Grant initiatives. In addition the NSGD staff has been creating the links to those

documents from its existing database. This service will provide another integrated means of accessing Sea Grant literature and will benefit many patrons and researchers, especially those in schools, local government and foreign countries that often have great difficulty obtaining scientific and technical literature.

The CDIC Director and National Office representatives met with NOAA Counsel to discuss copyright issues associated with the project. A scanning release form was sent to each Sea Grant Director in order to obtain permission to digitize material from their program. The form contained a section where programs could identify individual documents they wished to exclude from this project. The CDIC and NSGD remain sensitive to each program's need to recoup printing and other costs and many of these items can be scanned at a later date once their distribution copies are exhausted.

The CDIC Director presented a report to the Sea Grant Directors (March 1998) on the Depository and the CDIC at the beginning of this project. The Directors appeared to be very receptive to the project and have offered suggestions for topics and items for priority scanning. Other presentations were given by the CDIC Director at the annual IAMSLIC (International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers) Conference (September 1998, Reykjavik, Iceland); the Communicators' Steering Committee (November 1998, Houston, Texas); and Atmospheric Science Librarians International (January 1999, Dallas, Texas). This project met with much enthusiasm within these groups as well.

Digital Libraries

The scanned items resulting from the CDIC project have given the NSGD Coordinator the opportunity to create several digital libraries (<http://nsgd.gso.uri.edu/diglib.htm>) where one can quickly access electronic versions of Sea Grant documents on current issues. To date libraries on HACCP, Coastal Hazards, and Marine Careers are fairly complete. Others in the works include Harmful Algal Blooms, Diving Safety, Education Curriculum, Responsible Aquaculture, and Nonindigenous Species. While links to documents contained in these digital libraries are also provided through the NSGD database, these libraries offer patrons the added advantage of being able to browse a list of related titles without requiring a familiarity with the vocabulary.

ASFA

The CDIC Director has initiated dialogue with the editor of *Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA)*--the premier aquatic science indexing and abstracting database (created under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)--because Sea Grant documents are not as thoroughly covered in *ASFA* as they should be. *ASFA* has indicated that they would like to explore possible linkages between the citations in their database and the full-text electronic documents at the NSGD. *ASFA* is making efforts to facilitate document delivery and feels that collaboration with NSGD would make the non-copyrighted material much more widely available. They have acknowledged the significance of the NSGD digitization project and have indicated that they would "shift some resources to index material that will

become part of the digitized database". Their positive response and future actions will ensure a wider domestic and international audience and easier access to Sea Grant literature

Aquaculture Network

With approximately 25% of its collection devoted to aquaculture and fisheries, the NSGD was recently recognized as one of the key sources for aquaculture information on the national level. The NSGD Coordinator was invited to attend a September 1998 meeting (called by Jim McVey, National Office) regarding the current status of aquaculture information. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) resulted from this meeting with the intent of establishing a formal cooperative relationship between the NOAA Central Library, AquaNIC (at Purdue University), NSGD and the Delaware Aquaculture Resource Center (affiliated with Delaware Sea Grant). This relationship will result in the formation of the NOAA Network of Aquaculture Information Services (NNAIS) to provide the best access to aquaculture information and to facilitate the flow of communication within the network. A plan for coordinating access to resources will be developed and joint activities will be pursued.

Organizational Change

URI administrative changes resulted in reorganizing the NSGD under the direction of a new Director of Marine Sciences Information Services at URI, Eleanor Uhlinger. This organizational restructuring will benefit the NSGD by offering more guidance on library and national issues.

Survey

A survey was conducted during this grant period to determine the extent of NSGD usage within the Sea Grant community. Results were encouraging and out of those responding, nearly 80% said they use the services of the Depository and 73% refer patrons to the Depository for loans. In addition, 83% use our web services. It was also an opportunity to learn how we might better serve the program. Some recommendations were to provide: (1) an interactive order form for loans; (2) a Sea Grant project directory database; and (3) PDF fact sheets available from the Depository. Some of these suggestions are already being considered.

Sea Grant Abstracts

The NSGD published two volumes of *Sea Grant Abstracts (SGA)* during this period. This free publication is published quarterly by the NSGD and produced by Woods Hole Data Base, Inc. *Sea Grant Abstracts* reports on the availability of current Sea Grant publications and includes abstracts and ordering information for each publication. Approximately 98% of all material received by the NSGD is included in *SGA*. Documents commonly omitted include annual reports, outdated material and thesis/dissertation abstracts. The NSGD supplies the data input files and preliminary editing for Woods Hole Data Base, Inc. An index to the quarterly appears in issue 4 and a periodicals directory is included in issue 1 of each volume.

Other Activities

Among the other activities completed during this grant period is a fully automated circulation system, designed

in-house by Depository staff. In addition to circulation control, the system also prints overdue notices and keeps highly accurate statistics.

The NSGD also worked closely with several Sea Grant researchers and consultants in developing comprehensive bibliographies for various groups. Topics included marinas, fisheries, coral reefs and aquaculture. Extensive assistance was also provided to a writer for the magazine, *Fishing Trade Tackle News*, which resulted in a series of articles based on Sea Grant work.

Sample Patron Comments

"These articles represent a classic example of fruitful cooperation between the public and private sectors. Sea Grant researchers did the work, you gathered it and made it available to FTTN and it got out to interested users in a readable form." *Douglas Norvell (Fishing Tackle Trade News 9/97)*

"You have a secret treasure trove which our Ohio University Government Documents librarian had not been able to help me access." *Pat Bassel Tillis (School of Health Sciences, Ohio University, 4/98)*

"Thank you for sharing your resources with us." *National Science Foundation (5/98)*

"This is an astounding service and a contribution worthy of its cost. I know of no other way of getting that info." *Russell David (Deep Structures Playground, 1/99)*

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