Blue Carbon Support Needed in the Gulf of Mexico

Taken from 2015 blue carbon workshop evaluations
(Alabama-Mississippi, Apalachicola, Naples, Port Aransas)

Workshop evaluations revealed a Gulf-wide desire for more info and technical support around the following topics. These topics may provide a framework for creating a Gulf Blue Carbon FAQ document.

1) More info on **feasibility studies**
   a) defining baselines to measure success, how-to manuals
   b) pilot projects/examples and local demo projects
   c) data, science translations (soil and above ground differences)
   d) guidelines on site specific planning
   e) long-term management
   f) beneficial use program
   g) info on a model wetland bank
   h) Louisiana case studies as a model
   i) Better understanding of BC project life cycle (step-by-step examples of a project worked through in detail from planning to implementation)

2) **Funding** opportunities
   a) using BC and existing/successful, large-scale projects to fund long-term stewardship/monitoring
   b) RESTORE (not a lot available for monitoring) – partner, work with, not competing against them
   c) RESTORE ($4.4 billion available for restoration), next draft of RESTORE Science Plan coming – package blue carbon benefits from restoration projects from state agencies going on 10-15 years could be attractive to Council)
   d) Collier County funds to restore hydrology
   e) NRDA
   f) What contributions from NGOs exist?
   g) Using multiple co-benefits to increase funding opportunities
   h) Data/local pilot projects will open doors to funding streams

3) More info on **ecosystem services** and value of wetlands
   a) Quantification of ecosystem services value/co-benefits of wetlands (soil and above ground)
      i) X acres = ? value
   b) Ecosystem-based Management Training Event (NatureServe, Margo, Laura Bowie/GOMA)
   c) Identification of experts, tools, etc.

4) More info on how **carbon credits/markets** work:
   a) Examples of a specific case working with a company using carbon credits
   b) Market project case study examples
   c) Do credits have to be tied geographically?
   d) Speculative market and trends
   e) Who is buying credits in the Gulf?

f) Third party buyers in CA/the auction system
g) Mitigation strategies – leveraging mitigation/restoration credits
h) Who gets credit and for what?
i) How to figure the value of a credit
j) Price differentials between conservation and restoration

5) Application of carbon markets to **conservation properties**
   a) Info on restrictions for doing BC projects on private land in conservation easements
   b) Local, state, federal policy regulations, planning, permitting, incentives (integration, changes)
   c) Future avenues for local government
   d) Info on regional differences/similarities around the country
   e) Coordination with existing state/federal wetland methodologies

6) **Communication angles** to approach and engage partners, buyers, policy makers, key stakeholders
   a) Translate BC into a story so people get it
   b) Local government/policy sales pitch, marketing doc to demonstrate importance to local stakeholders, show conservation value (ANERR)
   c) Convincing private land owners attitudes and interests
   d) How to address constraints (hard to sell BC idea when the $/outcome is so variable)
   e) How to approach buyers interested in corporate social responsibility
   f) Conducting "Roadshow Dialogues" with key stakeholders
   g) Link markets to land managers
   h) Outreach/Ed 101 (simplified, easy-to-understand general ed for community engagement)
      i) businesses, public – "what it is and how it relates to me" – piggyback on messages people already care about
      ii) podcasts, brochures for parks, libraries, schools, community centers highlighting climate change and how to reduce carbon footprint, info on credits, link to website

7) Need more technical **project planning** workshops
   a) Design, methodology, guidelines, cost-benefit analysis
   b) Specific step-by-step examples, better understanding of the life of a project (from planning to implementation and beyond)
   c) Creating partnerships (private sector, academia, NGOs, etc.)
   d) more info on Waquoit Bay protocols for science and engagement
   e) more about BC and freshwater and hyper-saline systems

8) More info on **SAV/seagrass** carbon sequestration protocols, budgets, variation, sampling, funding
   a) How to relate BC to seagrass restoration
   b) More info on Tampa Bay management scenarios
   c) Seagrass changeover in ULM, seagrass take-p CO2 vs bicarbonate

9) More info on how BC relates to **climate change** other than slowing CO2 emissions
   a) Adaptive management techniques
   b) How to tie into living shorelines, sea level rise, green infrastructure, low impact development

c) How to use BC in climate change management plans
d) How to close the gap between emissions and sequestration

10) Listserv protocol – **Gulf BC Network ongoing communications** to provide technical assistance
    a) Utilizing listservs to communicate funding opportunities, solicit partnerships
    b) Identify and prioritize action items in local areas
    c) Update Reference List with statements/citations for blue carbon project proposals
        i) Case studies and resources to cite to make proposal writing easier
        ii) Review of publications that provide quantification values by habitat
        iii) Landscape scale mitigation projects cited