

1. COASTAL CLEANUP PROGRAM TARGETED AT BOATERS

Representative: Kathryn Novak, Volunteer Programs & Outreach Coordinator

Organization: The Ocean Conservancy

449 Central Avenue, Suite 200

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

727-895-2188 ext. 23

Media Contact: Tom McCann

202-351-0465

tmccann@oceanconservancy.org

Students developing the marketing plan:

Cunningham, Leslie

Lehman, Linda

Stafford, Dawnelle

Thomas, Brittany

THE MARKETING PLAN WILL BE DEVELOPED TO RESEARCH AND FIND SOLUTIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING PROBLEM:

Over the past 20 years, The Ocean Conservancy (TOC) has engaged hundreds of thousands of volunteers from around the world in the largest one-day volunteer event focused on marine debris, The International Coastal Cleanup (ICC). These dedicated volunteers count, bag, and catalog all of the debris they remove from their local beaches, rivers, streams, and lakes so that their findings can be compiled into a national database. Last year in Florida, over 25,000 volunteers picked up nearly 400,000 pounds of marine debris.

Based on the data collected during the ICC, we are able to determine not only where debris comes from, but also to associate the debris with specific human-related activities. The most significant contributors are Shoreline and Recreational Activities (60.6%), Smoking-Related Activities (21.2%), Ocean and Waterway Activities (11.3%), Dumping Activities (5.7%), and Medical and Personal Hygiene (1.2%). As TOC evaluates these activities, we are also able to target specific groups who can be associated with these activities.

One of these groups is recreational boaters. TOC would like to connect to the boating community by engaging them in ICC events on their local waterways. We strive to create a statewide network of boaters empowered to work together ensuring that they are taking action to maintain safe and healthy waterways for their enjoyment of boating, fishing, swimming, and other water-related sports.

Please help us to create a marketing plan for a year-round anti-litter campaign targeted to Florida boaters, which includes engaging them in the ICC.

For more information about the ICC, please visit www.oceanconservancy.org/icc

2. BOATER REPORTING OF BOAT STRIKES WITH MANATEES

Representative: Dr. Richard O. Flamm, Research Scientist

Organization: Fish & Wildlife Research Institute at the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

Richard.flamm@myfwc.com,

Tel. 727-896-8626 ext. 1934

Media Contact: Jess Brown, media coordinator

727-896-8626 ext. 2076

Jessica.brown@myfwc.com

Students developing the marketing plan:

Fiordaliso, Michael

Helms, Amanda

Massey, Jamie

Stewart, Stephanie

THE MARKETING PLAN WILL BE DEVELOPED TO RESEARCH AND FIND SOLUTIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING PROBLEM:

Project: Campaign to increase the rate of boaters reporting boat strikes with manatees.

SCOPE OF PROBLEM

The Florida manatee, *Trichechus manatus latirostris*, is an endangered marine mammal that inhabits freshwater and estuarine habitats of Florida. These nearshore areas also are heavily used by humans, resulting in frequent encounters between people and manatees. Coexistence with humans has some negative consequences for manatees, but the one that concerns scientists, managers, and the public the most is manatee mortality caused by collisions with watercraft. Boat strike deaths account for 25-33% of the annual known manatee deaths each year. One attempt at reducing watercraft-related mortality has been the development of comprehensive manatee protection plans by state and local governments.

A significant component of manatee-protection planning is designating slow-speed zones for watercraft in areas frequented by manatees. Most coastal counties from Pasco south to Monroe and Northeast through St. Johns contain some manatee protection speed zones. Intuitively, speed zones make sense as a protection measure, but they never have been evaluated for their effectiveness in reducing vessel strikes. Furthermore virtually nothing is known about the specific conditions or boat traffic/manatee movement scenarios that lead to increases in boat strike risk. One way to learn about these scenarios is for boaters to report when they either hit a manatee with their boat or observe another boat strike an animal.

Reports by boaters would provide information about the types of boats involved in the collisions, their approximate speed, the location of the collision, attributes about the area of the collision such as distance to sea grass patches (manatee food), boat channels, the amount of boat traffic, etc. This knowledge could assist the State in refining its speed zone rules and focus on those areas that might be the greatest risk of collision. Furthermore, we might save many animals from death by being able to rescue animals sooner after a collision. Unfortunately, in the 37 years since manatee mortality data have been collected systematically, less than 25 collisions have been reported by boaters.

Nothing is known as to why boaters are not reporting vessel strikes. Hypotheses include:

1. The Endangered Species Act forbids take (loss) of a single manatee so knowledgeable boaters may be afraid of punishment regardless if they were operating their vessel within the law.
2. Boaters do not know who to contact when a strike occurs.
3. Boaters fear being penalized by the State or Federal authorities if they were speeding and hit a manatee.
4. Boaters do not care.
5. Boaters did not realize that they struck a manatee.

This problem has several components.

1. Research similar situations where public self-reporting can help managers protect a resource.
2. Understand what has been done so far to improve rates in boater self-reporting.
3. Segment the boating public based on reasoning for reporting or not reporting a collision.
4. Provide recommendations as to what the State might do to increase boater self-reporting of collisions with manatees.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Understanding of why boaters report or do not report collisions with manatees.
2. Based on #1, recommendations as to how to proceed to increase the rate of reporting of collisions.

MEASURING SUCCESS

1. Increase in the number of reported collisions. The reasons as to why boaters do not report collisions will influence what reporting rate is considered satisfactory. For example, if most boaters do not know that they hit a manatee, then the goal for reporting might be lower than if the reporting rate was low because of fear of punishment.
2. Increased survival of manatees hit by boats because of quicker response.
3. Increase retrieval of freshly-killed carcasses for use in patho-biology research.

3. STEWARDSHIP ETHICS IN TAMPA BAY

Representative: Jessica Koelsch, Florida Marine Wildlife Program Manager

Organization: The Ocean Conservancy

449 Central Ave #200

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

(727) 895-2188 x14

(727) 895-3248 Fax

Media Contact: Tom McCann

202-351-0465

tmccann@oceanconservancy.org

Students developing the marketing plan:

Alfaro, Natalie

Mann, Tina

Ruiz, Maria

THE MARKETING PLAN WILL BE DEVELOPED TO RESEARCH AND FIND SOLUTIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING PROBLEM:

Environmental stewardship is largely a local phenomenon because environmental issues that register with the public are often close-to-home. In Tampa Bay for example, many residents and visitors recognize poor water quality, sea grass damage, or litter. Other issues are more subtle because changes are much slower over time, such as decrease in wading bird populations or fish abundance, loss in marshlands, or increased risk of collisions between manatees and watercraft. Regardless of how obvious the issue is, it is decisions by individuals that have the greatest influence over the state of the environment. Government can dictate regulations over behavior, but it is still up to the individual to decide whether to comply.

One of the challenges for governments and environmental managers is that decisions made by people are almost always insignificant when considered individually. Rather it is the accumulation of these decisions that lead to negative impacts to the environment. For example, one piece of litter tossed from a boat by a single boater will not be noticed. However, one piece of litter tossed by 1 million boaters will be. The problem is how can we establish and maintain behaviors by individuals that benefit the environmental health of Tampa Bay, given that the decisions we want residents and visitors to make have significance only when pooled. This requires applying persuasive techniques and is clearly a problem that needs to be addressed from a marketing perspective.

The Tampa Bay Estuary Program is interested in initiating a Tampa Bay Friendly Neighborhood program. The objective is to begin building a conservation ethic in Tampa Bay by starting with households that live in neighborhoods that are located along the water. The belief is that these individuals are in frequent direct contact with the bay and notice trash, changes in water quality, manatees, abandoned fishing line and other debris more than most residents of the Tampa Bay area. They may also have developed a sense of ownership for the portion of Tampa Bay that abuts their neighborhood. The feeling is that these people might be the spark that lights the flame of stewardship and, through word-of-mouth, spreads the message to other residents and visitors of the bay. Eventually the hope is that a new more bay-conscience

social norm develops so that problems of trash, fishing line, violating boat speed zones, sea grass damage, and water quality are reduced by citizen action.

A similar program was started called Manatee Friendly Neighborhoods. Neighborhoods showed interest in this program, but not enough to be actively involved in spreading the word about manatees among the neighborhood and its businesses. No situational analyses or other market research were done to identify those methods most likely to succeed or whether such an approach is even viable. Certainly focusing on manatees, being a controversial topic, has its supporters and detractors. We are hoping that expanding the scope to Tampa Bay, we will inspire individuals from other user groups such as fishers and sailors, enough to be actively involved.

This problem is broad and needs to be divided into manageable tasks. We suggest contacting coastal neighborhood associations and getting their perspectives on Tampa Bay and what they desire for the waterways around their neighborhood. An understanding of what neighbors believe their role is in preserving the quality of Tampa Bay around their neighborhood and the whole bay in general would be valuable. Do the neighbors see a problem with environmental quality in Tampa Bay? Certainly the environmental values of Tampa Bay have been promoted (see Tampa Bay Estuary Program, Chambers of Commerce, tourist sites). The difficult part will be selecting strategies that will motivate neighbors to action. Most of these homeowners work 40 hours per week, have home maintenance to do, have personal hobbies, etc., so adding another activity to their weekly or monthly schedule will have to be very meaningful to them to compete successfully with existing activities.

Some high-profile issues for a neighborhood

1. Trash.
2. Speeding boats.
3. Protecting wildlife in neighborhood, including manatees.
4. What to do if injured wildlife are found.
5. Fishing line in vegetation.
6. Water pollution.

DESIRED OUTCOMES (not complete)

1. Neighbors will take an active role in being stewards of Tampa Bay in the area of their neighborhood.
2. Word of mouth will begin to spread from the borders of the neighborhood to others in Tampa Bay.
3. A new conservation-based social norm is established in Tampa Bay. Peer pressure becomes a driving force in “training” the public in proper stewardship techniques.
4. Outcomes become integrated into local governments.

MEASURING SUCCESS (many to be determined by student team)

1. Demonstrated actions taken by neighbors in Tampa Bay Friendly Neighborhoods.
2. Fewer complaints about “unruly” boaters near neighborhood.
3. Businesses local to neighborhood or used by neighbors involved in the program.

4. Pet Waste Education

Representative: Nanette O'Hara, Public Outreach Coordinator
(727) 893-2765 phone

Nanette@tbep.org

Organization: Tampa Bay Estuary Program

Media Contact: Nanette O'Hara

(727) 893-2765 phone

Nanette@tbep.org

Students developing the marketing plan:

Burgstahler, Grace

Felten, Darren

Grueninger, Billy

Webster, Luke

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According to recent research, non-human waste represents a significant source of bacterial contamination in urban watersheds. Genetic studies by Alderiso et al (1996) and Trial et al (1993) both concluded that 95 percent of the fecal coliform found in urban stormwater was of non-human origin. Bacterial source tracking studies in a watershed in the Seattle area also found that nearly 20 percent of the bacteria isolates that could be matched with host animals were matched with dogs. A 1993 USEPA report estimated that, for coastal watersheds of up to 20 square miles draining to small coastal bays, two to three days of droppings from a population of about 100 dogs would contribute enough bacteria and nutrients to temporarily close a bay to swimming and shellfishing.

Several communities around the country have instituted specific public education campaigns aimed at reducing pet waste in stormwater runoff, including Philadelphia, Seattle, Austin, Ventura, California and Williston, Vermont.

Four in 10 U.S. households have at least one dog. The Tampa Bay area has more than 500,000 dogs. Each dog produces between 1/3 and 3/4 pounds of poop per day, meaning that the 500,000 dogs in Tampa Bay generate from 82.5 to 187.5 tons of poop per day.

Studies have shown that roughly 40% of Americans do not pick up their dog's feces. In Tampa Bay, this means that 33 to 75 tons of poop per day is left unscooped.

The Tampa Bay Estuary Program is launching a campaign to educate pet owners about the harmful water quality and public health impacts of dog poop. The goal is to persuade pet owners to change their current behavior so that more will pick up and properly dispose of their dog's waste.