



Texas
Louisiana
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Florida

Building Partnerships for a Healthier Gulf

Volume III

3rd Quarter 2011



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Welcome New Alliance Partners

**Stephen F. Austin
University**

Nacogdoches, Texas

www.sfasu.edu/

**Gulf States Marine
Fisheries Commission**

Ocean Springs, Mississippi

www.gsmfc.org/

Partner Events

**Gulf Ecosystem
Restoration Task Force
Meeting:**

August 29, 2011

Biloxi, Mississippi

2011 ALL HANDS MEETING RECAP:

Challenges and Opportunities

The annual Gulf of Mexico Alliance "All Hands" meeting was different this year. First, the Mississippi River Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force (Hypoxia Task Force) met in conjunction with the All Hands conference in order to draw focus about strategies for reducing hypoxia. And, there were several other regionally important issues, so the format was changed to conference-style with PIT working meetings on the final day.

In addition to hypoxia, the other regionally important issues that were discussed in depth included:

- Gulf Restoration,
- Coastal & Marine Spatial Planning,
- Ecosystem Services Valuation,
- International Integration,
- Gulf Research Opportunities, and
- the proposed Gulf Report Card.

As part of his opening plenary discussion, Dr. Bill Walker, co-chair of the Alliance, encouraged attendees to take note of the common challenges that the Gulf region faces and to use them as opportunities for collaboration because more can be accomplished when working together rather than apart.

Conference presentations are being posted to the Alliance website at www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org.

ACTION PLAN SUCCESS STORY

Campaign Targets Gulf Coast Homeowners

State of the Gulf Summit II:

December 4-8, 2011
Houston, Texas

For more information on these and other upcoming events log onto www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org.

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For more information visit www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org.



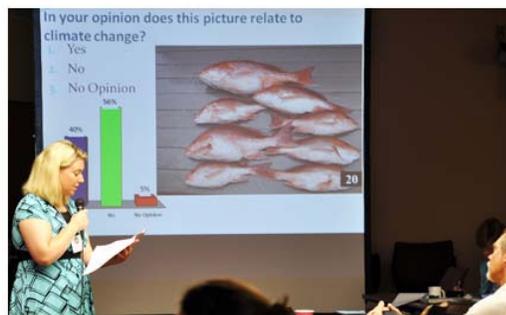
Developed by a partnership between the Education and Nutrient Priority Issue Teams, **Smart Yard, Healthy Gulf** is a new public education campaign designed to reduce fertilizers entering local waters by helping people make responsible lawn fertilizer decisions. The campaign was kicked off this summer and includes guidelines for fertilizer and lawn care in three of the five Gulf States. [Read more...](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON NGO PARTNERS

Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant Programs



The Gulf Network of Sea Grant Programs is a shining example of a partnership whose goals and objectives are aligned with those of the Alliance. Sea Grant partners actively participate on the majority of the Priority Issue Teams. In particular, Sea Grant has taken the lead on several resilience-related activities such as development and training of the Resilience Index, development of the Homeowner's Handbook, StormSmart web resources and workshops, and climate change surveys.



In addition to having active representation on many Alliance activities, the Gulf Sea Grant Programs also support approximately \$1.8 million worth of research that is directly related to Alliance priorities such as ecosystem health; freshwater input and hydrology; habitats and living resources; sea-level change, subsidence and storm surge; as well as water quality related to nutrients.

Alliance co-Chair, Dr. Bill Walker said, "The Gulf Sea Grant Program provides key leadership on issues that are priorities for



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both the Alliance and academia. They are an invaluable partner who is dedicated to enhancing coastal resilience and supporting Gulf research, some of our basic objectives."

So, many thanks go to the Gulf Sea Grant programs for their strong support that has contributed to the continued success of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance.

For more information about the Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant Programs, log onto <http://gulfseagrant.tamu.edu/index.html>.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning

Coastal & Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) is a regionally-based planning process for analyzing current and anticipated uses of coastal and marine areas. Executive Order 13547 established a National Ocean Policy and created an interagency National Ocean Council tasked with developing actions to address issues challenging our oceans and coastal areas, including CMSP.

Alliance Engagement

Several members of the Alliance represented the Gulf region at the National CMSP Workshop in Washington, D.C. on June 21, 2011. The Gulf Regional Planning Body (RPB) is currently being developed. Once the RPB is established, a customized CMS Plan will be developed for the region. Each of the Alliance PITs are tasked with developing a brief plan outlining their plans for engagement in the process.

More information regarding the CMSP process can be found at www.cmsp.noaa.gov.

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

As a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, President Obama established the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force through Executive Order and tasked it with defining ecosystem restoration goals, coordinating government policies, proposing additional actions (where necessary), and identifying monitoring, assessment, research and restoration gaps.

To gather information necessary for development of a Gulf-wide restoration plan, the Task Force is holding public meetings in each Gulf State. Meetings have been held in Pensacola, New Orleans, Mobile, and Galveston. The final meeting is scheduled for Biloxi on August 29, 2011. A preview of the restoration strategy will be publically available on October 5, 2011.

Alliance Engagement

Many members of the Alliance currently sit on the Task Force itself or on the variety of Coordination Teams working to establish a comprehensive restoration plan for the Gulf of Mexico

as a result of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

More information regarding the Gulf Coast Ecosystems Restoration Task Force can be found at www.epa.gov/gulfcoasttaskforce.

GRI UPDATE

Rapid Grants Provide \$1.5M in Stop-Gap Funding



At its May 5-6, 2011 meeting, the GRI Research Board identified the critical need for funding to support short-term continuing and emergent observations and sampling of the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill on the Gulf of Mexico. Therefore, they recently awarded 17 grants totalling \$1.5M for time-sensitive acquisition of critical samples and observations. The funding will support work from July 1 to September 30, 2011 and is provided under the terms of RFP-III, the most recent GRI request for proposals. [Read more...](#)

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is a non-profit organization with a mission to enhance the ecological and economic health of the region through six basic priority issues: improving water quality, increasing habitat conservation and restoration, evaluating ecosystems, reducing nutrient impacts, enhancing coastal resilience and promoting environmental education.

Please visit www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org for more information about the Alliance.