

Environmental exposures across urban and rural communities in the Deep South

Joint meeting: West Central Alabama Advisory Board, Birmingham Advisory Board and research team members

January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

11:00-12:00 PM

WebEx Conference Line

**Draft Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Molly Bernhard, Keisha Brown, Mary Evans, Julia Gohlke, Ethel Johnson, Willie Lampley, Claudiu Lungu, Leslie McClure, Aundretta Montgomery, Stacie Propst, Anna Scott, Rachel Stokes, Sheryl Threadgill-Mathews, Sheila Tyson, Steve Wood, and Ben Zaitchik

**Discussions:**

Agenda adoption: Agenda was adopted after Sheryl added an item to request involvement of students from the Environmental Science class at the Wilcox Central High School (Camden, AL). The students are lacking a strong foundation in science, particularly Environmental Science; making it hands on would be great during the academic year. Sheryl will connect Mr. Winford Angion, the science teacher, with Julia via email to see if it would be possible to set something up.

Logo and acronym online voting results: The logo design (below) and the acronym ENACT: Environmental Health for Alabama Communities were winners based on the online poll of advisory board members. It was noted that only 11 responses were submitted, meaning 2 advisory board members did not submit a vote. Advisory board members on the call approved use of the logo and acronym.

Logo design winner:



Results from Fall 2015 workshop surveys: In regards to demographics, participants attending the Birmingham workshop were younger than those attending the Camden workshop, with Birmingham having 17 participants under 40 and Camden zero under 40. Birmingham also had more male participants than the Camden workshop. For next year, recruitment within age and sex brackets can help to minimize this difference. Keisha, Sheila, and Ethel reported they were confident in recruiting from different age and sex groups. Sheryl suggested pulling from students. Since the current budget has incentives for 50 people, Ethel brought up that it may be a challenge to not invite some individuals who are particularly interested in the subject and had attended previously. It would be better to add participants in order to get the desired age/sex distribution for the study. It was agreed that we will extend invitations to those that are interested in attending as well as additional community members to increase the age distribution of participants; increasing the budget for workshop participant incentives if this results in higher than 50 participants.

Regarding results on differences in cooling center use (Birmingham showing higher use), Sheryl mentioned she didn't know of any cooling centers in the rural areas. Aundretta mentioned that some churches, the local hospital, and maybe some schools open up and a room at the Dept of Human Resources is opened up. Ethel and Sheryl identified this as a goal to work, identifying local cooling centers and advertising them.

Regarding results on environmental health priorities, Sheila mentioned that responses referring to gas are about the gasoline storage tanks in Birmingham. There are 17 in the community (including on the west side and Wenonah areas) and there are concerns over air quality and the trucks for transportation.

Summer 2015 temperature results: On average, there was not a large difference between temperatures recorded in Birmingham and Wilcox County. There was a systematic difference in grass surfaces and impervious surfaces (concrete- hotter in both day and night). Work conducted in Baltimore had similar findings. In Baltimore, park size doesn't seem to matter, with pocket parks reducing temperatures as much as larger parks. However pilot Birmingham data suggested shaded areas were not cooler than unshaded areas.

Summer 2015 air pollution results: Volatile organic compound (VOC) samplers were placed in the field for 2, 7, 14, and 21 days and results suggest measurement for 7 days with cover would be the maximum without loss of sample. The 3M sampler was not sensitive enough, whereas ACS samplers produced higher results than Radiello samplers; therefore recommendation was to use ACS samplers in upcoming summer with further replicates. Ozone sampler must be covered as well. It may also be possible to place a Grey Wolf continuous measurement system at one location to evaluate against the passive samplers, although since this sampler is very expensive, it will be important to identify a safe location during sampling.

Discussion of sampling protocol for this coming summer: Ben suggested more coverage in a small geographic area would make sense from pilot results with temp/humidity sensors. For VOC and ozone sampling this would also make sense considering cost of analysis for samplers. For example, 4 locations

in Birmingham, 4 in Camden (2 park and 2 non-park locations). Claudiu also mentioned testing only for toluene, which would be indicative of all VOCs, could be a cheaper alternative, but the downside is that it limits the knowledge of the source (i.e. papermill in Yellow Bluff).

Advisory Board membership: For the West Central advisory board, Brenda Anthony has retired and Pam Stenz has transferred to Marengo County. Willie stated they will be hiring a replacement in Wilcox by the 1<sup>st</sup> of March. He or she may be willing to participate. Ethel reached out to Pam, but hasn't heard back if she would like to continue to serve. Sheryl suggested Mr. Winford Angion may be a great candidate to serve on the CAB and maybe a student, too. Sheryl also mention the County Commissioner John Moton. For the Birmingham advisory board, the addition of a nurse from Princeton was discussed again and Sheila had someone in mind. Stacie is no longer with GASP and is consulting with health advocacy nonprofits and corporations. She is still willing to serve. Matt Lackey may have restrictive time commitments. Julia will try to get in touch with him to see if he is still able to serve and/or if he is able to identify an alternate from the health department. There was agreement on monthly conference calls leading up to summer 2016 activities. In addition, Julia will be in Birmingham March 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> for in-person meeting with Birmingham group, time TBD.

Next conference call: February 25<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm Central.