

**Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve**  
**2009 Market Analysis Report – Executive Summary**  
March 2, 2009

## **1. Project Background**

In the summer of 2008, the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (referred to as Weeks Bay for the remainder of this report) began preparation to implement the K-12 Estuarine Education Program (KEEP) and specifically the Estuaries 101 curriculum. Based on recommendations from the NERRS Education Sector, it was decided that Weeks Bay would conduct the following:

- a market analysis of agencies within its geographic service area;
- a needs assessment based on science educator professional development needs related to the implementation of the new curriculum; and
- a program evaluation of Weeks Bay professional development programs in the light of findings from the market analysis and needs assessment.

An Education Advisory Board was formed, consisting of like professionals from Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, charged with the task of providing guidance and oversight of assessment activities in preparation for implementation of the Estuaries 101 curriculum. An external evaluator was hired to conduct the market analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation.

The Education Advisory Board worked together, with the external evaluator, through the fall of 2008, to identify agencies to participate in the market analysis survey, develop the survey items and conduct the survey field test. The purpose of the market analysis survey was to determine the degree to which the agencies and organizations surveyed provide professional development programs for science and other educators. Once the survey data is analyzed, Weeks Bay will then develop and distribute a training needs assessment survey to area educators in preparation for the program evaluation process.

The survey consisted of seven demographic questions, four questions for agencies that did not provide professional development for science educators, and 18 questions directed to those agencies that did provide professional development for science educators. Survey Monkey®, a web-based survey provider, was chosen to host the survey. A field test was performed in December 2008, with board members, and regional and national experts to serve as field testers. The survey went live in January 2009, and was made available to 40 local and regional agencies within a 50-mile radius of Weeks Bay, and included agencies in Alabama, Florida and Mississippi. Please see Appendix 1 for the agency distribution list, and Appendix 2 for a copy of the market analysis survey.

Thirty-three agencies responded to the survey, including the project sponsor, for an 83% return rate. The external evaluator conducted follow-up emails and phone calls to those agencies not responding, and was able to substantially improve the initial 55% return rate.

## **2. Survey Findings**

### **2.1. General Survey Responses**

The survey respondents were asked:

*1. Is your agency or organization associated with any governmental, non-profit, or public or private school system?*

- General responses included city, state, and national partnerships; public school systems; and various consortia.

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2. *Does your agency or organization provide professional development programs, workshops, or training for science educators?*

- 70% - Yes
- 30% - No

3. *When asked: If you do not offer professional development programs and services, why not?*

- 45% - We are planning to in the future
- 33% - Not a part of our mission
- 22% - No need

4. *When asked: If you don't currently offer such programs and services, but you are planning to in the future, when do you plan to begin offering these (month/year)?*

Responses included:

- As federal money becomes available
- Summer 2009 and September 2009

5. *When asked: What barriers are currently keeping you from offering those services:*

- 50% - Lack of funding/budget cuts
- 30% - Lack of staff
- 10% - Capacity
- 10% - Lack of time

## **2.2. Professional Development Survey Item Responses**

The respondents were fairly evenly distributed across the states (Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi) in their responses to the survey items related to providing professional development for science educators. A summary of their responses is offered below. Note: some total percentages will equal more than 100% due to the option to select multiple responses.

1. *Who are your target audiences for your professional development programs, workshops or training?*

- 33% - public school educators
- 24% - private school educators
- 20% - parochial school educators
- 19% - volunteers/informal educators
- 4% - other

2. *For what types of educators do you offer professional development programs, workshops or training?*

- 13% - Pre-K educators
- 18% - K-2 educators
- 22% - Grades 3-5
- 21% - Grades 6 -8
- 21% - Grades 9 -12
- 7% - Pre-service educators

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- 1% - Other

3. *Upon what subjects do your professional development programs, workshops and training focus?*

- 23% - Environmental Science
- 21% - Biology
- 17% - Marine Science
- 17% - Earth Science
- 14% - Physical Science
- 9% - Other

4. *What content delivery methods do you most often utilize for your professional development programs?*

- 32% - Hands-on
- 28% - Lecture
- 24% - Field-based
- 9% - On site technology based (webinar, etc.)
- 5% - Distance learning
- 2% - Other

5. *What are your usual time frames for professional development programs?*

- 31% - Full day
- 20% - Multi-day
- 16% - Weekend
- 13% - Half-day
- 9% - Afternoon
- 11% - Other

6. *When do you offer your professional development programs?*

- 90% - Rear-round
- 5% - Academic year only
- 5% - Summer only

7. *How are your professional development programs funded?*

- 29% - Partnerships with other agencies
- 29% - Grants
- 24% - Intra-agency (funds allocated in the yearly budget)
- 13% - Charge participants
- 5% - Donations

8. *How do you advertise your professional development programs to the educators your serve?*

- 26% - Email
- 21% - Website
- 16% - Professional organizations
- 12% - Faculty meetings

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- 11% - Radio, television, newspaper
- 14% - Other (telephone, newsletters, catalogs, word of mouth)

9. *What types of instruments do you use to evaluate and track the impact of your professional development programs?*

- 37% - Self-developed
- 21% - Standardized
- 18% - Professional evaluator
- 15% - Provided by presenter or sponsor
- 3% - Don't use
- 6% - Other (qualitative, quantitative)

10. *What have been your biggest challenges in providing relevant professional development programs?*

- 31% - Funding
- 23% - Scheduling
- 23% - Attendance
- 9% - Bureaucracy
- 9% - Staffing
- 5% - Logistics

11. *Do you offer CEU's?*

- 70% - Yes
- 30% - No

12. *Of all your professional development offerings, which are the most popular, most demanded, or most requested?*

By title or topic:

- Weeks Bay Watershed Wonders (non-point source pollution), Project Wild, Project Aquatic Wild, Project Wet
- Inquiry based learning in the content area (Bio, Earth, Physical, Environmental
- Environmental Science
- Water Quality Training Sessions, Stormwater, Exotic Plant ID
- Coastal Ecology, Barrier Island Ecology, Fauna and Flora, Ocean and Human Health
- Biology
- Project SEA OATS, Marine Science
- Coastal Discovery Teacher Workshop, funded by Legacy Inc. - focuses on coastal environmental science and certifies participants in Project Wild and Project Wild Aquatic
- Beaches, Birds & Barrier Islands; Sharks & Rays; Marine Applications of Science & Technology (MAST); The Delta; Submerged Grassbeds of the Northern Gulf of Mexico
- Florida Master Naturalist Program, Project WET workshops
- Workshops offered off campus
- Project WILD, WET, Flying WILD, Outdoor Classroom

Note: Projects WILD and WET were most frequently mentioned.

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By design or subject:

- We offer marine related programs when funding permits...we don't really have a list of titles. When we do offer programs, they fill up.
- lab practices
- Boat tours into the Delta are our most popular field trip.
- Field oriented
- Hands-on workshop with practitioners
- anything combining literacy and science
- Linking Science to other content areas

Note: Programs that linked disciplines were most frequently mentioned.

*13. Of all your professional development offerings, which are the least popular, are least demanded, or requested?*

By title or topic:

- Physical Science
- Water Chemistry
- Inside the Cell, Biology
- K-2 Science concepts

By design or subject:

- professional development activities without participant involvement
- assessment
- anything too narrow in focus or too broad
- more than one day trainings

*14. If you charge for your programs, what is the average cost per person?*

Ranges included \$400-\$225 for programs and \$30-\$10 for materials.

*15. What have been your biggest successes in providing relevant professional development programs?*

Responses included:

- CRISS workshops, lab based workshops
- Participants learn and become part of a larger community of learners
- Developing a working team of educators to assist each other when park personnel is low and groups are too large.
- Repeat attendees to other workshops
- Long-term water quality data collected
- Continued funding
- Partnerships with other agencies
- AMSTI (Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative)
- More highly qualified teachers and retention of teachers.
- Increased interest in science and environmental education by area teachers
- Increased content understanding and improved use of hands on instructional strategies.
- Our annual Coastal Discovery Teacher Workshop in May partnering with Legacy
- Contacting science teachers in the state individually, rather than going through the science coordinator in that area has been successful.

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- Choosing topics of interest and immersing teachers in that subject
- Providing what is immediately used in the classroom to improve instruction

# 2009 Weeks Bay Reserve Market Analysis Survey

## 1. General Information

The Weeks Bay Reserve is conducting this survey as a part of a market analysis of agencies and organizations like ours within a 50 mile radius of Weeks Bay. The purpose of the market analysis is to determine the degree to which the agencies and organizations surveyed provide professional development programs for educators. Once the data from the surveys is collected and analyzed, the Reserve will conduct a needs assessment of professional development offerings for future programs. Your feedback will help us improve our local programs and ensure that we are not duplicating professional development programs in our area. Results of the market analysis will be available upon request in early 2009.

The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. When listing organizations, please write out the organization names as opposed to using acronyms. We appreciate your time and expertise.

1. Name of Agency or Organization:

2. Physical address:

3. Web address:

4. Name, title, and contact information (if different from above) of person completing this survey:

5. What is your geographic service area? Please check all that apply.

- Baldwin County, Alabama
- Clarke County, Alabama
- Escambia County, Alabama
- Mobile County, Alabama
- Monroe County, Alabama
- Washington County, Alabama
- Escambia County, Florida
- Okaloosa County, Florida
- Santa Rosa County, Florida
- Jackson County, Mississippi

6. Is your agency or organization associated with any governmental, non-profit, or public or private school system? If so, please describe. If not, please type N/A.

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7. Does your agency or organization provide professional development programs, workshops, or training for science educators?

Yes

No

### 2. No Professional Development

1. If you do not offer professional development programs and services, why not?

Not part of our mission

No need

We are planning to in the future

Other (please specify)

2. If you don't currently offer such programs and services, but you are planning to in the future, when do you plan to begin offering these (month/year). If you are not planning to offer services, please type N/A.

3. What types of programs and services will you offer? If you are not planning to offer services, please type N/A.

4. What barriers are currently keeping you from offering those services?

5. This completes the survey. Please check "yes" and the "next" button to exit the survey.

Yes

No

### 3. Professional Development for Educators

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1. Who are your target audiences for your professional development programs, workshops or training? Please check all that apply.

- Public school educators
- Private school educators
- Parochial school educators
- Volunteer/informal educators

Other (please specify)

2. For what types of educators do you offer your professional development programs, workshops, or training? Please check all that apply.

- Pre-K educators
- K-2 educators
- Grades 3 - 5 educators
- Grades 6 -8 educators
- Grades 9 - 12 educators
- Pre-service educators

Other (please specify)

3. Upon what subjects do your professional development programs, workshops and training focus? Please check all that apply.

- Biology
- Earth Science
- Physical Science
- Environmental Science
- Marine Science

Other (please specify)

4. Of all your professional development offerings, which are the most popular, most demanded, or most requested? Please list by title and subject.

5. Of all your professional development offerings, which are the least popular, are least demanded, or requested? Please list by title and subject.

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6. What content delivery methods do you most often utilize for your professional development programs? Please check all that apply.

- Lecture
- On-site technology-based (i.e. a webinar)
- Field-based
- Distance learning
- Hands-on

Other (please specify)

7. What are your usual time frames for professional development programs? Please check all that apply.

- Half day
- Full day
- Weekend
- Morning
- Afternoon
- After school
- Evening
- Multi-day

Other (please specify)

8. When do you offer your professional development programs?

- Summer only
- Academic year only
- Year-round

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9. How are your professional development programs funded? Please check all that apply.

- Intra-agency (funds allocated in the yearly budget)
- Grants
- Donations
- Charge participants
- Partnerships with other agencies

Other (please specify)

10. If you charge for your programs, what is the average cost per person? If you do not charge, please type N/A.

11. What community partners and resources do you work with to present your professional development programs?

12. How do you advertise your professional development programs to the educators you serve? Please check all that apply.

- Newspaper
- Radio
- Television
- Faculty meetings
- Website
- Email
- Professional organizations
- Telephone

Other (please specify)

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13. What type(s) of instruments do you use to evaluate and track the impact of your professional development programs?

- Self-developed evaluation instruments
- Standardized evaluation instruments
- Instruments developed by professional evaluator
- Instruments provided by presenter or sponsor
- Don't use evaluation instruments
- Other

Other (please specify)

14. What have been your biggest successes in providing relevant professional development programs?

15. What have been your biggest challenges in providing relevant professional development programs? Please check all that apply.

- Logistics
- Funding
- Scheduling
- Bureaucracy
- Attendance

Other (please specify)

16. Do you provide CEU's for your professional development programs?

- Yes
- No

17. If yes, what accreditation agency certifies your professional development programs? If no, please type N/A.

18. This completes the survey. Please check "yes" and the "next" button to exit the survey.

- Yes
- No

# 2009 Weeks Bay Reserve Market Analysis Survey

## 4. Thank You

Thank you for completing the survey.