

**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
Government Networks Committee Meeting  
Original Oyster House, Mobile AL  
July 17, 2017**

---



*The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Government Networks Committee was established to bring State agencies and regional government administrators together with local officials of Mobile and Baldwin counties to more effectively communicate local needs/understand State agency functions and priorities. The goal of this committee is to articulate innovative ways to improve communications and management of our coastal environment.*

In attendance:

Joseph Abston, Washington County Commission; David Baker, City of Semmes; Chris Blankenship, ADCNR; Napoleon Bracy, Jr., Alabama House of Representatives; Guy Busby, Baldwin County Legislative Delegation; Jeff Collier, Town of Dauphin Island; Carnes Craig, City of Chickasaw; Newton Cromer, City of Saraland; Randy Davis, Alabama House of Representatives; Terry Downey, City of Bayou La Batre; Chris Elliot, Baldwin County Commission; Charles 'Skip' Gruber, Baldwin County Commission; Kae Hamilton, Town of Perdido Beach; Dane Haygood, City of Daphne; Scott Hughes, ADEM; Diane Irby, City of Mobile; Thomas Jackson, Alabama House of Representatives; Matthew Lambert, City of Saraland; Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County Commission; Eliska Morgan, Alabama Gulf Coast Restore Council; Patti Powell, ADCNR State Lands Division; Chris Pringle, Alabama House of Representatives; William Puckett, Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee; Mike McMillan, City of Spanish Fort; Casey Rains, City of Spanish Fort; Elizabeth Roney, Bradley Byrne's Office; Harry Shiver, Alabama House of Representatives; Terry Williams, Town of Mount Vernon; Tom Williams, City of Satsuma; David Ludwig, City of Mobile; Evan Davis for Vince Calametti, ALDOT; Cheyenne West, ALDOT; Judy Haner, The Nature Conservancy

MBNEP Staff: Roberta Swann, Christian Miller, Rick Frederick, Paul Lammers, and Bethany Dickey

**Takeaways**

- Management Conference Committees are participating in a survey to prioritize habitat restoration goals for the future using CCMP community values.
- The Tensaw-Apalachee Watershed Plan has started to be scoped out and we will be reaching out to counties farther up that watershed.
- ADEM has programs and funding available to help remediate illegal dumping of waste and tires on private property and public right-of-ways

Commissioner Merceria Ludgood welcomed members and each gave a quick introduction. The meeting was called to order at 7:47 a.m. Commissioner Gruber moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, the motion was seconded by Chris Elliot, and the minutes were approved.

Next on the agenda, Patti Powell gave an update on Federal Restore Council funding. NRDA will have their annual public council meeting September 12<sup>th</sup> in Mobile. The Federal Council will have a work session in early September and she will give an update at the next GNC meeting. After changes in the administration, things are moving much smoother after the update from our last meeting. Eliska Morgan gave an update on the status of RESTORE & NFWF-GEBF funding. Governor Ivey has asked Joe

Bonner to act as her trustee on the Alabama Restore Council. A work session will happen soon. The latest approved NFWF projects are being evaluated with a time schedule of February through November. Please go to [www.alabamacoastalrestoration.org](http://www.alabamacoastalrestoration.org) to sign up for e-mail updates. Deadlines, release of a plan, meetings, and information on funding are all on the website.

Commissioner Ludgood then introduced Chris Blankenship as the new Acting Commissioner of ADCNR Marine Resources Division.

Next, Roberta Swann discussed a Coastal Habitat Restoration Tool (CART) for Alabama. Funding was received from NFWF. The first plan was completed in 2005 and evaluated projects to identify priority habitats and what value they provide in terms of ecosystem services. The Habitats Tool (MS-AL Habitats Database) created in 2009 displays all restoration projects that are completed, underway, or planned. The habitat conservation goals classified 10 coastal priority habitats, identified in the MBNEP Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (freshwater wetlands, beaches & dunes, intertidal marshes & flats, longleaf pine habitats, submerged aquatic vegetation, oyster reefs, streams & rivers, riparian forests, pine savanna forests, and maritime forests). Judy Haner had attendees participate in a clicker survey on prioritizing habitat restoration goals for the future using CCMP community values (access, shorelines, fish & wildlife, heritage & culture, environmental resilience, and water quality). The final plan is scheduled to be complete by December 31, 2017.

Next on the agenda, David Deyton from ADEM gave a presentation on their Removals and Response Unit. This unit is responsible for the removal and proper disposal of Unauthorized Solid Waste Dumps (UAD) and Unauthorized Scrap Tire Accumulations (UASTA). Being primarily complaint driven, ADEM personnel investigate sites and obtain responsible party and property owner information. “Innocent landowners” remediation projects are awarded to private contractors through either the Solid Waste Fund or the Scrap Tire Fund. ADEM’s Right of Way (ROW) Program assists counties by reimbursing expenses associated with the collection, management, and disposal of scrap tires found along the right-of-ways. 54 out of the 67 counties in Alabama are already participating in the ROW Program.

Commissioner Ludgood asked members to bring forward ideas before the next meeting of what experts could be brought in and relevant topics that can be discussed as well as things of concern in your community that need to be addressed. The Tensaw-Apalachee Watershed Plan has started to be scoped out and we will be reaching out to counties farther up that watershed. Christian then showed a short educational video on Low Impact Development (LID) that was just completed. Municipalities can use this video to educate their city council or planning commissions on LID practices. Another announcement was a stormwater workshop for engineers and planners for Mobile County and the City of Mobile. On November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 a.m.