

**Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Environmental Education
Steering Committee**

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Steering Committee Attendees:

Alison Hammer, NOAA SPO
Chris Simoniello, GCOOS EOC, University of South Florida, College of Marine Science
Phillip Hinesley, AL Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Coastal Section
Ericka McCauley, Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Flinda Hill, Mississippi Power Company
Lee Yokel, GOMA/DISL
Sharon Hodge, Northern Gulf Institute
Tabitha Stadler, Rookery Bay NERR
Tara Schultz, Texas State Aquarium
Tracie Sempier, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
Valerie Kleinschmidt, GOMA/DISL

Current Homework

- Complete survey for EEN Quarterly Call, if you haven't done so already.
- Once Public Input with surveymonkey is online, send out link to your e-mail contacts or ListServ to get feedback. Also, if your organization has a website, please post the link there.

Acronyms

BTNEP= Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
DISL= Dauphin Island Sea Lab
EEN= Environmental Education Network
GCOOS= Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System
GOMA= Gulf of Mexico Alliance
NOAA=National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NERR= National Estuarine Research Reserve
RFP= Request for Proposals
SLAM= Sea Level Rise Affecting Marshes Model

1. Quarterly Call Review

- i. Valerie gave overview of call. She stated-"Over 30 people RSVP'd to be on the call; hopefully most of them were on it. First we had a guest speaker, Sheri Potter from the Year of Science, and I felt she did a great job giving an overview of her program and how GOMA and others can be involved. Then we had the state leads and PIT Liaisons give updates on environmental programs in their states or priorities. I thought everyone gave useful information, but kept it brief. I sent everyone the survey to evaluate the call, please fill it out if you haven't yet. I'll be e-mailing the notes by the end of this week, 2/13."

- ii. Tracie Sempier stated: Appreciated all the people being together on one call. Flowed well; and everyone was on task.
- iii. Next Call Monday, May 4' 2009 at 1 pm CST.

2. Update on Action Plan II-

a. Status-

- i. Lee explained: It was a long afternoon going over the education chapter, but good progress was made. On the following Monday 2/2, more changes were made with a small group. Changes to draft have been submitted to AMT and we're waiting to hear status.

b. Public Input-

- i. Four public workshops in FL were conducted and completed. Results are now with NOAA.
- ii. Public input for the remaining states will be done through Survey Monkey; as approved by AMT. Florida residents are also able to take it if they missed one of their public input meetings. Some questions from FL's meetings were used for survey. Resolution on when these on-line public input surveys will be starting will be decided by the end of the week 2/13.
- iii. Tabitha asked- Are you going to use the same draft as FL's public input meetings? It's important to have consistency. Lee is checking with AMT about survey questions this afternoon.
- iv. States and partners need to send out the public input survey through their e-mail contacts and listservs. Also, if they have a website put the link on there. There will be a link on the Gulf Alliance page. Having a notice in the newspapers is a possibility.
- v. Florida- They expressed they were very pleased with outcomes of workshops. Residents got to learn about the Alliance and they were excited about what the goals of the Alliance. Also, there was a diversity of crowds.
- vi. Tabitha will send steering committee the outcomes of workshops.
- vii. Chris noted-It would be a good idea to promote the public input survey with a newspaper advertisement. They used ads for a Boating Workshop and many of the participants heard about it through that.

3. Update from Working Groups-

- i. Lee Stated- The qualitative reviews are done for the Public Awareness Campaign. Surveys are completed and they are analyzing results. A Strategy Session will be held March 4th-5th, Wednesday & Thursday, at Five Rivers in Spanish Fort; please attend if you can. Nutrient Team has a new coordinator, Ann Copeland, and she will be attending the strategy session. The Public Awareness campaign can be applied to all of GOMA-not just nutrients.
- ii. Lee explained- During the draft editing, there seemed to be some confusion about the difference between outreach and awareness and also a narrow view of the Public Awareness Campaign. Lee added a new section in the plan for Public Awareness activities. This broadened the action to include all activities; outreach and public awareness.

- iii. Underserved & Underrepresented has their Working Group call on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Greg Ira is the facilitator and guest speakers and updates are given on the call.
- iv. BTNEP will be having a Diversity Conference in Thibodaux, LA during the 1st week of June. The conference is trying to be more interactive, rather than just listening sessions. Goal is to find better ways to reach untraditional audiences. Save the date has been sent out and we are helping to organize the conference. Is anyone from EEN interested in speaking about their educational programs?
 - a. Flinda stated-An untraditional audience that would be good to reach is the Vietnamese community.
 - b. Tabitha stated she's like to speak at the conference and will e-mail Lee.
- v. Valerie gave Update on Website- "I met the web developers at Stennis on Tuesday 2/3. We are getting the pages populated with content and figuring out a web interface to manage announcements and an RSS feed automatically. Also, we are changing the colors of the banner and making the website more distinct from the GOMA site. No date yet for when the site will go live, but Lee will be contacting people for their input before going live."
 - a. Sharon Noted- They are making headway. She met today with the web developer. Lee and Valerie will be having a call with them on the 17th to discuss progress.

5. Priority Team Reports

a. Water Quality-No one was available for update. Noted that Steve Wolfe is the new coordinator.

b. Nutrients- No one was available for update. Noted that Ann Copeland is the new coordinator.

c. Resiliency-

Tracie Sempier-

- i. The Resilience Team will be meeting soon in Apalachicola, FL.
- ii. The team has been pilot testing their "Community Resilience Index" to make it a useful tool for coastal communities. The index looks at factors like mitigation, social systems, critical structures, etc. Decision makers take part in a round-table discussion and explore the 8 page index. So far 6 communities have participated in piloting; results will be available in March.
- iii. Jay Ritchie is developing a Coastal IQ program.
- iv. Team is implementing a Resiliency Social Climate Survey. June is when the surveys will be taking place.
- v. The Clean Marinas program through MS Marine Resources has been promoting awareness about proper boating practices.
- vi. The Team is working on the Resilience Clearinghouse. It will be Web Portal with an audience of local officials and managers. Also, serve as a big database of all resiliency topics.
- vii. Rafael with Nature Conservancy is using SLAM Modeling to measure Ecological Resilience.

Questions/Comments:

- Tara asked if there would be Pilot Testing in Texas for Community Resilience Index and Coastal IQ. Tracie stated that Texas was included.

- Tabitha asked if the Clean Marina Program was national and Tracie clarified that is was. Tabitha went on to say, rather than teams creating new projects it's nice to see them utilizing ones that already exist that match GOMA priorities.
 - Tracie mentioned her team was having conversations about what exactly resiliency means to the public. They will be adding content about this topic in the "what you can do" section of digital library for the EEN site.
- d. Habitat-**No one was available to give update. It was noted that Ryan Fikes is the new coordinator.
- e. Ecosystem Assessment- Chris Simoniello**
- Seneca Holland is the new coordinator and will be working at Harte Institute.
 - On the last week of March through the first week of April the team will be meeting to identify priorities and discuss Geospatial data & Gap analysis.
 - A pilot study to assess the economic value of ecosystems will be held on Mustang Island-off of Corpus Christi. The progress of this is under the reduction component.
- 6. Issue for the Alliance Management Team-** No issues brought up.
- 7. Announcements and Other Discussions-**
- I. Funding Activities-**
- a. Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant has a grant open; closing Feb. 23rd.
 - b. There is an open RFP on msgc.org.
 - c. Regional Climate & Resiliency RFP is open. For a collaboration of many organizations. Also, due on Feb. 23rd. You can find it on: <http://www.flseagrants.org/>- under "Funding options".
 - d. Gulf of Mexico Program is opening its yearly RFP soon.
 - e. Dauphin Island Sea Lab has closed their RFP and sent applications to reviewers. They are getting together with reviewers this Fri. the 13th. Once that's completed we will contact people.
- II. Other-**
- a. Chris thanked everyone for circulating GCOOS information; she received an overwhelming response.
 - b. Tabitha stated that Florida would be doing a survey of journalists to find out how much coverage is done about the Gulf of Mexico.
- 8. Next Call-Send any updates to Lee for next call.**
Tuesday, March 10, 2009 10 AM CST