

Background:

Climate change presents a variety of hazards to coastal communities. The Cleveland Planning for Climate Impacts workshop, geared towards building the capacity of community organizations to adapt to changes in climate in the lower Great Lakes regions, attracted people from a range of jobs and places. Natural resource managers, city planners, and public servants were among those in attendance. This workshop, funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and NOAA attempted to help the audience develop an understanding of climate change and ways to mitigate and adapt to it. Heavy emphasis was placed on incorporating adaptive strategies into current plans. Statistics gathered from surveys taken by attendees brought to light many poorly addressed problems. In a question asking respondents what they needed to effectively perform their jobs, an overwhelming number said they wanted to know how other Great Lakes communities were handling climate change. Case studies do exist and are outlined in *Adapting to Climate Change: A Planning Guide for State Coastal Managers-A Great Lakes Supplement*. While professionals and decision-makers may not access the full 100 page document, the case studies it contains address a need for key climate information. Dr. McKenzie-Mohr's book, *Fostering Sustainable Behavior*, explains that the way information is presented can often make all the difference in people's willingness to act. Social marketing is the use of marketing principles to influence human behavior in order to achieve specific behavioral goals for a social good. This approach has been proven effective in achieving behavioral change for many sustainable practices such as recycling and water conservation. It involves identifying the activity to be promoted, barriers to the activity and designing a strategy to overcome these barriers.

Proposal:

Funding from this grant will be used to offset transportation costs associated with the journey from my home in Dayton, Ohio to Old Woman Creek National Estuarine Research Reserve in Huron, Ohio. There I will work closely with Heather Elmer, coordinator of the Ohio Coastal Training Program, to develop climate outreach products for community leaders, professionals, and residents in the Old Woman Creek watershed and other communities along Lake Erie. In order to do this, I plan on combining Dr. McKenzie's methodology with pertinent, regional and current case studies of climate impacts and responses in the Great Lakes. We will present stories in print and film to stage behavior changes and frame messages that will move people along the continuum to climate action. Productions will address how temperature and precipitation changes will impact Lake Erie coastal communities and benefits to support action. I will begin the project by reviewing several documents on best practices for climate communication including Climate Communication and Behavior Change – A Guide for Practitioners; EcoAmerica's Climate and Energy Truths: Our Common Future, Making the Necessary Connections; ICLEP's Resource Guide, for Outreach and Communication; and the Yale Climate Communication Project's Global Warming's Six Americas 2009: An Audience Segmentation Analysis. I will also review the results of recent interviews and surveys with Lake Erie coastal community leaders, professionals, and residents to understand local perception regarding climate change. "Climate Wisconsin" <http://climatewisconsin.org/> videos and the attached "climate story" developed by NOAA's Coastal Services Center provide potential frameworks for products. After talking with Heather Elmer, It was concluded that we will develop two or three outreach products to address some of the issues from the survey. Potential audiences include: community professionals and decision-makers, rural residents, schools, parks and natural resource areas.