



**Mississippi Gulf of Mexico Alliance Public Meeting Evaluation Summary
 Biloxi, Mississippi – January 31, 2006
 Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center**

	Newspaper		Radio		Word of Mouth		Television News	Other
1. How did you learn about this workshop?	8		0		3		3	6
	Federal Gov't	State Gov't	Local Gov't	Academic	Non-Profit	Private Business	Citizen	Other
2. Please tell us which of the following best describes your professional affiliation.	1	1	0	2	2	5	5	3
	Low (1)	(2)	(3)	High (4)	Total Respondents			
3. What is your level of understanding of the variety of issues that impact the health of the Gulf of Mexico?	2	1	6	9	18			
	Yes	No	Unsure		Total Respondents			
4. Was the format of the workshop conducive to discussing those issues you consider to be high priority with respect to the health of the Gulf of Mexico?	15	1	2		18			



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5. Why or why not?

- Obviously people's opinions were sincere and knowledgeable.
- Open discussion. Some individuals dominated the discussion. More time might have helped.
- Enjoy interaction with other citizens.
- Local-Across state issues not presented.
- Hope the solutions can be accomplished before we have destroyed all God's creatures, including us.
- It was fun. Sometimes it's good to have people in a group introduce themselves and state reason for coming to program.
- More knowledge for all attendees.
- Very good!
- A healthy Gulf starts with preventing pollution from entering water bodies, bays, estuaries, marshes, and wetlands. Until we regulate pollution, we will continue to see loss of resources.
- Not clear what, if anything, will come out of it.
- We must protect this valuable asset.
- Politics and money have a tendency to override good intentions.



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6. If you could accomplish one thing under each of the five priority issues, what would it be?

Reductions in Nutrient Loading

- Allow alliances to have equal voice as lobbyist groups with binding results.
- Build or restore wetlands upstream.
- Education on impacts of nutrients used on private property.
- Better control of sewage contamination. Better runoff management via reductions in impervious pavement.
- Reduce number of permits to discharge; better education.
- Reduce pesticide/insecticide use. Subsidize organic farming.
- Standardize monitoring for Gulf Alliance States 1st, then up the Mississippi we go!
- Implement alternative farming practices and offer effective ways of addressing Problems.
- Change to front loading machine (uses less detergent).
- Less soaps used.
- Federal monitoring.
- Educate farmers and residential landscapers, and homeowners to carefully monitor and apply pesticides.
- Identify and focus on major sources.



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Improving Gulf Water Quality

- Stop further destruction vs. economic development.
- Build Bill Wolverton sewage treatment facilities using plants.
- Stepped up water testing and publishing of results for general public.
- Control sewage contamination through tighter wastewater management and strict enforcement of coastal counties. Improve existing treatment plants.
- Stop issuing permits to industries that pollute.
- Deliberately break levees of MS during floods.
- Identify sources of degradation, prioritize based on impact and eliminate!
- Consider non-motorized water crafts.
- Reduce sewage over flows.
- Have stormwater treated before it is released into the Gulf.
- Increased monitoring to better identify source problems.
- Improve community wastewater treatment system.

Restoration of Coastal Wetlands

- Stop further destruction vs. economic development.
- Strict enforcement of wetland protection.
- Protection of endangered wetlands in the path of development. In particular, Turkey Creek Watershed. De-channelization of channelized streams in Harrison County.
- Wetlands are not protected as required by law. Stop issuing permits to fill or destroy wetlands, marshes, and tidal marsh areas.
- Increase level of effort and stop destruction!
- Clean up day participation.
- Hold contractors accountable for their sediment run-off into water ways. Also MDOT sediment run-off.
- Reduce construction in or near wetlands.
- See Governor's Commission report.
- Carefully regulate and enforce wetland protection.
- More mitigation and identify methods to re-develop wetlands.



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Identification of Gulf Habitats to Inform Management

- Inventory endangered estuarine areas in urban areas.
- All should be protected as required by law.
- Continue to use available technology to map habitats and monitor/evaluate change over time.
- Teach kids how to prevent pollution and make things more environmentally friendly.
- Educate more people about various gulf habitats and the ecosystem contribution.

Gulf of Mexico Environmental Education

- Public service announcements or media spread the news and views of the public and not what the lobby groups say.
- Establish curriculum resource center and incorporate Gulf environmental issues into curriculum in at least coastal counties' schools.
- Environmental education should be required in grades K-12 in all states.
- Get it on TV in any and all ways.
- We need to inform America how important the Gulf of Mexico is to our country and the world. Focus on 'what's in it for me?'
- Develop creative ways to capture public attention and inform them of the consequences of activities that affect the quality of the environment; IMAX theater productions.
- Make connections for the public between public behavior and negative and positive ecosystem effects.
- Regular spot on local news...maybe weekly. Establish group with multiple representation to develop message.



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7. Additional Comments

- More please!
- Find funding mechanisms to buyout low coastal areas (FEMA velocity zones) to return to natural areas and preserves.
- Until the rules and regulations are enforced, the situation in the environment will only get worse. Need consistent standards, testing, and monitoring.
- Accountability: monitoring standards on nutrient loading; rate industries like restaurant reviews. Action Plans: Get info from other coastal states (not GOMA) on what they are doing to address issues we are concerned with now. 32 states dump 'nutrients' into the MS River. How does that impact us all?
- Identify and publicize major contributors to degradation of our coastal environment. Prioritize actions to attach major sources. Grade your actions in terms of measurements important to the environment.
- Need to figure out a solution to get people concerned enough in our environment to help make a difference.
- Good, lively discussion!
- Increased credibility of regulators and data is needed for public confidence in evaluation of pollution concerns.