**SR-4 Public Information**

1. OBJECTIVES
2. To produce a communications package that provides informational and educational materials about the BTES and CCMP in formats that relate and correspond to identified target audiences.
3. To develop and implement a well-coordinated, cohesive campaign for distribution of informational and educational materials about BTES issues and CCMP actions in estuary businesses and public points of interest.
4. To provide multiple forums for community engagement including website, social media, e-mail and 1-800 number.
5. To effectively and efficiently spread the word about BTNEP throughout the estuary by using the expertise of the management conference members and volunteers in the form of a Speakers Bureau.
6. BACKGROUND

For citizens to form or change opinions and become advocates of CCMP actions, they must be informed and educated about the BTES and CCMP goals. Communications packages that are tailored to specific target audiences will increase the likelihood of the audience’s acceptance of the material. Targeting information to the audience is more appealing and gains the interest of the reader, listener, or viewer. It presents a direct link between the audience and the estuary. Throughout the distribution campaign, information must appear and be provided where the people live, work, recreate, and visit in ways that relate to public needs. This kind of dissemination is essential in order to gain recognition for the BTES as a nationally significant area of the country.

C. DESCRIPTION

This action will develop sets of educational materials tailored to BTES target audiences that provide science-based consensus-driven accurate, technical, and up-to-date information about the BTES and CCMP actions. All materials will be part of a communications package and will share a consistent message. Materials will be developed in a cohesive manner by building on the overall message. Using this consistent message, materials will be presented in various formats—printed, audio, and visual—specific to the target audience’s needs. Additionally, this action will involve a massive, targeted distribution of information to educate and influence estuary citizens about BTES and CCMP actions. The distribution will be coordinated to reach local, state, and national target audiences in an appropriate manner, with interesting, credible materials. A Speakers Bureau program will also assist in dissemination of this important information to civic groups, schools, parish and city governments and the like.

To facilitate true understanding of the BTES and the program’s message, the public must have an opportunity to participate in two-way communication. The program office has used a 1-800 number in the past to serve this end. New tactics such as website features, social media and a designated e-mail address will be utilized.

Materials will be produced by the program staff and distributed nationally. All two-way communication (social media, 1-800 number, e-mail, etc.) will be monitored by program staff. Speakers Bureau participants will be prepared by program staff and will speak on local, regional, state, and possibly national levels.

1. LEAD AGENCY

The lead implementer for this action will be the Program Office, BTMC members, EPA, and consultants when necessary. Support implementers will include management conference members, volunteer speakers, volunteer businesses, agencies, chambers of commerce, economic councils, tourism offices, and other public points-of-interest at the local and state level. The Program Office should also partner with the Nicholls State University Department of Mass Communication for assistance in creating and disseminating communications, creating strategy for and monitoring social media, and other communication activities. At the national level, partnerships will be developed with appropriate federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and special interest groups to distribute, display, and use BTES informational materials.

1. TIMELINES AND/OR MILESTONES
2. Continue to identify and create database of all BTES target audiences. Database should include geographical, educational, socio-economic, and other demographic aspects of target audiences. Building from the community sector approach, determine issues of concern and the educational needs of specific target audiences and include in database.
3. Determine the most effective formats (printed, audio, and/or visual) for conveying the overall message and information to each target audience, and produce products that align with each.
4. Create database to track and evaluate dissemination campaign including quantities of materials distributed, formats of information distributed, dissemination methods corresponding to each target audience, dates, and locations.
5. Enhance two-way communication with the public through marketing of all channels (1-800 number, social media, informational e-mail address, contact features on website).
6. Create social media strategy to reach multiple audiences. This strategy should include all forms of social media and should consider new platforms as they emerge.
7. Recruit, train and market the Speakers Bureau. Speakers should be prepared to deliver the overall message of the BTES as well as specialized information for targeted groups or projects.
8. POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Costs for production and dissemination of information will vary depending on chosen tactics. Total range of funding necessary annually for SR-4: **$75,000.00-$500,000.00**, which includes but is not limited to:

* Salaries
* Operating Services
* Supplies
* Equipment
* Content production and distribution

Sources of funding include local, state, federal, individual, industrial, institutional, NGO, and private organizations.

1. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The monitoring strategies are intended to serve as mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of projects implemented under the action plans. These strategies should only be used as a guide, not as a requirement. It must be recognized that the monitoring strategies will be expensive to implement and that, because all levels of government and much of the private sector currently have severe funding restraints, they may not be affordable without significant modification. The monitoring strategies do not override or replace monitoring that would be done by an agency related to specific agency-sponsored projects.

1. Possible Data Gathered
   1. Most effective format for conveying the message of the BTES
   2. Number of materials given out at different events/locations
   3. Analytics on specific web site or social media posts
2. Monitoring
   * Parties responsible: BTNEP staff, BTMC members, and partners
   * Timetable for gathering data: quarterly for BTMC and regularly for EPA
   * How data is shared: BTMC quarterly meetings, media reports
   * Possible data gaps: Rapidly changing technology demands continued research and funding in this area.
   * If additional funding is needed: always.