

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Outreach Listening Session

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Academia	The only "general education" effort that has worked - recycling at the elementary level. If you are looking at the long-term, you must start at the elementary level. The only place where environmental topics fit well is at the elementary level. But that starts with the teachers as well, and getting teachers trained. Need to get teachers on board.
Academia	Develop a curriculum, consider broadcasting, e.g. with TV1. Little kids take things home to their parents. An education program that is simple enough for elementary school students, but that they can take home to their parents, that is what you need to do.
Academia	There are a lot of different organizations that specialize in this (Audobon, National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, Oxfam). Otherwise it is hit-or-miss with individual media actions. Right now there is a Parks and Wildlife video about the Gulf of Mexico, showing on PBS, but it probably has lousy ratings.
NGO	Need opportunities for elementary school kids or kids on the bayou to take field trips, they will get a chance to see and understand why they need to be connected to the environment. Makes it real for them.
NGO	It is difficult to get kids in the New Orleans to buy into restoration. Inner-city kids haven't been out to the bayou - they don't have a real idea of what is out there, don't have any idea of where seafood really comes from. From an educational level, you can't talk about coastal restoration without people physically seeing it, they need a mental image to see what it really means and how it affects them. City kids need to see it <i>live</i> .
Academia	The city of Houston uses both YouTube and Facebook, though they cannot yet measure its effectiveness. Use targeted spokes-people, local officials talking about their community, sharing themselves with their community. Folks at the aquarium used Facebook to talk about invasive species. KEY: identify each stakeholder group and get popular people in their group to donate time and deliver the message. For example, a mascot from their sports team, of a famous chef for seafood industry.
Academia	Consider showing the life cycle of the process and the people in the process. Show from start to finish how many people are involved/affected, honed down to 90 seconds: "I catch it, he sells it, you buy it, she cooks it, they eat it."

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NGO	Ideas: 1) Environmental fairs, environmental contests, "Play with fish!" etc. 2) Use cultural icons. 3) Pictures, photos and diagrams and illustrations work. 4) Choosing the word you use is the key.
Academia	Telling the story of the Gulf of Mexico to get more money. Chesapeake Bay has more access to Washington, DC and therefore to funding. The Great Lakes program was also successful in getting funding.
NGO	Ability to get the message to Washington is critical. A Gulf coast caucus will be necessary.
NGO	Policy issues are the big part of the problems. A bug hurdle we tackled was having the Small Business Association (SBA) allow oyster fishermen to qualify for loans, assistance. Had to get all federal partners together to talk, in order to get SBA willing to address the issue. Get the message out there so stakeholders can lobby for us.
NGO	We are pro-workforce development. We are tracking the three Gulf Coast restoration bills now in Congress. Did you know that one of them does not include the state of Texas?
NGO	Spending funds effectively means realizing the blocks to making the best use of the funds. For example, asking the question, "How can the Task Force stakeholders further the process with policy makers?" A state governor can take a stand, do things that bring at least partial improvements. So when the next storm hits, he can show how those improvements decreased the impacts, and use that momentum to make more improvements.
NGO	What can I talk about the Gulf directly from? There are some requirements in Texas schools, specifically the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). TEKS and its successor test are the standards that teachers look at to draw up their lesson plans. The standardized objectives for the state. National standards for education are important, but the most important are going to be your state standards. Teachers are looking for content that they can add to their lesson plans.
NGO	Taking tools back to teachers. There are resources out there, but teachers need to be shown how to bring them into the classroom, and need support for learning how to communicate with audiences. They are not yet aware or trained about Gulf resources.
NGO	Environmental educational issues need to be started from the beginning, even from kindergarten. Write, publish kids books! A great example is <u>A Day in the Salt Marsh</u> . Check into the company that publishes this book.

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NGO	Let people know about the economic value of restoration actions. Connect actions to the pocket book. Feeding the family is the priority, so provide incentives that support both goals: restoration and family needs. Address the idea that folks individually can make a difference: the most important challenge.
NGO	Diversity of populations, and reaching different populations.
NGO	Galveston Bay Estuary Program is going to start a campaign - Back the Bay. They've done a survey of how to change minds, and then how to change behaviors as a result of that.
NGO	3 levels of education: Knowing, Understanding, and Responding.
NGO	Radio DJs in New Orleans will get behind issues, such as the weekly "Real Talk" program. Folks listen and call in from the community. One way to start reaching out to the local communities.
NGO	There is a lot of work that has been done. We have this information, but we need to get to the next level with it.
NGO	Seek out the people who are already working with these communities to assist in reaching people about Gulf issues. Find mentors, heroes to talk to multiple high schools once a year. Address 5th graders, 8th graders, 21th graders, and rely on the "trickle up effect." Not only will they tell their parents, but they will pass the information on to students in other grades. Mentors could include pastors, boy scout leaders, sports figures.
NGO	When reaching out to various groups, it helps to find a partner, especially when resources are slim. A band at Jazz Fest spoke about environmental issues! Consider the Stone Soup analogy. Everyone contributing one small resource can result in a significant outcome.
NGO	National Geographic initiative 11/5 first in Miami, then in New Orleans, educating the recreational community (e.g. life guards, bike vendors, dolphin tour guides) who have daily access to the public, so they could in turn educate the tourists.
NGO	How did Texas get buy-in from the citizens in Texas to support green energy, specifically the wind farms? Reach out to them for tips. They sponsored the Offshore Technology Conference.
NGO	A struggle to get the attention for it. Educators learned to be innovative and to partner with people, and to do much with little.
NGO	If the community knows that they can affect the Gulf, then they are more inclined to make that behavior change. GOMA is already working to include communities.