



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Science Advisory Committee Meeting**

**10 am – 12:00 pm January 17th, 2017
Killian Room, International Trade Center
250 N. Water Street Mobile, AL 36602**

Agenda

Welcome - review and approval of minutes from previous meeting

Fred Leslie, Alabama Department of Environmental Management (5 min)

Updates

Estuary Status and Trends progress report – what did we accomplish, what did we not?

Jason Kudulis, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (10 min)

ADEM surface water monitoring plan 2016-17

Fred Leslie and Lisa Huff, Alabama Department of Environmental Management (20 min)

Leveraging “Respect” for the Connect in an Infrastructure-centric Policy Environment

Mark Curran, Battelle; Laurel McGinley, Dewberry; Bryon Griffith, Community Resilience Redefined (35 min with questions)

Fowl River Marsh Health and Recovery Study

Dr. Just Cebrian, Dauphin Island Sea Land (35 min with questions)

Other Business

Schedule SAC meetings for the remainder of 2017 (10 min)

Adjourn



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Killian Room, International Trade Center, Mobile AL
January 17th, 2017**



The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Science Advisory Committee was established to bring area experts together to provide advice, guidance, and recommendations to ensure that the MBNEP activities will be conducted in a scientifically relevant and rigorous manner.

In attendance:

SAC Voting Members Present: Steve Ashby, Alex Beebe, Don Blancher, Kevin Calci, Just Cebrian, Renee Collini, Mike Dardeau, Steve Heath, Stephen Jones, Fred Leslie, John Mareska, Tom Strange, Tim Thibaut, Bret Webb

Phone-in Voting Members: Becky Allee

Proxy Voting Members: Dottie Byron for Ken Heck

Other Attendees: Matt Love, Amy Hunter, Stephanie Smallegan, Bethany Kraft, Stephen Jones, Angelica Morrisette, Evan Reid, Eliska Morgan, LaDon Swann, Patric Harper, Jerome Langlinois, Scott Jackson, Mark Ornelas, Ashley Campbell, Joie Horn, Clark Gerken,

MBNEP Staff: Jason Kudulis, Roberta Swann, Christian Miller, Tom Herder, Rick Frederick, Paul Lammers, Bethany Dickey

Takeaways

- CCMP Estuary Status and Trends Year Four goals and objectives were reviewed.
- SAC meeting dates for 2017: Wednesday, May 24 and Wednesday, August 23.
- Action Items:
 - Organize a meeting to further discuss the NFWF Fowl River Marsh Study. Seeking input from those experienced in this field, but will be open to anyone interested.
 - MBNEP will provide the Fowl River WMP, Marlon Cook's sediment study, and Dr. Cebrian's presentation prior to meeting.
 - MBNEP staff will resend a task list for the State of the Bay to SAC.

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Fred Leslie called the meeting to order at 10:00 CDT.

The meeting started with quick introductions around the room. Minutes from August 17th, 2016 were distributed prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Bret Webb and seconded by Renee Collini to approve the minutes. No objections to the motion.

The first portion of the meeting was a presentation on Year Four progress report for CCMP Estuary Status and Trends goals. Before getting started, Jason Kudulis introduced new MBNEP staff, Bethany Dickey and Paul Lammers. Mr. Kudulis then went over 2016 accomplishments, on-going tasks and items needing attention in 2017. Some 2016 Estuary Status and Trends highlights: Working with DISL, MBNEP datasets/metadata will continue to be made available through NCEI for widespread access (still ongoing); Need to continue to review data gaps and needs to facilitate increased monitoring; Report of SAV mapping was presented and published; Work on a Biological Condition Gradient Framework continues; State of the Bay team will set a meeting to discuss the timeline of deliverables in the first quarter of 2017. See included EST report for the full list of accomplishments and to-dos.

Next Mr. Fred Leslie presented on ADEM Surface Water Quality Monitoring. Alabama's aquatic biodiversity is #1 in North America. ADEM statewide monitoring was on a 5-year cycle, but is now more frequent. ADEM's 2016 Monitoring Plan has 39 locations in Baldwin and Mobile Counties and approximately 40 in 2017. An objective for the ADEM surface monitoring program is to determine background conditions in different waterbody types where they don't have as much data. There will be a good bit of work done on riverine wetlands in 2017. There are two real-time stations for siltation surveys in D'Olive and Tiawasee Creeks. Data is available on the USGS website. ADEM is currently doing biological testing as well in these locations. Chris Johnson will be invited to a SAC meeting to give a presentation once enough data is collected. Water quality reports from ADEM are being published on two year cycles. The water chemistry data from these reports is available within a couple of months, but biological data takes 1- 2 years to process. See Powerpoint presentation for further information.

Next Mr. Bryon Griffith, Mr. Mark Curran, and Ms. Laurel McGinley presented Anchoring "Respect" For The Connect in an Infrastructure-Centric Policy Environment. The concept utilizes a Triple Bottom Line approach by bringing in three components of sustainable return on investment: economic, social, and environmental. Essentially the idea involves leveraging traditional infrastructure funding sources for infrastructure projects but including aspects of restoration or "green" projects within these larger proposals that might otherwise not be funded. As a pilot, they suggest tackling a sub-watershed (D'Olive) that is currently under active implementation of an approved WMP. Mr. Curran suggested dredged material as a commodity by evaluating alternative uses (example: Long Island Sound). Dr. LaDon Swann commented that we can't cherry pick the services in restoration projects and you can't calculate the spiritual value of a saline marsh. Mrs. McGinley also discussed the National Mall Underground as an example of applied Triple Bottom Line. FEMA has a strict ROI on restoration projects of .75. See benefit cost analysis. WRDA Section 1122: Beneficial use of dredged material. New pilot programs will be established. Roberta asks if the projects have been selected yet. They have not, but should be implemented within 90 days of signing of the legislation.

The last presentation was Dr. Just Cebrian discussing the recently awarded NFWF GEBF Fowl River Watershed Restoration: Coastal Spits and Wetlands Project. His discussion primarily focused on the Marsh Health and Recovery Study portion. The Coastal Spits and Wetland Project stems from recommended management measures in the Fowl River Watershed Management Plan. The project has three parts, listed in no order 1. A Marsh Health and Recovery Study 2. Hydrological study of the watershed 3. Engineering assessment and design for Fowl River spits restoration. The Marsh Health and Recovery Study is needed to determine what is causing marsh degradation and to come up with experiments that show how the problem can be fixed. Dr. Cebrian provided four "proof-of-concept" restoration experiments. Control (no amendment to shoreline); breakwater; breakwater and filling; and breakwater, filling, and planting. See example pictures on presentation. Some initial thoughts and

questions posed by the SAC included: possibility of inoculating plant roots to accelerate growth, elevation profiles linked with the tide gauges; will the proposed 30 monitoring locations be an issue if on private land; typical marsh restoration takes seven years, is there a way to accelerate this study to know results sooner; differential subsidence a factor for loss of spits; use of geotechnical assessment before engineering and design; and what material will be used for breakwater. Roberta recommends organizing a meeting to thoroughly discuss the project. E-mail will go out with details.

Lastly, Jason selected dates for the remaining 2017 SAC meetings: May 24 and August 23.

At 12:04 Fred asked for a motion to adjourn. Renee Collini made the motion and Fred seconded it.