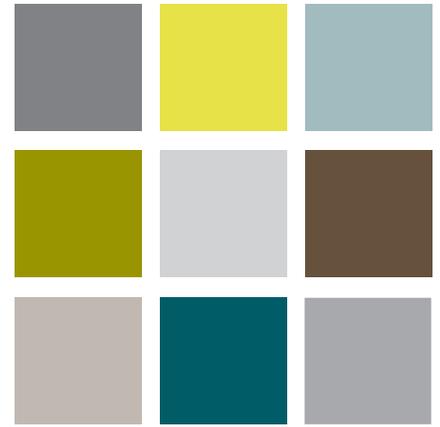


Coordinating Climate Outreach in the Great Lakes Region

Impact Statement



Photo credit: Peggy Comptom-UW Extension Environmental Resource Center



SUMMARY

Regional Climate Education Team

OSU Extension staff in SENR led a team of 23 climate education experts from Land Grant universities, Sea Grant programs, River Network (a national non-governmental organization), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to provide regional coordination on the development of educational programs and materials related to climate change impacts on water resources.

SITUATION

Climate change is expected to directly impact water resource quality and quantity in the Great Lakes Region in the coming years. Increases in impaired waterways and pressure on aging stormwater infrastructure due to increased stormwater runoff are both of critical concern. In order to address these and related issues, water managers and environmental professionals in the Great Lakes region need to understand and address expected climate change impacts and help communities find ways to mitigate and adapt to climate change using sustainable practices.



Coordinating Climate Outreach in the Great Lakes Region Impact Statement

RESPONSE

Climate Change Core Competencies for Educators

A sub-team of representatives from six Great Lakes states developed a list of climate change core competencies for community outreach professionals, addressing knowledge gaps identified by surveys in Minnesota and Wisconsin and through extensive dialog among team members and experts in extension education program development.

Climate Change Learning Materials

Based on the needs assessment findings, the team compiled a list of existing educational resources (presentations, videos, texts, decision-making tools and webinars) that could be incorporated into Land Grant and Sea Grant Extension programming in five key areas: economic development, land use, water quality, ecosystem management and invasive species. The lists (one per key area) are housed on the new regional climate website: ClimateGreatLakes.com

Distance Education Courses

Two web-based courses for environmental professionals were developed and conducted:

- Sustainable Water Management in the Great Lakes Region, Ohio State, April 22-30, 2013 (31 completed)
- Milwaukee's Climate Change Initiative, webinar, Ohio State, June 13, 2013 (245 attendees from 16 states)

IMPACT

2013 Sustainable Water Management Course

- 90% of those who completed the course also completed pre- and post-surveys (28/31)
- After the course, respondents were significantly more confident in their abilities to:
 - Apply the principles of sustainability and stakeholder engagement to water infrastructure planning
 - Lead education programs on climate change
 - Lead community planning activities around climate change
- 96% of respondents reported they will use knowledge gained to:
 - Expand stakeholder engagement
 - Help communities plan for water infrastructure improvements
 - Help community decision-makers take proactive measures to ensure that risks and vulnerabilities are addressed in planning efforts and communicated to impacted stakeholders
 - Work with communities to approve climate adaptation plans or incorporate climate adaptation strategies into existing plans
- 89% said they plan to become more personally involved in initiatives to address climate change
- 54% said they plan to conduct an assessment of their geographic area's water infrastructure

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Milwaukee's Climate Change Initiative Webinar

- 82% of 52 attendees who completed the post-webinar survey gained information that will help them do job their job better
- 59% said they planned to take action