



# **AUBURN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

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John Mareska  
Biologist  
Alabama Marine Resources  
PO Box 189  
Dauphin Island, AL 36528

Dear Mr. Mareska,

I am writing this letter to thank your organization for allowing Diane McKinnon, the Fish Lady, to come to our school to speak to our students. I received a National Art Education Foundation Teacher Incentive Grant and an Auburn PTA Faces grant to complete an installation project at our school. This project focused on the oil spill and its affect on the wildlife, fauna, rivers and the gulf in Alabama. Nancy Raia from the Eastern Shore art center was coming the week after Diane spoke to work with our 8<sup>th</sup> graders in completing this installation. Four panels that were painted to resemble the Alabama River were covered with student art work. The work was completed on pieces of old blue jeans. We focused on a recycling and conservation theme. Students were to draw and paint what they would miss if it was no longer around. Diane played a big role in introducing our students to the mission of your group and the impact that the Deep Horizon explosion has had on our state and its environment.

Without programs like yours our students would not be as knowledgeable about the Marine life and the industries that rely on the gulf. Her program was very informative and even the teachers (including myself) learned a lot. Who knew that you could tell how old a fish was by counting rings, or that Bluefish tuna is so important to the Gulf economy. It was very interesting to learn how hard the Marine Resources division is working to protect the resources of the Alabama Coast. Diane spoke to over 200 8<sup>th</sup> graders during the 3 class periods that she was here. Diane was very animated with the students and she held their attention the whole 90 minutes that she spoke. Many students had excellent questions for her and she was able to answer them with expertise and knowledge. It was an honor to have her at our school and to learn more about your program. Please extend to her our warmest regards and know that it meant a lot to have her donate her time to come to Auburn Junior High School.

Sincerely,

Betsy Logan  
Art teacher

Cc: Dr. Jason Wright, Diane McKinnon