

**Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Environmental Education Network
Underserved and Underrepresented Populations Working Group**

Conference Call 01/04/07

Work Group Attendees:

Lead: Susan Testroet-Bergeron, Barataria Terrebonne NEP; Susan@btnep.org
Facilitator: Lee Yokel, GOMA Environmental Education Coordinator; lyokel@disl.org
Bryan Fluech, FL Sea Grant; fluech@ufl.edu
Christina Verlinde, UF/IFAS Santa Rosa County Sea Grant Extension; chrismv@ufl.edu
Jennifer Buchanan, Grand Bay NERR; jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov
Julie Morgan, USACE; julie.t.morgan@mvn02.usace.army.mil
Richard Gonzales, Gulf of Mexico Foundation; richard@gulfmex.org
Roxanne Nikolaus, Division of Ocean Sciences National Science Foundation; rnikolau@nsf.gov
Tara Shultz, Texas State Aquarium; tschultz@txstateaq.org

Current Homework

1. Draft A Comprehensive UUP Definition;
Susan Bergeron will draft a general UUP definition for review at the next call. Chris Verlinde and Tricia LeBlanc will also support this effort. Bryan Fluech and Roxanne Nikolaus will submit any additional definitions they find to Lee Yokel who will maintain a running list of definitions. Deadline to submit is Friday, January 19, 2007.
2. Continue Partnership Spreadsheet Development
All involved. Submit changes, updates, and additions to Lee Yokel in excel format. Think “outside the box” for collecting organization information who have a potential involvement or who are engaged with UUP. Deadline to submit information is Tuesday, January 30, 2007.
3. Identify Key Education Department Contacts
Submit information to Lee Yokel who will maintain the spreadsheet. Deadline to submit information is Tuesday, January 30, 2007.
Florida: Greg Ira
Alabama: Lee Yokel
Mississippi: Sharon Walker
Louisiana: Susan Bergeron
Texas: Tara Schultz
4. Survey Development Continued
Richard Gonzales will work with Lee Yokel and Richard Makopondo to continue drafting the first general survey. Draft will be available for next call, Thursday, February 1, 2007.

Acronyms

GOMA = Gulf of Mexico Alliance

UUP = Underserved and Underrepresented Populations

Goal – “Develop and host a pilot program to engage underrepresented and underserved communities in Gulf stewardship activities related to the Alliance strategic priorities.”

Agenda General Notes

Working Group Name

A brief discussion was held to discuss the name of the Working Group. It was agreed to continued usage of Underserved and Underrepresented Populations Working Group as it reflects the general verbiage found in the *Governors’ Action Plan*.

Underserved and Underrepresented Definitions

Attendees continued the discussion from the previous conference call. Various definitions were solicited from UUP volunteers and the Federal Working Group. It was noted that response was not high. The need for a definition was apparent when individuals tried to contact various organizations for the spreadsheet development. Many wanted a more specific reference to a UUP. To accommodate the wide variety of communities around the Gulf, all agreed that the working definition should:

- need be broad and flexible;
- include people with disabilities or percentage of participation (i.e. fewer males in female disciplines and vice versa);
- be simple and basic enough that any constituent can use for their agencies’ more specific goals.

How Diverse is the GOMA Partnership

The initial spreadsheet developed by everyone was a significant amount of work accomplished toward identifying all the groups that needed to be contacted regarding UUP involvement. The list is still incomplete and all agreed to continue to refine the list for another month. Currently are developing a master list and the survey will help to sort out who works with UUP. Things that need to be included in the spreadsheet:

- Note if the group is conclusively working with UUP
- collect resources from outside the region when identified
- list examples of successful programs when identified

Further discussion noted the desire to be inclusive so there could be a potential opportunity for people who want to do something can find a successful mentor. Currently most organizations are working with elementary aged children while only a few environmental justice groups work with adults. Additional discussion led to the topic of current state mandates for environmental

education. It was decided to list key contacts with state departments of education for future reference with regards to surveys and questions regarding “gulf-based science”.

Finally it was noted there maybe a need for three surveys. One would be to the general diversity list to find out what people are doing. The second would be to query those organizations working with UUP to understand their programs and successes. A third survey could be questions to department of education contacts to find out what students are receiving in environmental education, opportunities that maybe available, and what audiences are most involved.

Survey

Richard Gonzales took the initial survey questions and re-organized them for simplicity. Greg Ira also supplied a separate set of questions which Richard feels can be combined into the current draft. The survey will continue to evolve with February being the deadline. It was discussed that the survey would be distributed and conducted via email with survey monkey.

Call Schedule

The group was given three options for future conference call schedules. They chose a once a month call; the first Thursday at 10:00AM CST. Lee Yokel will coordinate the information distribution and call-in numbers. The next call is scheduled for Thursday, February 1, 2007 at 10:00AM CST.