



Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Science Advisory Committee Meeting

**10 am – 12:00 pm August 17th, 2016
Killian Room, International Trade Center
250 N. Water Street Mobile, AL 36602**

Agenda

Welcome & review and approval of minutes from previous meeting

Ruth Carmichael, University of South Alabama/Dauphin Island Sea Lab

Align Around Areas of Concern

Updates

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Report and Sign-Off – Tim Thibaut, Barry A Vittor & Associates Inc.

Oil Spill Science Update – Larissa Graham, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium

Ecosystem Services in D'Olive – Renee Collini, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

State of the Bay – Renee Collini, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

Execute with/through Partners

Review Stream Index

Michele Goodfellow, University of West Florida

Remote Sensing of Marsh Health

NASA DEVELOP Program Young Scientists

Other Business

Adjourn



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Science
Advisory Committee Meeting
Killian Room, International Trade Center, Mobile AL
May 17th, 2016**



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: Bret Webb, Brian Dzwonkowski, John Lehrter, Kevin Calci, Marlon Cook, Mike Dardeau, Randy Shaneyfelt, Ruth Carmichael, Stephen Jones, Steve Ashby, Tim Thibaut

Phone-in Voting Members: Dottie Byron for Ken Heck

Proxy Voting Members: Bonnie Coleman for Fred Leslie

Other Attendees: Scott Phipps, Don Blancher, Larissa Graham, Evan Reid, Matt Love, Austin Clark, Tyler Lynn, Bethany Kraft, Patric Harper, Byron Webb, Jerome Langlinais, Sandy Page, Scott Jackson, Johan Leibens, Michele Goodfellow

MBNP Staff: Renee Collini, Ashley Camp, Amy Newbold, Christian Miller, Roberta Swann, Tom Herder, Jason Kudulis

Takeaways

- Updates on: ecosystem services in D'Olive, State of the Bay, oil spill science
 - Review and approval of SAV mapping report
 - Review of stream and riparian index buffer development: Needs some additional work before signing off
 - Action Items:
 - Need to have an ecosystem services working group meeting to determine next steps
 - Incorporate NASA DEVELOP project into State of the Bay and Freshwater Network tool
 - Set meeting date for early January
 - Need to have another meeting of the stream team to develop the stream and riparian buffer index
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Dr. Ruth Carmichael called the meeting to order at 10:02 CDT.

Minutes from May 25th, 2016 were distributed prior to the meeting. Motion made by Dr. Don Blancher and seconded by Mr. Marlon Cook to approve the minutes. No objections to the motion.

The first portion of the meeting was focused on updates. Mr. Tim Thibaut updated the SAC on the recently completed submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) mapping and change analysis. Aerial surveys in conjunction with validation through field sampling were utilized for mapping. Tim covered the species type at each

location and changes from the two previous sampling years compared to sampling from this year. This also included analysis of sampling at different times (summer vs fall). There was also a separate Tier 2 monitoring document looking at habitat condition in addition to habitat total acreage. See Appendix for presentation.

Both reports (previously distributed to the SAC) were put to the SAC for a vote. There was some discussion about the conclusion drawn at the end of the Tier 2 document recommending that Tier 2 sampling be focused in Perdido Bay system. Recommended language was put forth to change the recommendation from sampling in Perdido Bay to conducting research to determine where/why the best location for assessing human-caused stress vs natural effects. A motion was made by Dr. John Lehrter and seconded by Don to accept both Tier 1 and Tier 2 documents after changes made to the Tier 2 document. Motion passed with no nays or abstentions.

Next Ms. Larissa Graham, an oil spill extension specialist, presented on the opportunities to access and learn more about research focused around the oil spill and its impacts. She also presented data on 3 topics: habitat impacts, water quality impacts, impacts on living marine resources at various levels (individual, population, community). Oil spill research and data can be found at data.gulfresearchinitiative.org and research.gulfresearchinitiative.org. See presentation in Appendix.

Next Ms. Renee Collini updated the SAC on progress with previously tasked working groups: State of the Bay and Ecosystem Services. The Ecosystem Services Team met and has developed a preliminary set of parameters for D’Olive assessment and the State of the Bay team made excellent progress outlining topics and parameters and assigning responsible parties for each and time line for completion. Mr. Marlon Cook joined the ecosystem services team.

Time was then devoted to reviewing the recently completed stream index. Ms. Michele Goodfellow, a student at UWF, presented the metrics that were determined by the Stream Team (a subworking group as part of the Monitoring working group). This index is being developed from the metrics that Michele is sampling to track stream and riparian buffer health in D’Olive watershed. Michele noted that this was specific to restored urban streams. Work still needs to be done to correlate individual parameters to see if they all need to be included (specifically discussed was leaf litter with canopy cover). Don recommended that the nomenclature of the index be changed to a riparian index and not a stream index. He also recommended that the EPA stream habitat assessment be analyzed to look at overlap and see what else we might want to include – should also think about integration of the datasets. Recommendations were also made by Ruth to clearly define each parameter in the index narrative so it is clearer what is being discussed. Finally, discussion centered around refining the scoring process to ensure that these scores are actually reflective of the stream settings. See presentation in Appendix.

The last presentation was from Mr. Tyler Lynn and Mr. Austin Clark, young scientists with NASA’s DEVELOP program. They presented on work conducted to look at utilizing remote sensing for assessing wetland health across Mobile and Baldwin counties. The data demonstrated a decline in wetland health since 2000. Likely primary drivers of this decline was storm events and changes in water flow. Discussion focused around the availability of these data to incorporate in to the Freshwater Network Tool and in to the upcoming State of the Bay. See presentation in Appendix.

Ruth then announced that this was Renee Collini’s last meeting serving as staff support for the MBNEP and she will be leaving at the end of October. Renee will be developing in depth folders for each on-going project so that whoever takes over will have an easier time of it.

Finally, given the amount of activities that are coming up (Bays and Bayous, CERF, RAE, etc.) it was decided that while the working groups will continue to meet this will be the last SAC meeting of the year, but a

doodle poll will go out later this year to set a date for January so the SAC can hit the ground running next year.

At 12:06 Ruth asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Randy Shaneyfelt made the motion and Don seconded it.