

Environmental Education and the Gulf of Mexico Program



Environmental Education – cont.

- Update on the Program's Collaboration with Coastal America
- Status of Other Education-Related Activities

Environmental Education – cont.

- Update on Collaboration with Coastal America
 - The Alliance Action Plan I committed to designating at least one Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center (CELC) in each Gulf State, plus one in Mexico
 - CELCs are typically Marine Education Centers (Aquariums, Marine Science Labs, etc.) who have met the CELC criteria, undergone a site review and been approved by Coastal America Principals

Environmental Education – cont.

- To date, CELCs have been designated in each state but Louisiana: the Atlanta Aquarium, Florida Aquarium in Tampa, J.L. Scott Marine Education Center, and the Dauphin Island Sea Lab; a CELC has also been designated in Veracruz, Mexico
- The fifth facility to be designated – the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas in New Orleans, has submitted its application, and a site review is scheduled for July 30. We're looking at an October 29 designation event in conjunction with the Gulf Guardian Awards, and the 20th Anniversary of the Gulf Program

Environmental Education – cont.

- The CELCs have been working closely with the Smithsonian Institution on the opening of their new Ocean Hall scheduled for Sept. 27, with the goal of improving ocean literacy
- They have been collaborating with CA on an international art contest, and will fly the top five winners to DC for the award event
- Five CELCs are constructing digital kiosks that will share content with the kiosk in the new Hall; the Shed Aquarium in Chicago (Great Lakes), the National Aquarium of Baltimore (Chesapeake Bay), the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, CA (the Top Ten Ocean Issues, which was developed in tandem with their tenth anniversary), and the National Mississippi Museum and Aquarium, and the J.L. Scott Marine Education Center, which are working together to prepare video on the Mississippi River and Hypoxia
- The addition of these kiosks should add another 5 million viewers to the five million already anticipated to view the Ocean Today kiosk in Washington, DC.

Environmental Education – cont.

- All CELC Executive Directors have been invited to the private opening on Sept. 25
- In addition, CA is considering a number of collaborative projects with the *World Ocean Network* (similar to CA, but a worldwide forum for Aquariums spearheaded by the French Nausicaa Aquarium), including a film festival, a *Passport Program*, which allows the viewing public to record their Aquarium tours, etc.
- CELCs will be holding their annual meeting in DC during the week of the opening; they will be meeting separately, and with the Business Leaders (CWRP) to discuss potential partnership projects

Environmental Education – cont.

- Alliance-related Education Projects underway:
 - Public outreach campaign (working with the Social Marketing group at USF to determine baseline knowledge and best ‘messages’ on nutrients)
 - Development of Environmental Education website (with NOAA’s assistance)
 - FL/Rookery Bay workshops on science and the media and others
 - Environmental education and outreach to disadvantaged populations

Environmental Education – cont.

- Looking to the Future, with new GMP funding:
 - Additional outreach, education and training activities targeting the agricultural sector “up the River” and in Mexico
 - Additional work with disadvantaged, often overlooked populations, serving more customers in more innovative ways
 - Innovative partnerships integrating formal and informal environmental education opportunities