

Education/Outreach

Reef on the Road: A Traveling Exhibit



Photo: FGBNMS/Drinnen

Reef on the Road's premiere at the 2014 AZA conference in Orlando, Florida.



Photo: FGBNMS/Drinnen

Side 1 of Reef on the Road's three-piece traveling exhibit.

From the Gulf of Mexico to You

NOAA Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary is a gem in the Gulf of Mexico about 100 miles off the Texas and Louisiana coasts. Due to its relatively remote location, most people will never be able to visit the sanctuary; therefore, we have found a way to bring its beautiful, healthy coral reefs to you and your visitors!

Reef on the Road delivers messages of underwater beauty and diversity, as well as reasons for action to conserve our fragile ocean planet.

The exhibit consists of three stand-alone units that telescope to 10 feet tall, each with a video display on one side and an interactive element on the other.

Bright Spot in the Gulf

Side 1 introduces guests to Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary with a looping video of sanctuary highlights such as manta rays, spawning corals and brightly colored reef creatures.

Teeming with Life

Side 2 highlights the sanctuary's diversity of wildlife, including some species seldom found elsewhere. An interactive roller barrel provides fun facts about the sanctuary's fish and invertebrates. A model of a scalloped hammerhead shark hangs overhead.

Flourishing, but Fragile

Side 3 focuses on the fact that sanctuary reefs are healthy, but surrounded by a variety of threats. A looping slide show addresses how the reefs fit into the overall gulf ecosystem and issues that may affect them, such as invasive species, anchoring, shipping and oil/gas production.

We All Live Upstream

Side 4 helps visitors understand their impact on the ocean through their use of water. An interactive map lets people light up the three major watersheds of the U.S. to see which part of the ocean they affect most immediately.

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY SYSTEM



Scale varies in this perspective. Adapted from National Geographic Maps.



Next Generations

Side 5 features the annual mass coral spawning that takes place in the sanctuary every year. High definition video footage brings to life the underwater snowstorm that occurs for several nights every August. Fun facts highlight other creatures that spawn at about the same time each year.

Cruising Through

Side 6 highlights the large species that spend all or part of their lives in the sanctuary — sharks, rays and sea turtles. An interactive flip-book shows visitors part of the sanctuary's manta ray Catalog and invites them to identify the Manta ray pictured above. Facts about mantas, stingrays and acoustic tracking data are also included.

Exhibit Specifications

The Reef on the Road exhibit consists of the following items:

- One two-sided welcome banner
- Three two-sided displays with artificial coral bases topped by banner images of the sanctuary (Up to 55" x 46" at base, 96"-120" tall)
- One hammerhead shark model
- Three 24" LCD monitors
- Three plywood shipping crates (62" x 49" x 54") and two packing cases that must be stored while the exhibit is on display

Exhibit Costs

There is no fee to host the Reef on the Road exhibit, but there is a shipping and setup cost.

The host site is asked to pay for the cost of insuring and shipping the exhibit from its previous location, and for a sanctuary staff person to be on site to supervise the unloading and installation. While on site, the sanctuary staff person will also provide training regarding operation of the exhibit and background information about the sanctuary.

For more information, visit us on the web at <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov/travelingexhibit.html> or email flowergarden@noaa.gov.

Now available for dates beginning in February 2016!



Partner with NOAA Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

In addition to developing permanent exhibits at partner sites, Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary offers this traveling exhibit that can stand alone or be incorporated into existing zoo, aquarium or museum displays on a temporary basis.

In September 2014, the Reef on the Road exhibit premiered at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) conference and it is now available for display at different venues for periods of six, nine or 12 months at a time.

Funding for the exhibit's development was provided through the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (www.nmsfocean.org).