



**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Kathleen Hickey  
Senior Communications Officer  
Tel: (845) 838-1600 ext. 15  
[khickey@thebeaconinstitute.org](mailto:khickey@thebeaconinstitute.org)

**Date:** May 20, 2008

## **Beacon Institute Appoints Bonner Director of Research**

*(Beacon and Troy, NY)* – The Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries has named James S. Bonner, Ph.D., P.E., as REON Director of Research. A nationally recognized expert in real-time water monitoring technologies, Bonner will lead the development and implementation of the River and Estuary Observatory Network (REON) to create the first technology-based monitoring and forecasting network for rivers and estuaries. REON is a joint effort between The Beacon Institute, IBM and Clarkson University.

REON will allow for minute-to-minute monitoring of physical, chemical and biological data from New York's Hudson and St. Lawrence Rivers via an integrated network of sensors, robotics and computational technology distributed throughout both rivers.

“Tremendous human impact occurs in the regions where rivers and estuaries meet the ‘coastal margin’ – coastal wetlands, bays and shoreline,” explained Bonner. “In the United States, this region is home to 70% of the population and 20 of its 25 largest cities. It is also where most industry and ports are found.”

In addition to his new post with The Beacon Institute, Bonner concurrently serves as Director of the [Center for the Environment](#) at Clarkson University in Potsdam, NY, where he is a member of the civil and environmental engineering faculty.

Bonner holds an M.S. in civil engineering and a Ph.D. in civil and environmental engineering from Clarkson University, as well as a B.A. in biology from SUNY Plattsburgh. In the early 1990s, he spearheaded an effort with colleagues from Texas A&M University to pursue a long-term research project to improve understanding of modern oil spill remediation and countermeasure technologies.

Bonner also established the Shoreline Environmental Research Facility in Corpus Christi, TX, where he developed and implemented technologies that use high-frequency radar to map surface water along the Texas coastline. He has developed new technologies that provide real-time continuous monitoring with in-situ sensing ("sensing in place") to measure important water parameters. With funding from the National Science Foundation, he has undertaken a

# The Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries

## Beacon Institute Appoints Bonner Director of Research

Release Date: May 20, 2008

national effort to create a cyber-collaboratory framework, enabling collection and circulation of real-time data and data analysis in the study of oxygen depletion in water.

“Jim Bonner is one of the most innovative talents in the country in the field of advanced environmental technologies, and a respected thought-leader in real-time monitoring,” said John Cronin, Director and Chief Executive Officer of The Beacon Institute. “His impressive expertise, combined with his extensive network of collaborators, makes him the perfect choice to direct and propel our REON initiative forward.”

"Clarkson University is very pleased to have this opportunity to associate with The Beacon Institute through Jim Bonner," said Clarkson University President Tony Collins. "Jim's depth of experience and knowledge, along with the resources of our Center for the Environment, will combine to safeguard the future of two waterways most vital to future generations of New Yorkers."

“I am excited and proud to have the opportunity to shape and lead The Beacon Institute’s REON initiative,” Bonner said. “Through our collaborations with New York’s industries and educational institutions, we are applying technology and research to monitor the pulse of the environment, which will yield valuable data and management options to inform the design and creation of public policy for environmental restoration and protection.”

### ***About The Beacon Institute:***

*The Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries, with offices in Beacon and Troy, New York, is a not-for-profit environmental research organization engaging scientists, engineers, educators and policy experts in collaborative work focusing on real-time monitoring of river ecosystems. It aims to make the Hudson Valley a global center for scientific and technological innovation that advances research, education and public policy regarding rivers and estuaries. [www.thebeaconinstitute.org](http://www.thebeaconinstitute.org)*

###