



Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
Business Resources Committee Meeting  
International Trade Center  
September 28, 2017  
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

The Business Resources Committee of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) met on Thursday, September 28, 2017 at the International Trade Center in Mobile, AL. The meeting was attended by: Co-chairs Jennifer Denson, Partners for Environmental Progress and Darrelyn Dunmore, Strategic Wealth Specialists; Ron Wright, Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. of America; Don Bates, Thompson Engineering; Eliska Morgan, Al. Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources; Chandra Wright, Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism; Steve McClure, Hargrove; Graham Green, Smart Home America; Andrea Moore, Manufacturers Packaging; Cheryl Monroe, Sweep Masters; John T. Bender, Mcfadden, Rouse, & Bender; Colette Boehm, Gulf Shores and Orange Beach Tourism; Chris Williams, Hand Arendall LLC; John Goodloe, Land Heritage Properties; Jack Conger, Stirling Properties; MBNEP staff: Rick Frederick, Roberta Swann, and Bethany Dickey.

**Mission of the BRC: To advocate for streamlined regulations and balanced business practices that are in the best interest of the region's economic and environmental resources.**

*Meeting Summary:*

- *Committee updated on MBNEP projects*
- *Committee updated on "Litter Gitters"*
- *Survey results, discussed member feedback*

**1). WELCOME AND UPDATES**

Co-chairs Jennifer Denson and Darrelyn Dunmore opened the meeting with a welcome and introductions. After introductions, Rick Frederick gave an update and status report on recent activity involving Watershed Management Plans overseen by the Mobile Bay NEP. The watershed management plans play a significant role in guiding restoration efforts along the gulf coast while identifying funding needs.

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- Watershed Management Plans (WMPs):
  - Fowl River WMP completed in 2016 by Goodwyn, Mills, and Cawood (GMC).
  - Dog River draft WMP was recently completed by GMC, released for public comment, and near final completion.
  - Weeks Bay WMP completed by Thompson Engineering and closed for public comment.
  - Bon Secour, Oyster Bay, Skunk Bayou WMP completed in January 2017 by Volkert Engineering.
  - Bayou La Batre WMP completed by Dewberry Environmental with W. Fowl River and Dauphin Island later added and in process of completion.
  - RFQ for the Wolf Bay WMP was recently posted and selection of firm is in process.
  - Tensaw-Apalachee is the final WMP funded through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and RFP will be released in 2018.

## **2). LITTER GITTER SMALL STREAM LITTER TRAP**

Mayor Stimpson and the City of Mobile recently recognized the work Don Bates, the MBNEP, and PEP have been doing with the litter traps, and Don was awarded a proclamation from the City. Don and Rick were also featured on the cover of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's August Business View magazine promoting the Litter Gitter and cleaning up area waterways. The Dauphin Island Sea Lab Foundation will be honoring Don for his outstanding work in the environment at their annual luncheon on Nov. 7th

The NEP has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the EPA (Trash Free Waters) for the construction, installation, and maintenance of 5 new "Litter Gitters" in Mobile and Baldwin County. A Gulf of Mexico Program Grant for \$400,000+ for 10 litter traps in Three Mile Creek is pending (**awarded as of October 3, 2017**). This 2 year grant also includes a water monitoring and education component. The second phase will involve the BRC, as businesses identified as the source of the trash will be targeted and incentivized and encouraged to implement environmentally-friendly packaging as an alternative to current packaging.

Don gave up an update on the Corps of Engineers permits for the Litter Gitters. Verbal approval was received last week and full deployment of the traps should be mid-October.

## **3). ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS**

MBNEP has received money from EPA to do an economic impact analysis. Roberta Swann opened the floor for discussion regarding the impacts of the MBNEP restoration projects in the D'Olive Watershed. The challenge is to determine and target the most effective and pertinent audience: the general public, local government, or the development community. Most committee members felt the general public would not serve as the best or most effective focus group. Several members voiced the opinion that a professional planner could bridge the gap between developers and

municipalities. Additional feedback included using historical data to study watersheds that have implemented stormwater best management practices versus those watersheds that have not.

#### **4). SURVEY RESULTS/FEEDBACK**

With about 1/3 of members participating, Rick Frederick discussed the results from the survey that he sent out to BRC members:

- 100% of those who responded indicated that they “Strongly or Somewhat Agree” that the BRC mission statement accurately reflects the mission of the group. T
- All three activities of the BRC (Tours, Presentations, Clean Water Future campaign) ranked highly effective in fostering private sector stewardship. Tours, such as canoe trips, were thought to have larger impact, but presentations more effective in reaching larger audience. Feedback suggested more meetings, speakers, and gathering related to the MBNEP through different organizations is needed.
- BRC members are sharing the information and updates obtained at BRC meeting or from subsequent emails with their personal and business networks. Most shared were the AI Coastal Cleanup and the Litter Gitter. Followed by Create a Clean Water Future and information on Three Mile Creek.
- As a result of membership in the BRC, members have increased their support to protect the environment through community cleanups and monetary donations.
- Only 20 % of respondents wrote the legislative representatives in support of the National Estuary Program as requested by the BRC co-chairs.

#### **5). CLEAN MARINA PROGRAM and ReTHINK DISPOSABLE PROGRAM**

- The Mobile Bay NEP is working with the Ms/AI Sea Grant Consortium to help reenergize the Clean Marina Program along the coast and throughout Alabama waterways. To learn about the program, visit [www.masg.org/clean-marina-program](http://www.masg.org/clean-marina-program).
- ReThink Disposable- Program to promote the use of alternative reusable products.

#### **6). CLOSING**

The MBNEP 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Breakfast Meeting will take place on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at the Battle House Hotel. This will serve as the final BRC meeting for 2017.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25.