

Life and Environmental Sciences Cluster Minutes Tuesday, August 29, 2006, Mote Marine Laboratory

Co-Chairs Ken Shelin and Dr. Meg Lowman welcomed the group and introductions were made. Mote Marine Laboratory was thanked for their hospitality.

Dr. Meg Lowman, Director of Environmental Initiatives and Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies at New College, provided a Biological Field Station update. The Field Station will bring the best available science, policy, and management skills to bear on the problem of sustainable economic development and land use. Rationale: The Florida Population is projected to double as soon as 2040, our natural resources are running out, loss of ecosystem, and we live in hurricane alley. The mission of the center is to provide unbiased, scientifically based best practices advice to state and local governments, and the private sector for appropriate land use.

Professional programs to research “best practices,” include:

- Land Use
- Design
- Natural Resource
- Energy Systems
- Transportation Ecology
- Policy and Process for Sustainable growth

In late July, the field station was granted funding by the EDC board to complete their goal of writing a \$1 million grant to The Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice to fund construction and completion of the architectural design process. Construction is planned to start in 2008. The group was encouraged to visit www.designchallenge.org to weigh in on the field station’s design and to contribute ideas and suggestions.

Dr. Caroline Popper, President of Popper and Company, spoke about the “New” Bioscience Cluster. Dr. Popper reviewed some of the current ideas of “Bioscience” in Sarasota. The Cluster, as she expressed, is in need of ideas, money, and entrepreneurs. She stated that the cluster’s potential needs to be leveraged to address the capital gap. Bioscience is in need of more critical mass and interest from organizations in the South Tampa Bay Region. USF has stepped up as a player and that is very encouraging to have them as a strong partner in this new Cluster. Dr Popper said key components include the need to launch the simulation initiative and to seek community leadership to put an early stage funding mechanism in place. A meeting is being planned by Manatee and Sarasota’s EDC’s in late October where the leadership of the Cluster will educate leaders from both organizations about this initiative.

Sub Group Reports:

Biomimicry: Dr. Bob Hueter gave an update on the biomimicry project that has been chosen for use of the funding from EDC. Jay Leverone, Staff Biologist from Mote Marine Laboratory's scope of work will be looking for new technologies for the removal of arsenic from water supplies developed through biomimicry of natural systems. One of our manufacturers, Crane Environmental from Venice told committee members that is a challenge for them in their business. A comprehensive electronic literature search will be conducted. A final report and recommendations will be made regarding research avenues to pursue and scientists to contact for the next phase of the work.

International Design Summit – Nan Summers spoke about the upcoming Design Summit, and encouraged everyone to attend. The Design Summit will be October 9-11, 2006 at the Ritz Carlton in Sarasota, Florida. Packets were passed out for various volunteer opportunities which will give the volunteer a discounted rate for attending the Summit. Some of the speakers to date are: Helen Stringer, Design Director from Proctor and Gamble, John Remington, Target Corp. and Arthur Aw of Singapore's JTC Development Corp. to name a few. EDC urged all to get involved in this exciting and cutting edge event.

The next Meeting of the LES Cluster will be October 12, 2006 from 8:30 – 10:00 at The Community Foundation of Sarasota County.