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As you know, there is a need to create a generation of people so well informed about the ecology of wetlands, the issues facing it, and coastal erosion that maintaining and preserving these treasures becomes second nature. This need has been made even more important due to the recent hurricanes that struck South Louisiana and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. One of the main goals of the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center (SLWDC) is to educate people about our wetlands and to help students strengthen their science, math and technology skills through the use of hands-on learning with a focus on the ecology of the wetlands. SLWDC is accomplishing this goal by offering educational programs to the students of the region.

In 2011, the Center was able to offer five educational programs throughout the year. It was also able to include an additional level III to its popular summer camp. These programs were all wetlands based and included field trips to different wetlands venues for a more intensive learning experience. Participation in the programs was a mixture of students from both public and private schools. Hands-on activities which reinforced math, science, and technology skills were also incorporated into each educational program. Science teachers with specialized wetlands training led the instruction of the programs and there was a student-teacher ratio of 1 to 10. Due to the success of the Level III summer camp, it will be expanded to a 5 day camp in 2012.

2011 Educational Program Accomplishments: For photos/videos, visit www.slwdc.org/programs.html

- 180 students from Southdown Elementary School and St. Francis de Sales attended the 3rd annual "World Wetlands Day" in Terrebonne Parish
- 48 students from public and private schools attended "Wetlands Explorer – Level I" 5 day summer camp
- 33 students from public and private schools attended "Wetlands Conservationist – Level II" 5 day summer camp
- 13 students from public and private schools attended "Wetlands Restoration – Level III" 3 day summer camp
- 33 students from public and private schools attended the "Fall Mandalay Nature Trail Adventure"

Benefits of the Educational Programs:

- Students gain a better understanding about the wetlands and its issues
- Students are able to have hands-on wetlands educational experiences
- Students are able to strengthen their science, math, and technology skills in a fun environment
- Students are exposed to different wetlands related career opportunities

The SLWDC was able to raise over \$82,000.00 so far this year through fund raising events, sponsorships, grants, and donations. These funds were divided among the ongoing educational programs offered, the capital fund, and the operational expenses of the Center. Please consider becoming a 2012 Educational Programs sponsor so the Center can continue to educate people about our wetlands and to continue to help students strengthen their science, math and technology skills. The Center is aiming to raise \$27,500.00 to help cover the expenses of the programs.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Guidry, MBA
Executive Director