

RISING TOGETHER TEMPERATURE, WATER, HEALTH AND STRENGTH



Quick Facts & Statistics

- 193 residents in 168 households were educated about the public health risks of climate change in English, Spanish or Creole. 108 were signed up for Code Red, and 31 oral histories were recorded and transcribed.
- Census tracts served had 52%-95% minority populations, with 23% - 27% below the poverty line.
- 26 Climate Communicators were trained within the 2 communities. Of those, 4 became Outreach Leaders in the neighborhood outreach campaign.

OVERVIEW

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Boca Raton has supported the Regional Climate Action Plan since it responded to the draft plan during the comment period. In seeking Green Sanctuary status for the Fellowship, the Green Sanctuary Committee chose to support PO-1 by working to strengthen existing community partners in vulnerable communities.

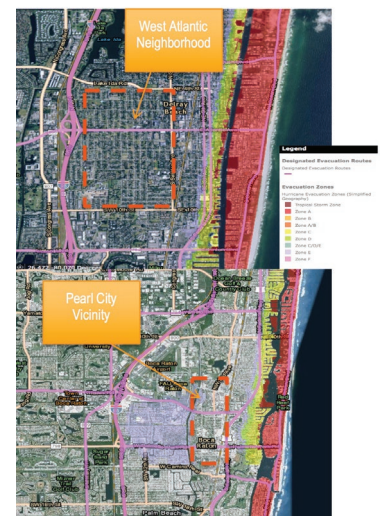
APPROACH

Existing leadership in vulnerable communities is supported to become climate literate, to design and conduct a health and climate outreach campaign appropriate to their community, and to survey their neighbors about sea level rise related concerns. Results are presented to public officials responsible for the health and safety of the community.

COST

A \$30,000 EPA Environmental Justice Small Project Grant was used to create an online tool kit www.ReACTToolkit.net and use it in community led neighborhood canvassing and community meetings to provide education and training to reduce public health risks associated with increasingly severe storms and sea level rise associated with climate change.

Evacuation Zones and Routes



PARTNERSHIPS

The Green Sanctuary Committee's community partner in the Pearl City area of Boca Raton was Developing Interracial Social Change (DISC). The community partner in South Delray Beach was Toussaint L'Ouverture High School for Arts and Social Justice (TLHS). Training support for canvassers was provided by Habitat for Humanity in Boca Raton. In addition to Project Manager (Phase I) Dr. Ana Puszkin-Chevlin and Project Manager (Phase II) Dr. Debra Weiss-Randall, academic supervision was provided by Dr. Keren Bolter (FAU CES) for the SLR Risk Perception Survey and by Dr. Sandra Norman (FAU-Dept. of History) for oral histories.

TIMELINE

Lead community partners were recruited in late 2014 when the grant application was drafted, with letters of commitment from the partners appended to the application. Funds were received in November 2015 for a one-year project implementation time table.
November 2015 – March 2016, Development and design of ReACT Tool Kit materials, with vetting by PBC Climate Change Coordinator Natalie Schneider, and both Public Health and Emergency Services Departments. Capacity Building meetings with community partners to identify leaders and canvassers, create tracking systems, and to translate and print tri-lingual outreach material. Climate Change and Health training sessions and Oral History training.
April 16–Summer 2016, Outreach Training. Neighborhood canvass with SLR Risk Perception Survey.
Fall 2016, Data entry and preliminary analysis Empowerment and Capacity Building: Opening dialogue with public officials and holding a public meeting in each community. Remaining work includes support for community partners in discussions with public officials regarding neighborhood climate resilience building, website completion with distribution of Tool Kit links to resources shared with organizers throughout Florida, and EPA Outputs and Outcomes reporting.

OUTREACH

The EPA put out a press release in November 2015 to inform the country of grant recipients. Within the vulnerable communities, outreach was from neighbors speaking to neighbors, students speaking to parents, knocking on doors, or by tabling at community events. DISC created and distributed fliers to recruit canvassers. TLHS used school channels to reach parents.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Identification and training of bi-lingual residents created a bridge between community partner (DISC) and the Creole and Spanish speaking sections of the neighborhood in Boca Raton.
- Identification of residents' concerns related to sea level rise
- Residents with climate literacy and leadership experience on a public health campaign
- Funds spent in the community: Paid Outreach Leaders, stipends for canvassers and survey respondents

QUESTIONS?

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