



August 5, 2005

Dear Community Leader:

As a stakeholder and key partner with an interest in the environmental and economic health of the **Gulf of Mexico**, you are invited to participate in an important workshop on **Thursday, August 25, 2005 at the Apalachicola Community Center at Battery Park** (directions and local lodging information enclosed).

The workshop is co-sponsored by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve. The Gulf Alliance is the Gulf Coast states' response to the U.S. Ocean Commission report and subsequently the U.S. Ocean Action Plan released by the White House in December 2004. These reports noted certain ocean-related problems nationwide and recommended solutions, including an integrated management approach for the Gulf of Mexico by the Gulf Coast states. The White House, the five Gulf States, and federal agencies met at Rookery Bay in Naples, Florida in June to kick off the discussion, which will culminate in the release of a long-term Action Plan at a November Summit in Corpus Christi, Texas.

This **regional Gulf of Mexico Alliance Community Workshop** in Apalachicola will be an important opportunity to add your voice to this international effort. Your help is needed to identify and rank priority needs to improve the health of the Gulf of Mexico. Results of this workshop will become a part of the final Action Plan.

The workshop is designed to gather input from local citizens, non-profit groups and other interested parties, scientists, resource managers and government officials. **The workshop will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m (Eastern Daylight Time). Lunch will be provided. Early birds are invited to arrive at 8:30 a.m. for morning refreshments.**

Space is limited, so your reply is requested by **Monday, August 22** to ensure accurate numbers for planning and lunch purposes. Please confirm your participation by returning the enclosed registration form or contacting Rosalyn Kilcollins or Alan Knothe at the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve by phone at (850) 653-8063 or via e-mail at rosalyn.kilcollins@dep.state.fl.us or alan.knothe@dep.state.fl.us by **Monday, August 22.**

Please share this letter with others who may be interested. For more information about the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, please visit www.GulfofMexicoAlliance.org.

We look forward to seeing you on August 25th!

Sincerely,

Seth Blitch
Manager, Apalachicola NERR

SB/rk
Enclosures