

# Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program Outreach Strategy

**2006-2008**

*Draft*

The Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program (APNEP) has developed this outreach and communication strategy to provide guidance in fulfilling implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). The Program has determined that the most effective outreach strategy meeting the program's goals will target decision-makers and educators. However, APNEP does support continuing efforts to inform and involve stakeholders throughout the APNEP region. This approach also acknowledges and complements the numerous education and outreach activities that our partners are already undertaking to engage citizens in issues of importance to the region.

## **GOALS**

To increase the visibility of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program and its partners' accomplishments toward implementing the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).

The purpose of this Communication Strategy is guide and support present and future activities for the program. The target audiences for this outreach plan are:

1. The media;
2. Partners;
3. Community leaders;
4. Local, state, and federal officials and legislators;
5. Educators; and
6. Citizens.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Increase awareness of APNEP by having a consistent and recognizable face, message, logo, etc.
2. Create, disseminate and update complementary outreach materials to target audiences, as necessary, and maintain a quality Web site.
3. Maintain an informative quarterly newsletter.
4. Develop and maintain relationships with municipal and state officials, legislators and congressional delegates in North Carolina and Virginia.
5. Develop and maintain relationships with media reporters and editors (newspapers, TV, radio, etc)
6. Educate partners and community leaders about ways to promote APNEP's mission and CCMP implementation and how those actions will benefit them.
7. Use NC DENR Public Affairs to assist in reaching these outreach strategies.
8. Encourage active participation by Policy Board and Advisory Committee members in APNEP in outreach activities.
8. Incorporate, as appropriate, an outreach component in each APNEP funded project.
9. Evaluate Outreach Strategy on an annual basis.



## STRATEGIES

1. **Consistent and recognizable “face”.**
  - Create improved, consistent written and other materials for distribution (e.g., logo, signs, etc.)
  - Maintain a current display unit to reflect our “look.”
  - Connect, wherever possible, with the EPA’s National Program.
2. **Complementary Outreach materials and Web Site**
  - Work with N.C. DENR office of public affairs to maintain a consistent and professional program image.
  - Create and distribute a “State of the Sounds Report” by 2010.
  - Maintain informational handouts (case statement) and update as needed.
  - Create a subcommittee to review, evaluate and update, if needed, Web site layout, including links, and information to meet objectives of this plan (e.g. update “look” to be consistent with new brochure, highlight current projects).
  - Work with partners to add APNEP link to their websites.
3. **Maintain an informative newsletter**
  - Distribute newsletter via email and website.
  - Include content relevant to APNEP projects, partner projects, upcoming events of interest to stakeholders in the region, grant opportunities and relevant news.
4. **Relationships with municipal, state and Congressional officials.**
  - Attend the annual spring meeting of EPA’s National Estuary Programs in Washington, D.C.
  - Meet with congressional delegations as appropriate
  - Participate in events at the N.C. General Assembly where appropriate.
  - Invite legislators to events where appropriate.
  - Meet with the staff of local Congressional offices to raise program awareness when appropriate.
  - Continue to develop and strengthen town and municipal relationships by supporting and partnering on projects.
4. **Media:**
  - Help support the N.C. DENR office of public affairs’ database of media contacts and deadlines based on media outlets of interest to target audiences in the N.C. DENR Web portal.
  - Develop a relationship with environmental reporters, editors and assignment desk personnel.
  - Invite to board meetings when appropriate
  - Respond to requests from reporters and follow up on relevant stories
  - Develop and disseminate press releases about upcoming APNEP events and projects.
5. **Educate community leaders.**
  - Work with community leaders and businesses to emphasize the positive connection between economic development and a healthy environment.
  - Recognize the positive environmental impacts of these groups within the APNEP program area (e.g. Clean Marinas).
  - Attend community events.
  - Use relationships with citizens’ advisory committee and policy board members to strengthen ties with local communities.
  - Develop materials highlighting local business anecdotes/testimonials about how a healthy environment is good for business.

**6. Obtain Resources for Outreach Activities.**

- Review staffing and support needed to implement APNEP's outreach and communication strategy and options for meeting these needs.
- Effectively communicate with the Policy Board member who represents public relations and media.
- Seek funding and in-kind contributions to support projects and outreach opportunities.

**7. More active Board participation.**

- Continue orientation program/ process for new board and advisory committee members.
- Create Ad Hoc committees as needed and provide board member with opportunities and responsibilities to support the Program.

**8. Outreach Component in funded projects.**

- Include an outreach component consistent with the goal and objectives described above in each APNEP project. These outreach activities should emphasize APNEP as a *sponsor or partner*.

**9. Evaluate Outreach Program**

- Assess program outreach and communications progress annually and modify the Outreach and Communications Strategy as needed.
- Evaluate the success of the program over a longer term.

