

LAKE WORTH LAGOON INITIATIVE, PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM AREA KICK-OFF MEETING

February 27, 2009 (Friday), 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
PBC ERM, 2300 N. Jog Road, West Palm Beach
Vista Center, 1E-60 (1st Floor)

MEETING MINUTES

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ginny Powell

- Meeting participants introduced themselves.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

Ginny Powell

- Meeting objectives were reviewed: Introduction to the Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative, identification of Public Outreach Program Area team members, roles and responsibilities, identification of the team's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis), and "next steps"

SHORT PRESENTATION: Lake Worth Lagoon Initiative – An Introduction

Ginny Powell

- An Overview of Executive Committee, Guidelines – Goals and Program Areas (working groups), and LWLI.org was given.

DISCUSSION: Program Area Team, Roles and Responsibilities

Alyssa Dodd

- Limited discussion focused on meeting days of the week and time.

ACTIVITY & DISCUSSION: Program Area Team SWOT Exercise (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Alyssa Dodd

STRENGTHS (*internal to our group*)

- **Some workgroup participants are working on specific water quality projects (for example CRA) providing an opportunity to link projects with outreach efforts for residents.** Efforts could relate to data sharing as well as broader community efforts like an EcoArt project.
- **Location, Location, Location!** Some workgroup participants work on a daily basis at key activity centers/nature centers within the Lagoon like John D. MacArthur Beach State Park and Peanut Island. These are key locations for getting the message out with displays, programs, video, literature. These are also key public access areas to the Lagoon.
- **Staff Resources.** Some workgroup participants have access to staff/colleagues who can be "tapped" to help this group meeting its goals. For example, web site development, publication development, public relations, videography, photography, Lagoon knowledge and more!
- **Volunteer Resources.** Some workgroup participants are already working with volunteers. We can "tap into" and combine volunteer resources to help achieve our goals.
- **Our Group Includes both Public and Private Partners.** It's exciting to have such a diverse group around the table and there are many opportunities for public - private partnerships.
- **Knowledge!** It's exciting to bring together such a knowledgeable group regarding the Lake Worth Lagoon and public outreach efforts.
- **Funding.** Some working group participants can help identify and obtain funding for outreach efforts. For example, Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful mentioned grants available through Keep America Beautiful. PBC ERM mentioned the Manatee Protection Fund and the SFWMD has access to some funds.
- **Access/involvement with diverse audiences (a diverse network).** While our individual agency or organization may communicate with specific audiences, collectively we can reach diverse audiences including neighborhood associations, boaters, anglers, educators and students, environmental interest groups, and more!
- **Lake Worth Lagoon Related Educational Resources/Media.** Workgroup partners have existing educational resources to share. For example, the USCGA has educational materials for youth, Captain Danny and Captain Barry are giving presentations on fishing the Lake Worth Lagoon, and PBC ERM has a general "Lovin' Lake Worth Lagoon" presentation and brochures to share.

- **Efforts are underway and there are numerous opportunities to collaborate.** Workgroup partners have ongoing efforts and are already working together on events such as coastal cleanup and the Great American Cleanup coming up April 18, 2009. And there are more opportunities to collaborate! For example, in order for a student to earn community service hours for the coastal clean-ups we can collaborate and have those students also learn about the Lagoon during a specific educational program that day or by watching an educational video of the Lagoon in advance.
- **Political capital.** We can build upon this strength by establishing a network to get the word out on funding issues at the federal, state, and local levels.

WEAKNESSES (*internal to our group*)

- **We don't have enough people to deliver the resources.** There are so many people to reach! We need to think about "train-the-trainer" and other ways to increase the number of people providing outreach/education.
- **The Lagoon lacks an "identity".**
- **We don't have a good handle on the impact of our current efforts.**
- **Do we have a good concise outreach message?** Have we really identified why the Lagoon is so important?
- **Are we targeting specific audiences so our efforts have the greatest impact?**
- **While we have existing outreach materials, several need to be updated with more current information.** For example, updating the LWL video to include recent habitat restoration projects and we need to update the LWL boater guide with better quality charts with fishing areas, artificial reefs, boater dining locations, etc.
- **We need better communication among workgroup members.** We need a better system to share information like upcoming events, when we know videos of the Lagoon will be on T.V. , etc. This can be passed on to many people through our large network (one of our strengths!).
- **Sometimes there is not enough interaction among the workgroup partners/need better coordination.** For example, we need to identify smaller tasks that can be accomplished in a short time frame.
- **Funding.** While we know of some potential funding sources, we are all facing reduced budgets and more competition for grant programs (or possibly less grant money awarded).

OPPORTUNITIES (*external to our group*)– **We didn't get a chance to discuss this as a group, but some members shared their ideas on the worksheet.**

- **The "green" movement.** People are "going green". We can help them make the connection to how their behavior relates to the Lagoon.
- **Westgate CRA jurisdiction is composed of approximately 10,000 people.** We have regular public meetings that can be a forum.
- **With so many user groups of the Lagoon there's an opportunity to include diverse group in events.** For example, running groups, kayak clubs, etc.

THREATS (*external to our group*)

- **There's a never ending need to enhance awareness among the public.** It's not just a "one shot" deal. You need to be continuous with your efforts. However, maybe one big event would bring a lot of attention to the Lagoon.
- **So many user groups of the Lagoon make outreach a challenge.**

NEXT STEPS & ACTION ITEMS

Ginny Powell

- Next meeting date: March 20 (Friday) 2:30 – 4:00 pm at PBC Environmental Resources Management
- Using an interactive form sent by the Chair in advance of the next meeting, working group members will be asked to share at least 5 specific LWL Public Outreach project ideas and identify additional "strengths and weaknesses" (building upon the SWOT analysis conducted at today's meeting)
- Alyssa will follow-up with working group members and share additional information regarding a US Coast Guard Lake Worth Inlet event that will be hosted on May 16th.