

**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Science  
Advisory Committee Meeting  
Killian Room, International Trade Center, Mobile AL  
February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

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*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: Alex Beebe, Bret Webb, Carol Dorsey, Fred Leslie, Kevin Calci, Marlon Cook, Mike Dardeau, Stephen Jones, Steve Ashby, Steve Heath, Tim Thibaut, Tom Strange

Phone-in Voting Members: Dennis Devries, Julien Lartigue

Proxy Voting Members: Dottie Byron for Ken Heck, Phone in Karsten Shein for Becky Allee

Other Attendees: Mark Ornelas, Chris Johnson, Kara Lankford, Matt Love, Rich Fulford, Kari Servold, Don Blanchard, Meg Goecker, Brittany Blomberg, Alison Robertson

MBNEP Staff: Renee Collini and Ben Brenner

### **Takeaways**

- Set the date for the next two meetings
- Update on the status of the recent harmful algal bloom (HAB), monitoring, and toxicity research
- Reviewed the new plan for surface water monitoring by ADEM
- Solidified the metadata and data management archival plan for the MBNEP – will use the DISL existing infrastructure and contributing one month of salary to Mimi Tzeng
- Reviewed the actions laid out in the CCMP for year 3 and developed a strategy to address them
- Action Items:
  - Develop working group to define “missing” data
  - Discuss potential remote sensing options at the next SAC meeting
  - Select and engage experts on ecosystem services

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Dr. Ruth Carmichael called the meeting to order at 10:09 CST.

Minutes from September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 were distributed prior to the meeting. Motion made by Dr. Alex Beebe to approve the minutes as they were, motion seconded by Fred Leslie. There were no objections to the motion.

The group reviewed the proposed future dates and there were no identified conflicts. Renee Collini will check in with the remaining voting members to ensure there are no current conflicts and send out a google calendar invite and add it to the MBNEP public calendar.

Carol Dorsey presented on the history of the monitoring and observations of red tide in coastal Alabama. She covered the events the lead up to the current system of observing coastal Alabama, the commonly found HABs species, the impacts from their blooms, current toxicity testing methods, and the ADPH HAB

response plan. There are many agencies, both state and federal, involved in the response. Carol then covered the most recent HAB bloom from late 2015, including where monitoring occurred and the current status. See Appendix 1. During question and answer a potential auto-sampler location was discussed. If such a sampler was deployed the current likely location is at Gulf State Pier.

Carol was followed up by Dr. Alison Robertson specifically on the toxicity of the blooms and the species commonly found in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Alison discussed her research, conducted in partnership with many agencies, organizations, and colleagues, on the HAB bloom in late 2015. She discussed the species present and the toxicity levels over time. She also covered the differences between the current Mouse Bioassay and some other options that her and other colleagues have been working on. See Appendix 1.

Fred Leslie presented on ADEM's proposed Surface Water Monitoring Plan for 2016. Fred had a brief coverage of the monitoring timeline and existing monitoring areas (Rivers and Streams, Rivers and Reservoirs, Fish Tissue, and Coastal Water Quality). Fred covered the change from a basin rotation method top a statewide monitoring program. Fred got more into detail of what that is going to look like for the coastal monitoring zones. Questions afterwards were focused on what they were sampling for in the fish tissue.

Renee Collini quickly covered the new Metadata and Data policy for the MBNEP. The new policy is that all metadata and data that are collected for or by the MBNEP will be stored in the Dauphin Island Sea Lab metadata archive. These data will be available publicly and will be searchable and the NEP encourages others to also register their metadata with the DISL archive. A metadata training will be occurring next month and Ruth requested that the dates for that be sent out.

Renee Collini skipped the recap of the watershed management plans to save time – an email with all of the information will be shared and a presentation that was to be presented is attached in Appendix 1.

The SAC moved into discussion of the goals and objectives outlined in the CCMP. For each objective actions were outlined. Each action was reviewed. These can be viewed in Appendix 2. For Objective One (Maintain/improve existing level of coastal monitoring) the two major points that need to be addressed this year are Identifying what data are not being collected and a remote sensing strategy. Moving forward a working group will be developed to review what data we are collecting and to discuss what else we might be missing, specifically considering stressor data as well as response data. The team current consists of: Tom Strange, Matt Love, Tim Thibaut, Mike Dardeau, Ruth Carmichael, Bret Webb, and Kevin Calci. The next SAC meeting will have some time devoted to learning more about what remote sensing data are available and how they can potentially fit into our monitoring needs as developed by the above working group. Tom Strange, Tim Thibaut, and Becky Allee will be approached about getting that ball rolling and getting the right experts into the room.

The next objective (Build a Biological Condition Gradient Framework for coastal Alabama), is making a lot of progress. From this work the SAC will need to write up the State of the Bay. Many of the SAC are not familiar with the document, which was last produced in 2008. Renee Collini will send out a digital copy of it for the SAC to review and become familiar with.

The objective for the third goal (Manage system for multiple services) has some progress through the work in D'Olive; however, the actions call for ecosystem service evaluation, which is not yet being addressed. There was discussion about needing to bring in the right experts for ecosystem services and to get a better understanding of what that means and how to go about monitoring and assessing ecosystem services. Names that were recommended to bring in were: David Yoskowitz, Cristina Carollo, Rich Fulford, and other researchers at EPA Gulf Breeze. Steve Ashby and Don Blanchard volunteered to help out with digging into ecosystem services. There was some discussion about the activity to predict changes in fish biomass being a goal, but not necessarily something that we have to address right away.

Ruth called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Everyone made a motion and everyone seconded it. Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm CST.