Coastal Alabama Restoration and Environmental Management: 
A Watershed Approach 
Dauphin Island Sea Lab 
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The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

Our mission is to promote the wise stewardship of the water quality and living resources of Alabama’s estuaries

- Funded by U. S. EPA, State of Alabama, and local governments and private interests
- One of 28 “nationally significant estuaries” in the United States
- In existence for 21 years
- Guided by a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP)
- Goal is to protect what people value about living on the Alabama Coast
## The Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

### Six Values
- Access
- Beaches/Shorelines
- Fish and Wildlife
- Heritage
- Resilience
- Water Quality

### Stressed Habitats
- Streams, Rivers, Riparian Buffers
- Freshwater wetlands
- Intertidal marshes and flats

### Strategic Approach

#### Measuring Status and Trends
- Baseline and System Monitoring

#### Ecosystem Restoration
- Watershed Planning
- Community and Environmental Restoration Projects

#### Building Capacity
- Improve State and local governance
- Improve Environmental Management/Tools

#### Promoting Stewardship
- Citizen Awareness and Involvement
Goals of the watershed planning process...

- **Improve water quality** to support healthy populations of fish and shellfish
- **Improve habitats** necessary to support healthy populations of fish and shellfish
- **Protect continued customary uses of biological resources** to preserve culture, heritage and traditional ecological knowledge of the watershed
- **Improve watershed resiliency** to sea level rise and changing climate impacts
- **Expand opportunities for community access** to the open spaces and waters of the watershed
Key Elements of Planning Process

• **Build Partnerships**, including identification of key stakeholders and solicitation of community input and concerns

• **Characterize the Watershed**, including creation of a natural and cultural resource inventory, identification of causes and sources of impairments, identification of data gaps and estimation of pollutant loads

• **Set Goals and Identify Solutions** including determination of pollutant reduction loads needed and management measures to achieve goals

• **Design and Implement Program**

Goals

• Restore freshwater wetlands, streams and rivers, and intertidal marshes and flats, and

• Establish /institutionalize collaborative watershed management practices for each HUC 12 watershed
Bayou La Batre Planning

- Scope has been expanded to include West Fowl River & Dauphin Island

- Major issues identified in the Bayou include healthy fishery, resilience, access

- Initial management measures
  - Safe Harbor locations
  - SSOs/Stormwater infrastructure
  - Bacteria & litter mitigation
  - Recreational access trail
Bayou La Batre
Dauphin Island
West Fowl River
Mississippi Sound

• Stakeholder Interests
• Economic Interests
• Ecological Nexus
Over the next several months:

- Meeting with Stakeholder groups
- Establish a Watershed Plan Steering Committee
- Mississippi Sound Public Meeting (January 2017)
- Written and online surveys
- US Army Corps and USGS scientific data for Barrier Island Study incorporated into plan
- Develop Management Measures, regulatory framework, financing opportunities, citizen involvement opportunities for implementation
Questions?

Thank you.