



**Community Workshop Evening Breakouts  
Tampa, Florida – August 23, 2005  
Florida Aquarium**

**ISSUE 1: GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**What role should the government play at the local, state, and/or federal level in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Develop inventory of valuable open sensitive areas and control use in these areas (R)
- Reduce or control building permits (C)
- Higher impact fees (C) (R)
- Research the impacts of growth management standards on the quantity and quality of tourism (C) (S)
- Understand that the location of land use can increase population and transportation density
- Reduce environmental impact
- Encourage efficient planned communities
- Provide incentives to increase density of management which may lessen the impact on the Gulf of Mexico
- Need environmental review boards with teeth!! (C) (R) (S)

(C) = County

(R) = Regional

(S) = State

**ISSUE 2: HABITAT LOSS**

**What role should the public play in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Get involved with local groups
- Public education
- Write public officials
- Decrease its own pollution
- Report violations
- Support land trust organizations

**What role should the government play at the local, state, and/or federal level in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Don't make exceptions for certain projects or developments
- Educate public realtors
- Stop beach development
- Restore habitat areas
- Eliminate mitigation
- Don't approve development in sensitive areas
- Put a timeline on entitlement
- Buy sensitive land
- Federal Emergency Management Agency should buy sensitive areas
- Stop growth
- Make it easier to contact appropriate people

**ISSUE 3: WATER QUALITY/QUANTITY**

**How do you define this issue with respect to the health of the Gulf of Mexico?**

- Agriculture
- Phosphate processing (gypsum)
- Commercial application of products
- Atmospheric deposition

**What role should the public play in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Call local agencies regarding local issues
- Volunteer with organizations
- Use public education to affect change
- Attend public hearing to learn about causes
- Communicate with elected representatives
- Understand the mechanics of government to determine where the public can have input
- Help to educate new residents
- Use techniques from Florida Yards & Neighborhoods
  - Native plants
  - Water wise
- Find legally defensible reasons to make environmentally friendly changes
- Encourage government studies that educate citizens on issues such as harmful algal blooms
- Request more real-time sampling
- Support grassroots organizations so that provide solid information and apply constant pressure to offending parties

**What role should the government play at the local, state, and/or federal level in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Speed up the pace of responding to needs
- Study the use of fill sediments in renourishment projects
- Limit impervious surfaces
- Monitor to determine appropriate water quality standards (TMDLs)
- Research other pollution delivery methods
  - Air
  - Water – stormwater
    - Rivers
- Define targets and make sure they are defensible and enforceable
- Not cave into special interests
- Creative financial incentives for more environmentally friendly practices

#### **ISSUE 4: LACK OF REGULATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT**

**How do you define this issue with respect to the health of the Gulf of Mexico?**

- Laws need teeth and enforcement to do better than we are now
- Defined as enforcement more than new regulations

**What role should the public play in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Demand public access such as noticing meetings in most popular newspaper and holding meetings when public can attend
- Act as watchdogs (don't be afraid)
- Follow the rules themselves by not polluting
- Be a role model by doing the "right thing"
- Offer to help others "do the right thing", volunteer
- Sponsor environmental programs/join advocacy groups
- Understand your vote for a candidate is linked to the policies/laws they support
- Write your representative
- Use energy-saving devices

**What role should the government play at the local, state, and/or federal level in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Need adequate funding and staff (and training) \*\*
- Staff need integrity and the work climate/culture to do their job
- Resist political /business influences

- Gulf states should monitor businesses across state lines and not allow those with “bad” environmental record do business anywhere in the Gulf
- Limit influence of outside and internal pressures that weaken environmental regulations
- Avoid managing by crisis by being proactive
- Add more on-water marine patrol
- Understand it takes commitment (money, time, will) to monitor and implement laws
- Use punishments that fit the crime and hold companies responsible
- Make punishments a true deterrent
- Assess impact fees
- Focus less on the single offender and more on the “Big fish”
- Make it easier for public to comment/engage in the process

## **ISSUE 5: POLITICAL AGENDAS**

### **What role should the public play in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Recognize they’re (really the only ones) empowered to address the issues
- Public needs to recognize that political agendas exist and don’t get swayed by the “agenda du jour”
- Take responsibility to be aware of process, and to participate (vote, write, etc.)
- Need enduring focus and vision
- Realize these issues are pertinent to their lives
- Public can help establish and be responsible for incremental implementation via plan of action and increase accountability

### **What role should the government play at the local, state, and/or federal level in helping to resolve this issue?**

- Maintain transparency so public sees where they can engage in the process
- Government can inform the public and show the pros and cons of issues
- Form groups that truly represent the citizenry – engage in the GOMA process
- Different economic agendas in different states drive policy makers
- Overcome problems associated with different resources in different states, and the impacts of the different agendas
- Develop better scientific information on living aquatic resources (baseline data, methods) so decisions can be made on sound science instead of politics
- Use GIS programs at all levels to help tell the story
- Develop water use plans (like land use plans) and show sensitive areas