

**Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Environmental Education Network
Steering Committee Conference Call
Tuesday, June 16, 2009**

Steering Committee Attendees

1. LaKeshia Robertson: EPA Gulf of Mexico Program
2. Richard Gonzales: Gulf of Mexico Program
3. Kris Shipman: Texas Parks & Wildlife
4. Chris Simoniello: Gulf Coast Ocean Observing System (GCOOS)
5. Flinda Hill: Mississippi State Power
6. Robyn Schoessel: Rookery Bay National Estuary Program
7. Valerie Kleinschmidt: GOMA/Dauphin Island Sea Lab
8. Lee Yokel: GOMA/Dauphin Island Sea Lab

Acronyms

BTNEP: Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

CELC: Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center

CHOW: Capitol Hill Ocean Week

EIA: Ecosystem Integration and Assessment

EPA: Environmental Protection Agency

GCOOS EOC: Gulf Coast Ocean Observing System-Education Outreach Council

HABs: Harmful Algal Blooms

HCR: Habitat Conservation and Restoration

NCDDC: National Coastal Data Development Center

PHINS: Priority Habitat Information System

READIM: Real-time Data Information Management

SSCN: Science and Spanish Club Network

Agenda General Notes

- I. Update on Action Plan II
 - a. The new Action Plan is available on the web at <http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org> and at <http://www.gulfallianceeducation.org> .
E-mail Ann Weaver if you would like a hard copy.
- II. CHOW Report
 - a. LaKeshia gave update. She was unable to attend the event, but Bryan Griffith expressed the event was successful! There was a large turnout for the reception when they released Action Plan II which gave a useful opportunity for networking and partnering. The event enabled the Alliance to reach more people with specific examples of on-the-ground projects.

III. Action Plan II – Tier II & Yearly Work Plan

- a. Lee had car trouble and was unable to be on the call, and the call already had a large agenda. She was able to call in mid-way into the call. Valerie & LaKeshia agreed to schedule a separate call to review and refine Action Plan II, including a yearly work plan.
- b. Valerie explained formatting and content of Tier II
 - i. When developing Tier II I went through previous drafts of Action Plan II from the education team to ensure specific details were pulled out.
 - ii. Note the commitments section-If your organization has a project that fits one of the Actions, let us know so that it can be included.
 - iii. The expected dates of completion will help to develop the Yearly Work Plan; with your commitments include a date of completion.
 - iv. For the Cross PIT category, we want to know where we can be working together with other teams to accomplish an action(s).
 - v. With the assessment & outcome category we want to ensure the EEN has specific, measurable actions so that we can review our activities and make improvements (if needed).

IV. Updates

- a. Diversity Symposium, June 3-5, 2009-BTNEP in Thibodaux, LA
 - i. Valerie & LaKeshia reported: The Diversity Symposium featured a grant project from each of the Gulf States that worked with underserved and underrepresented populations. They presented on their successes and challenges for the participants involved to learn more about engaging these populations with experiential learning in the coastal environment. The Symposium was smaller than intended, but those that did attend enjoyed the opportunity to share with one another. On the last day we did a water quality session and went canoeing on the Bayou Lafourche.
- b. August 2009 “All-Hands” meeting – joint GOMAEEN/GCOOS EOC meeting
 - i. See document from Chris Simoniello-her goals for the meeting.
 - ii. The meeting will focus on the development and promotion of the GOMA-CELC Kiosks. Each CELC Kiosk will have software that features all of the Priority Issues. The plan is for people to be able to continue with what they learned from using the kiosk by having supporting literature, lessons, games etc. available on-line. These will be tangible products that we can use with the different audiences we serve. Example: Dead zone activities.

- iii. Sharon just completed a grant to EPA for supplemental funding.
- iv. From GCOOS Workshops-What can you learn from real-time data? It's important to get the students and teachers to the website. Getting people to use data that relates to the environment.
- v. We can develop specific questions for kiosks. Possibly include: Phytoplankton monitoring system, HABs, corals in the FL Key, fish and wildlife cell counts. Perhaps the user of the kiosk could have an entry point depending on the level of experience.
- vi. Maybe include a diagram of the coastline including HABs-outbreaks and rise of asthma attacks; wellness component.
- vii. Richard Gonzales expressed his interest for the kiosks. He'd like to include: Seagrasses (understudied) and Nutrient Reduction/nutrient overloads. He discussed marketing of environmental education and how traditionally environmental education isn't given the recognition it deserves.
- c. Agenda for All Hands-Review
 - i. Please review the agenda to see if there is anything missing, is there something in particular you would like discussed at the meeting? Do you have a success to report on?
 - ii. When the PIT Liaisons give updates please mention if their PITs agenda has a time to meet with EEN for a messaging activity.
 - iii. Travel Support-If anyone is in need of travel support please call or e-mail Lee.

V. Liaison Reports

- a. **Water Quality Kris Shipman**
 - i. Steven Wolfe & I spoke earlier and the team plans to spend time breaking out into issue teams. EEN is scheduled to meet with water quality 1:30-5:30 on the 5th of August. Kris will be on vacation at this time and won't be able to attend.
 - ii. The water quality team is eager to work with EEN for cross-PIT projects. Their team has 4 Separate work groups: Pathogens, HABs, water quality testing and Mercury. The pathogens group is working to inform coastal managers to make better informed health and resource decisions, including accessing each state's status and creating maps, and beach water quality data. There will be public press releases on the research and health risks.
 - iii. Workshops for communicating HABs in non-technical terms will be held. The team is identifying ways for educating managers.
- b. **Nutrients Richard Gonzales**

- i. The Nutrient team had a meeting at Stennis Space Center on June 9th-11th about MS Source & Transport of nutrients. Water Quality managing catalogs are being developed. A partnership between Patelle and Ohio State to develop a database is being supported by NOAA. It will feed into Regional Ecosystem Data Management. They are looking for outreach assistance for data. There seems to be a driving need for collecting data and managing. For the CELC Kiosks: what are nutrients? Incorporation of behavior change, social marketing with the Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

c. **EIA Chris Simoniello**

- i. Seneca has not distributed agenda yet, but timeslots are available. She will definitely be willing to work with us.
- ii. With habitat data, the team is identifying gaps to decide next steps of activities.
- iii. White Paper, PIT Wide, for all of GOMA data. PHINS, NCDDC, incorporating READIM. They are working with NOAA for leveraging resources.
- iv. The team is looking for 2 Representatives to serve on a committee. Who are those representatives? (GOMAEEN will take time to decide)

d. **HCR Drew Puffer**

- i. Not in attendance

e. **Coastal Resilience Tracie Sempier**

- i. Not in attendance

VI. **Calendar Announcements**

- a. July 20th a Hybrid Electric Boat was launched from Tampa Bay into the Atlantic.
- b. Check out our new partner What about Blue <http://www.whataboutblue.com> ! The founder is Kevin Lilly and his crew is kayaking the MS River starting June 20th and ending in New Orleans in October. As they kayak, we can highlight water quality and nutrient issues. Robyn will send out information to everyone.
 - i. They are asking GOMAEEN: how to reach out to schools? They are looking for hands on restoration projects during their stops.

VII. **Issues for the Alliance Management Team**

- a. None were brought up.

VIII. **Other Discussions**

- a. Please add a link on your site to the GOMAEEN website.

- b. We have started a subcommittee for Public Relations to reach more people with Alliance news and information. As the group develops, we invite interested Alliance members to join if they'd like.
- c. We will be distributing a gulf wide press release on Action Plan II and social networking websites on July 1st. It will include quotes from state leads.
- d. Richard Gonzales-Interested training for teachers: waterway training which includes 4 days of on-line training. Cameron Parish is on board for SSCN, this includes 9 Teachers so there's lots of follow up.
- e. June 25th Midcoast Industry Education Alliance, Homegrown Talent for job development, Quarterly Meeting, Workforce Agenda for SSCN
- f. 2ND Annual Redfish Bay Festival included a tent with partners representing the TX Coast ecosystem. 30,000-40,000 people attended in Corpus Christi. It would be a good event for GOMA to table at. They partner with Yacht clubs to put on the event.

IX. Next call
July 14, 2009, 10AM CDT