In April 2019, the CHNEP partnered with The Balmoral Group (Balmoral), an economics and engineering consulting firm, to respond to a Request for Proposals from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) to evaluate the economic impacts of water quality impacts in the Gulf, specifically Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). The proposal was approved by GOMA’s Water Resources Team in May 2019 and the approximately one-year study was initiated in July.

CHNEP has been working with The Balmoral Group to develop and test a “dashboard” that will enable coastal resource managers to quantify the economic implications of HABs and thereby assess the value of restoration investments or management actions in avoiding negative economic impacts. Balmoral has relied on its recent experience with NASA to link remotely-sensed (satellite) data, social media data, and documented economic losses along Florida’s Gulf coast. CHNEP staff have provided technical review and feedback to Balmoral, as well as assisted in convening stakeholders - utilizing web-casted CHNEP Management Conference meetings as public workshops to disseminate information about this project as well to gather public input for the Dashboard’s development.

The final HAB Economic Impact Dashboard is available at https://datavisual.balmoralgroup.us/GOMA-HABecon.
Anticipated Results and Benefits

- Enables resource managers to quantify the economic impact of HABs in order to assess the cost/benefit of restoration investments and/or management actions in preventing such economic losses.
- Conveys to the public and policymakers the monetary effect of HABs on various revenues, employment, wages and property values, to cultivate support for measures to prevent or control HABs.

Dashboard Website:  https://datavisual.balmoralgroup.us/GOMA-HABecon

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