

Briefing for PWSRCAC Board of Directors – September 2021

INFORMATION ITEM

Sponsor: Betsi Oliver and the Information and Education Committee

Project number and name or topic: Alaska Oil Spill Lesson Bank

1. **Description of agenda item:** The Council has long hosted the Alaska Oil Spill Lesson Bank, a series of lesson plans and other educational resources that introduce a foundational understanding of the marine ecosystem, oil spill science, and citizen engagement principles to students K-12. The resources have received a major update and new searchable database platform on the Council's website. This has been a large multiyear project including work by the Information and Education Committee, volunteers Jane Eisemann and Kate Morse, intern Rosie Brennan, contractor Katie Gavenus, and multiple staff, particularly Amanda Johnson and Betsi Oliver. Here is a summary of the recent work:

- The resources were renamed Lesson Bank, instead of the previous Curriculum, to better represent the content and appeal to educators.
- All the lesson plans were reviewed, refined, and, where possible, tagged with relevant science standards. There are about 50 lessons for students grades K-12.
- Improvements included adding “educator tips” about how to make the lessons flow more smoothly based on experiences in the classroom, adding assessment tools and grading rubrics to help teachers know if students met the learning objectives, and checking/updating links to external resources.
- Lessons that teachers have developed in workshops over the years were polished and added, while other outdated lessons were retired.
- All the lessons were formatted into a template to enable teachers to quickly review and find relevant information, improving our professionalism with a polished, consistent look.
- Council wrote a how-to guide for future educators who want to use our template and create standards-aligned lessons that we can include in our resources.
- Access to the lesson plans has also been improved by creation of a searchable database on our website. Every lesson was identified according to various filter terms, such as grade level, subject, and key word. Educators can now more easily find relevant lessons to meet their needs.
- This webtool was tested with an audience of teachers in June and final refinements are being made over the summer and fall. A draft demonstration version of the tool is available on our website: <https://www.pwsrcac.org/new-2021-curriculum-demo/>.

2. **Why is this item important to PWSRCAC:** Since 2010, the Council has invested in youth involvement programs as a way to connect with young people in our region and keep the mission of the Council relevant to current and future generations. The Alaska Oil

Spill Lesson Bank is a low-cost way to provide resources to teachers, homeschool parents, and other educators.

Through education, youth develop understanding, awareness, and care for the ecosystem and systems that protect it from oil spills. The lessons have been used in classrooms, camps, field programs, and festivals. Many of the funded Youth Involvement projects use resources from the curriculum and educators who are not relying on funds from the Council are also using them to spread our message. Educators and organizations serving youth look to the Council as leaders in oil spill and marine education because of this resource.

3. **Previous actions taken by the Board on this item:** Not applicable.
4. **Summary of policy, issues, support or opposition:** None known.
5. **Committee Recommendation:** The IEC actively participated in this update and endorses the resulting materials.
6. **Relationship to LRP and Budget:** The Alaska Oil Spill Lesson Bank is not a budgeted project but is supported under the Council's 3530 Youth Involvement Project and the Council's 3903 Internship project, which are both in the approved FY2022 budget and annual workplan.
7. **Action Requested of the Board of Directors:** None, item is for information only.
8. **Attachments:** None.