



# NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office Staff Directory

November 2010

## About Us

The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO) provides science, service, and stewardship to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay. The Office is a division of NOAA's Office of Habitat Conservation and is organized into three programs—Ecosystem Science, Coastal and Living Resource Management, and Environmental Literacy—that together represent an integrated approach to ecosystem management that helps scientists, managers, and the public better understand and consider the interconnectedness of the Bay ecosystem. The Office coordinates NOAA's overall support of the implementation of the Executive Order of 2009 on Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration and leads the agency's effort in several key areas: fisheries, habitat, education, and observations.



**Peyton Robertson**, Director

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Peyton provides overall vision and direction to ensure that NOAA's interests and capabilities are represented in support of the Chesapeake Bay Program and the Executive Order of 2009 on Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration. He also advocates for broader regional interests through his leadership of NOAA's North Atlantic Regional Team—an integrated group of NOAA staff from Virginia to Maine. Peyton spent much of his childhood exploring the Virginia waters of the Chesapeake. His early career posts included serving as an environmental educator for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in Norfolk and a watershed manager in Albemarle County, Virginia. He began his 18-year career with NOAA as the agency's coastal nonpoint pollution program manager before returning to the Chesapeake in 2002.



**Sean Corson**, Deputy Director

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Sean oversees daily operations of NCBO, providing leadership and strategic planning to shape and implement office activities. He is the lead for budget formulation and execution as well as personnel matters. Sean works with all staff and programs to ensure NCBO goals are met. He joined NCBO in 2008 after serving as NOAA's Deputy Superintendent of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument located in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands. Sean holds a master's degree from Yale University in forest science with an emphasis on anadromous fish.



# Ecosystem Science

# Science

Monitoring, modeling, and researching fisheries and aquatic habitats to describe and predict Bay ecosystem processes

## **David Bruce**, Marine Scientist/GIS

David.Bruce@noaa.gov; 410-226-5193

David uses sonar systems to create digital mapping products for oyster restoration and other resource management projects, and also provides GIS support for NCBO and partner projects. Prior to joining NCBO in 2006, David worked for the state of Delaware, where he managed commercial fisheries using fisheries-dependent surveys and stock assessments and used acoustic surveying techniques to create habitat maps for shellfish management. David received a Master of Science in fisheries science from the University of Georgia.



## **Steve Giordano**, Fisheries Biologist

Steve.Giordano@noaa.gov; 410-507-8586

Steve directs field operations for NCBO, including managing field research and monitoring activities to support its Ecosystem Science, Coastal and Living Resource Management, and Environmental Literacy requirements. Steve also leads NCBO's habitat assessment team, which conducts habitat characterization and utilization research, monitoring, and assessment that supports regional protection and restoration. Steve joined NCBO in 2004 after serving the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a marine scientist and environmental enforcement attorney-advisor.



## **Tom Ihde**, Ecological Modeler

Tom.Ihde@noaa.gov; 410-295-3148

Tom is leading NCBO's effort to develop a spatially explicit ecosystem-based fisheries management model for the Chesapeake Bay watershed using the Atlantis modeling approach. This work provides Bay resource managers with a science-based comparison of tradeoffs for different management choices. Tom holds a Ph.D. in marine fisheries stock assessment from the College of William & Mary, and completed his postdoctoral work in recreational fisheries while with the University of Maryland at the Chesapeake Biological Lab.



## **Lieutenant (j.g.) Colin Kliewer**, NOAA Corps

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Colin, a commissioned officer in the NOAA Corps, is currently assigned to NCBO as the vessel and facility safety officer and NCBO divemaster. Colin also assists on many field projects—including hydrographic and fishery surveys, educational trips, and CBIBS buoy operations—aboard NCBO's small boats. He holds a master's degree in natural resource development from Texas A&M University.



## **Jay Lazar**, Hydrographer

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Jay ensures the acoustic seafloor mapping component of NCBO habitat assessments meets the highest quality standards. As a licensed captain, he is responsible for the safety of the crew, vessel, and equipment while conducting field operations. Using his background in marine resource management, Jay combines the hydrographic data acquisition and processing components with the GIS analytical tools to address native oyster restoration problems with a broad perspective focused on solutions.



## **Eric Stengel**, Physical Science Technician

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Eric coordinates field operations in support of the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System to ensure a continuous stream of real-time data for scientists and resource managers as well as boaters, educators, and other users. He joined NCBO in 2008 after working for NOAA's Satellite and Information Service and the Marine Optical Buoy project for 17 years. Eric has a bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland Baltimore County.





**Howard Townsend**, Fisheries Ecosystem Modeler

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Howard supports ecosystem-based fisheries management by developing and implementing ecosystem models and improved data management tools. These tools help managers understand the tradeoffs in ecosystem services under different management scenarios. Howard also provides administrative oversight of NCBO programs at the Cooperative Oxford Laboratory. Howard has a Ph.D. in biology from Wake Forest University. Prior to joining the office, he conducted statistical analysis for the health care industry.



**Doug Wilson**, Oceanographer

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Doug designs, deploys, and coordinates data management from marine observing systems—including the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Interpretive Buoy System—with the goal of increasing real-time information for science-based decisionmaking. Doug holds a Master of Science in meteorology and physical oceanography from University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. Prior to joining NCBO in 2002, he worked with the NOAA Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory for 20 years.



## NOAA Science Liaison

**Chris Kinkade**, Physical Scientist

NOAA Coastal Services Center (National Ocean Service)

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Chris is a geospatial coordinator, ensuring communication of products, tools, and training to address management needs for marine spatial planning, climate, and community hazard resiliency. He also manages the CoastWatch East Coast Node, distributing satellite remote-sensing products. Chris came to NCBO in 2006 from the NOAA Satellite and Information Service. He has a Ph.D. in oceanography from Columbia University and an adjunct faculty position at San Diego State University.



# Coastal and Living Resources Management

Providing resource managers with science-based policy advice that recognizes the interconnectedness of fisheries and habitat

## Service

### **Bruce Vogt**, Coastal and Living Resources Manager

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Bruce facilitates the consideration and inclusion of sound science in the development of Chesapeake Bay fisheries and habitat policy. To accomplish this, he works closely with scientists and managers across the Bay and serves as the coordinator of the Chesapeake Bay Program's Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team. Bruce holds a master's degree in marine science with a concentration in benthic ecology and ecotoxicology from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. He joined NCBO in 2009 from the National Ocean Service's policy office.



### **Peter Bergstrom**, Fisheries Biologist

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Peter promotes bivalve aquaculture in the Chesapeake Bay, advises community and school groups on how to restore and monitor tidal habitats (including submerged aquatic vegetation and switchgrass), and how to monitor water quality and analyze and report the results. Peter joined NCBO in 2002 after serving as a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and as a statistician with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency contractor, both in Annapolis. He holds a Ph.D. in biology from the University of Chicago.



### **Derek Orner**, Research Fisheries Biologist

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Derek serves as a liaison between NCBO and NOAA's Office of Sustainable Fisheries, fostering interjurisdictional fisheries management partnerships and collaborations among Atlantic coastal partners. Derek coordinates the Fisheries Research Program for NCBO, which supports Bay-wide fisheries research, monitoring, and modeling, and he provides scientific and management advice on the status of Chesapeake Bay fishery resources. Derek is also the NCBO grants lead. He has been with the office since 1995 and holds a master's degree in environmental science and policy from Johns Hopkins University.



### **Stephanie Westby**, Oyster Coordinator

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Stephanie coordinates oyster strategy and manages grants related to oyster restoration for the NOAA Restoration Center and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. Previously, Stephanie oversaw the oyster restoration program and served as the technical and policy lead for fisheries at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Maryland office. She holds a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University in environmental science and policy.





## NOAA Resource Management Liaisons



**Mary Pittek Andrews**, Environmental Engineer  
NOAA Restoration Center (National Marine Fisheries Service)  
Mary.Andrews@noaa.gov; 410-267-5644

Mary is a civil/environmental engineer who designs and acts as project manager on dam removal, wetland, and coastal engineering projects for NOAA's Restoration Center. She has a Master of Science in ecological engineering and is a licensed civil engineer in the state of Maryland. She has worked in both engineering and research of dam removals, tidal wetlands, and coastal shoreline projects for more than 10 years and previously worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.



**Darlene Finch**, Mid-Atlantic Regional Coordinator  
NOAA Coastal Services Center (National Ocean Service)  
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Darlene works with coastal managers from New York to Virginia to improve the delivery of NOAA products and services. She started her career as a NOAA Sea Grant fellow and worked with the National Marine Sanctuaries, Estuarine Research Reserves, Salmon Recovery Division, Damage Assessment and Restoration Program, and as the special assistant to the director of the National Ocean Service before joining the Coastal Services Center. Darlene has a master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**John Kuriawa**, Coastal Program Specialist  
NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (National Ocean Service)  
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John works with Maryland and Virginia to facilitate the development and implementation of coastal policies and projects. His primary areas of focus are smart growth/development, climate adaptation, and nonpoint pollution. John brings previous experience from the private sector and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency focusing on watershed management. He holds a Master of Environmental Management from the Yale School of Forestry.



**Walter Priest**, Marine Habitat Resource Specialist  
NOAA Restoration Center (National Marine Fisheries Service)  
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Walter is a restoration scientist with the NOAA Restoration Center based at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. As part of his current role, he provides technical assistance and design guidance for parties interested in living shoreline implementation. He serves as the Virginia manager for the Living Shoreline Initiative Grant Program. Prior to his NOAA role, Walter was a VIMS research scientist for many years.



**Ariana Sutton-Grier**, Science and Technology Policy Fellow  
American Association for the Advancement of Science  
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Ariana is a AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow hosted by NOAA. Ariana is participating in the interagency working group on ecosystem services and the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Markets Team. She is also working on the Marine InVEST project helping to determine which agencies can best use this modeling tool to support decision-making and policy in the Chesapeake Bay. Ariana has a Ph.D. in ecology from Duke University. Prior to becoming a fellow with NOAA, she was a fellow at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.



**Rich Takacs**, Restoration and Native Oyster Specialist  
NOAA Restoration Center (National Marine Fisheries Service)  
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Rich implements habitat restoration projects for NOAA's Restoration Center, including community-based and large-scale restoration. In addition, he provides response and restoration support to NOAA during oil spills or contaminant releases, and serves as a NOAA science diver and vessel operator. Rich joined NOAA in 1998. He has a Master of Science in marine, estuarine, and environmental science from the University of Maryland.

# Environmental Literacy

Fostering citizen stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay by providing learning opportunities designed to increase environmental literacy

# Stewardship

## **Shannon Sprague**, Environmental Literacy Manager

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Shannon manages education, outreach, and communications for NCBO, including managing the Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) environmental education grant program. She also coordinates NOAA's engagement in the Citizen Stewardship components of the Executive Order on Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration. Shannon joined NCBO in 2003 after serving as a budget and management analyst for NOAA and the Department of Interior. She holds a Master of Public Affairs in environmental policy from Indiana University.

## **Kim Couranz**, Communications Specialist

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Kim coordinates NCBO media outreach, web content, and written communications—linking the public with the information they need to make informed decisions on Bay issues. She serves as the NCBO representative on the NOAA Fisheries Public Affairs Team, the Habitat Conservation Communications Team, and the Chesapeake Bay Program Communications Workgroup. Prior to joining NCBO, she edited magazines and developed and marketed educational events for the U.S. Naval Institute. Kim has a bachelor's degree in international relations and Russian studies from Brown University.

## **Andrew Larkin**, Outreach Specialist

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Andrew, who works out of NCBO's location at the Nauticus Maritime Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, ensures that NCBO programs are available to our Virginia constituents and that they meet their unique needs. He coordinates B-WET in Virginia and facilitates NOAA's partnership with Nauticus. Leveraging his previous experience in NOAA's Office of Legislative Affairs and on Capitol Hill, Andrew also manages government communications for the office. Andrew has a J.D. from the College of William & Mary School of Law.

## **Bart Merrick**, Education Coordinator

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Bart manages the NOAA Environmental Science Training Center at the Cooperative Oxford Lab, which provides training on cutting-edge science to environmental education professionals. Bart brings a wealth of science education experience to his position, having served as the educator coordinator for the Maryland National Estuarine Research Reserves and a field educator for Living Classrooms and Chesapeake Bay Foundation. He holds a master's degree in environmental science from Johns Hopkins University.

## **Kevin Schabow**, Education Coordinator

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Kevin oversees the day-to-day operations of the B-WET program and runs the NOAA Emerging Scientist Project, which uses NOAA staff and resources to support environmental education in local high schools. Before joining NCBO, Kevin ran an environmental education center in California and served as staff for the Chesapeake Bay Program Communication and Education Subcommittee. Kevin has a master's degree in environmental management from Johns Hopkins University.

## **Maggie Kerchner**, Communications Liaison

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Maggie leads the NOAA Air Resources Laboratory's (ARL) communications and outreach activities and serves as ARL's representative to NOAA's Research Communication's Office. Using her communications capabilities, she also provides assistance to NCBO in showcasing NOAA programs to and from the Chesapeake region. Maggie joined ARL in 1995, positioned in the NCBO. She received her Bachelor of Arts in environmental studies from Hood College in Maryland.



# Information Technology



**Bill Bradley**, Information Technology Program Manager

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Bill oversees all facets of information technology at NCBO and leads a team of development and database professionals. He ensures availability of all NCBO websites, network, computer, and telecommunication resources used by NCBO staff and constituents. Bill joined NOAA as a data system integrator in 1990, and moved to NCBO in 2007 after serving for six years as the manager for all national and local area networks for NOAA Fisheries headquarters.



**CJ Pellerin**, Application Developer

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CJ develops applications to support the scientific mission at NCBO. This includes all facets of software development such as architecture, project planning, design, and implementation. He also performs hardware administration and configuration. CJ joined NCBO in 2009 after working as an independent consultant. He holds a master's degree in distributed computing from Johns Hopkins University.



**Dale Vogel**, Web Developer

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Dale is the webmaster for NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office; he administers the NCBO public internet site. He offers training and support to NCBO personnel on the use of the public Internet site's Joomla content management system. He is helping to develop the new Chesapeake Bay Observing System website. Dale has developed and handcoded the NCBO intranet application, which helps NCBO management and personnel plan projects, submit funding requests, track accounts, approve funds for requests, and track spending.



**Nicholas Whittier**, Database Administrator

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Nicholas administers databases and performs software development and systems administration for NCBO. Before joining NCBO in 2009, Nicholas worked in wireless technologies, developing mobile applications and managing quality assurance procedures for mobile software and web development.

# Administration



**Tiffany Hopkins**, Lead Administrative Support

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Tiffany coordinates front office operations for NCBO, ensuring high-quality support for all staff and customers. She maintains a close working relationship with the Office of Habitat Conservation administrative staff and oversees financial obligations, coordinates personnel actions, and maintains administrative records. She is also a certified contracting officer's technical representative (COTR) and coordinates the execution of all NCBO contracts. Tiffany holds a bachelor's degree in management from Ashworth College.



**Tammy Muncy**, Secretary

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Tammy provides administrative support for NCBO, including planning for and executing travel orders, reconciling credit card purchases, updating property logs, and ensuring that office supplies and equipment are maintained. Before joining the office, Tammy managed accounts receivable for several doctors' offices in and around the Annapolis area.