



**MOBILE BAY NATIONAL
ESTUARY PROGRAM**

CCMP WORKPLAN

FISCAL YEAR 2007 (YR 11)

May 30, 2006

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PREFACE

This document provides annual financial and task-based information to meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Estuary Program Work Plan requirements. The focus of this Work Plan continues to be the implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), approved by USEPA on April 22, 2002.

On June 3, 2005, Suzanne Schwartz, Director of the Oceans and Coastal Protection Division of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued guidance for the development of the FY 05-06 Work Plans and related reporting requirements. This guidance applies to FY 07 work Plans as well. New assistance agreement policies include:

EPA Order N. 5700.7-- Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements

This order ensures that EPA assistance agreements are results-oriented and aligned with EPA's strategic goals, such that, all annual Work Plans

- be aligned with the goals and objectives of EPA's Strategic Plan and the Governments Performance and Results Act;
- included well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well defined outcomes.

EPA Order No. 5700.5A1- Policy for Competition and Assistance Agreements

In the event that Mobile Bay National Estuary Program competes for a portion of its CWA Section 320 funds, it must comply with all Competition Order requirements.

EPA Order No. 5700.8- EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards

This pre-award order establishes controls for determining the administrative and programmatic capability of non-profit organizations applying for EPA assistance agreements and enhances post-award oversight of those agreements. The pre-award order applies to all awards to non-profit organizations made on or after March 31, 2005. There is a \$200,000 threshold above which a pre-award review for administrative capability is required.

This is the **Eleventh Annual Work Plan for the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP)**. It describes the work items to be carried out for Fiscal Year 2007. It also includes continuing tasks that are part of prior grants (CE-98405902-4 and CE 97491303-2) as well as projects funded through other external grant sources.

The FY2007 Plan is the first year of a new three year EPA grant. This Work Plan provides for tasks that support implementation of actions identified in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). The Management and Program Administration sections support all CCMP Action Plans and the continuance of support for the Management Conference.

The organization of this work plan is designed to allow easy comparison with the MBNEP CCMP. This organization allows a reader to quickly understand how the work items proposed for this year will contribute to the accomplishment of CCMP objectives. A review of the tables included is key to understanding this Work Plan. These tables taken as a whole satisfy the requirements of the funding guidance. Table 1: Budget Status of Existing Projects provides budget, expenditure and balance information on activities in all open EPA grants. Table 2: Narrative of Existing Projects provides further detail about those projects that are in progress. Table 3: New Projects Budget provides budgetary information on projects to be initiated this coming year. Table 4: Local Entity Support provides information on external funds awarded to further activities of the CCMP. Table 5: Match Sources provides detail information about which activities have generated match and what type of match is expected. Table 6: Administration Budget provides detailed information on the program office funding for the next year. Table 7: Travel Summary provides a log of all

travel activities of program staff. Finally, Table 8: CCMP Activities by cost category breaks funding out by cost categories stipulated by EPA.

The MBNEP Program Office is located at 4172 Commanders Drive, Mobile, Alabama on the Brookley Campus of the University of South Alabama. As of March 1, 2002, the Dauphin Island Sea Lab / Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium (DISL) became the grantee. This change in grantee was made pursuant to the direction of the Management Conference and the particulars are detailed in a three party Memorandum of Agreement between the State of Alabama, DISL and the MBNEP. The activities outlined in this work plan were approved by the Management Committee on April 20, 2006 and by the Policy Committee on April 27, 2006 and is available to the public upon request.

Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Overview

Purpose, Goals, Objectives

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program's (MBNEP) mission is to promote wise stewardship of water quality and living resources of the Mobile Bay and Tensaw Delta. Established as part of the Clean Water Act and funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency, MBNEP serves as a catalyst for activities of estuary stakeholders, helping to build community based organizational capacity for sound resource management and leveraging commitment and investment to ensure the estuary's sustainability.

MBNEP's purpose is to encourage a community-based approach to watershed management by empowering citizens, grassroots organizations, government agencies, and educational establishments to work together to address local environmental challenges. MBNEP's objectives are to engage these groups in the development of a comprehensive conservation and management plan, act as a catalyst to leverage greater funding for sustainable estuary activities, and to educate the communities surrounding the estuary about the how to best treat the Mobile Bay and its surrounding watersheds to ensure their protection and conservation for our lifetime and beyond.

MBNEP works within a set of guiding principles to maximize its effectiveness in promoting estuary health.

Those that live it know it- Those citizens, fishermen, boaters, scientists, hunters and others have a unique insight into the environmental challenges we face, what works, and what doesn't. This plan capitalizes on their insight.

Economic opportunities must be available- Our coast is an economic engine, creating well over three billion dollars in wealth for our state each year through such activities as trade through the Port of Mobile, commercial fishing, tourism, hunting and coastal homebuilding. This plan incorporates economic impacts and promotes smart growth practices where ever and when ever possible.



Environmental Stewardship efforts depend on each other- The Mobile Estuary benefits from the efforts of many diverse partnerships, collaborations, consortiums and associations. These groups of disparate interests come together, in part through the MBNEP's watershed based management process; to develop comprehensive solutions to challenge that threaten the estuary's sustainability. This plan promotes this "watershed based management" cooperation, acknowledging the need for multiple purpose programming.

It happens in the river, in the sea, and on the street- Involvement of citizens in carrying out environmental activities aimed at improving the Bay and its watersheds is paramount to ensuring the long-term health and vitality of the Mobile estuary. This plan encourages citizen input, involvement, and education, recognizing that ultimately, citizens must be actively engaged in balancing the many uses of the Bay so that we can preserve its unique natural resources for all of our needs.

Both in the analysis of data and the development of this Work Plan, MBNEP has remained acutely aware of the budget constraints under which the State, Counties, and municipalities must operate. To this extent, the priorities and activities have been formed to give maximum weight to feasible projects.

Federal Resources

EPA Allocation and Non Federal Matching Share

Each year the MBNEP receives an allocation from EPA to support activities geared toward achieving the objectives of the CCMP. The allocation for the Year 11 Work Plan (2006-2007) is \$492,000. EPA requires that this allocation be matched with non-federal dollars in a 1:1 ratio, or an additional \$492,000 in cash or in-kind valuation. This match may be in the form of cash investments, donated property valuation, or in-kind equipment, professional, or volunteer services (see Match section). The combined total amount of resources that will be available to further implement the CCMP will be valued at \$984,000 for Year 11.



Gulf of Mexico Program (GOMP)

The Gulf of Mexico Program facilitates collaborative actions to protect, maintain, and restore the health and productivity of the Gulf of Mexico in ways consistent with the economic well-being of the Region. To date, MBNEP has received over \$540,324 in Gulf of Mexico Program (GOMP) grants to support a water management strategy for Eight Mile Creek, wetlands resource measurement baseline development, SAV gardening, Oyster gardening programs and the creation of a strategic assessment of priority habitats. *MBNEP anticipates applying for GOMP funding to conduct additional wetland and or SAV assessments during fiscal year 2007.*



Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP)

In fiscal year 2001, the US congress authorized the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) to assist states and local communities in mitigating the impacts of Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas development and production. Alabama received a one time grant of approximately \$21,000,000, of which MBNEP received \$390,000 to fund an analysis of fish data, air deposition sample analysis, a study of Living Resources in the Delta, and Mobile Bay water monitoring.



In 2005, congress re-authorized funding for this program. The CIAP, which was established under section 384 of the Energy Policy Act (EPACT) of 2005, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to distribute \$250 million annually to these six Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas producing states in fiscal years 2007 through 2010. The EPACT of 2005 requires that all CIAP funds be used to directly conserve, restore, enhance or protect renewable natural resources. The Minerals Management Service projects that the final guidelines for CIAP funding will be made available by fall 2006.

The State of Alabama will receive funding from this program that far exceeds the \$21,000,000 awarded in the last round. MBNEP is currently working with county governments as well as the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources- Coastal Section to identify and develop projects.

Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant Consortium (MASGC)

The Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant Consortium is dedicated to activities that foster the conservation and sustainable development of coastal and marine resources in Mississippi and Alabama. Sea Grant is NOAA's primary university-based program in support of coastal resource use and conservation. The MASGC is an important partner to MBNEP in implementing many CCMP actions. MASGC provides technical expertise, program development assistance, and valuable research and is a leader of many initiatives related to CCMP objectives.



NOAA Restoration Grants/ Gulf of Mexico Foundation (GOMF)

The NOAA Community-based Restoration Program administered by the Gulf of Mexico Foundation funds citizen-driven habitat restoration projects which benefit living marine resources and foster local stewardship throughout the Gulf of Mexico region. In 2003, MBNEP received funding for derelict crab trap removal and creation of shellfish habitat (\$42,981), in part used to support oyster gardening. In 2004, MBNEP received a Five Star



Grant (\$9,100) to further support our oyster gardening program. *MBNEP will seek funding through this program in its 2007 year to institute a restoration project for Isle aux Herbes.*

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Participation (USACE)

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) actively participates in the implementation of many of the actions of the CCMP. USACE has developed, or is in the process of developing Preliminary Restoration Plans (PRP), valued at approximately \$10,000 each, for two separate habitat restoration projects. Once both of these PRPs are complete, USACE will request Section 204 funding. These projects are both estimated to cost almost \$1 million. A combined planning and design report, valued at over \$80,000 is already in progress for the DI Causeway Restoration and USACE has secured \$439,000 to begin construction. In addition, USACE has partnered with MBNEP to restore the marsh area at Isle of Herbes. With the USACE PRP complete, MBNEP is in the process of preparing a living resources characterization of the island to assist with the corps combined planning and development phase. Another project Helen Wood Park (along the Dauphin Island Parkway) to break wave energy, thus reducing erosion has been delayed by USACE. USACE participation in CCMP activities represents a crucial resource for moving projects forward.

State Resources

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources State Lands Division (ADCNR)

Because the ADCNR has a long term interest in Alabama’s Coastal Resources and the statutory responsibility for the conservation, management, and protection of these resources through its State Lands Division, Marine Resources Division, Wildlife and Fresh Water Fisheries Division, State Parks Division and particularly through the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program, it has entered into a memorandum of agreement to provide annual funding to MBNEP as part of it’s non-federal match requirement, as an investment toward implementation of the CCMP. MBNEP has received \$240,000 (\$60,000 per year) for the past four years and anticipates a continuation and potentially an increase of this funding stream. In addition, through its various divisions, ADCNR has provided funding for Habitat Mapping, workshops, newsletters, Isle aux Herbes Restoration Planning, DI Public Access Feasibility study, wetlands status and trends and others on the order of \$340,000 to date. MBNEP anticipates continued project based support from ADCNR.



Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)

MBNEP met with the head of ADECA on March 17, 2006 to request additional State funding support for the program. Initial discussions were positive and initial discussions with our legislative delegation have been supportive. It is anticipated that ADECA will include MBNEP in its annual general fund budget request in FY2007.

Local Resources

The following local governmental entities provide continuing financial assistance to the MBNEP on an annual basis to support the implementation of the CCMP. Although these communities only allocate funding annually, MBNEP anticipates expanded support from these and other coastal communities in the future. At present MBNEP is cultivating Spanish Fort, Dauphin Island, Gulf Shores and Foley.

City of Mobile-	\$ 32,000	City of Daphne-	\$ 3,000
City of Fairhope	\$ 3,000	Mobile County	\$26,500
Baldwin County	\$17,000 (\$7,000 increase)		

Private Funding

During the Year 11 program year, MBNEP anticipates developing a stronger private sector funding based as a result of a Finance Committee establishment. The goal of this committee is to raise \$50,000 from private sources as a local investment (match) toward the implementation of the CCMP. In addition, the Nature Conservancy has given \$5,000 for delta hydrology/Causeway study and is active with habitat conservation planning and project efforts.

In-kind Contributions

MBNEP depends on volunteer support and local contributions of other in-kind services to achieve program success. On a yearly basis, in-kind contributions account for over half of the non-federal share of that MBNEP is required to raise as investment in implementing the CCMP. This in-kind support is generated from volunteer labor hours related to activities including but not limited to oyster gardening, crab trap monitoring, and participation in area environmental events. Other in-kind services include, use of city owned machinery, the value of land donated for conservation purposes, and private donations to cover expenses incurred for events and activities carried out by local grassroots organizations and sponsored by MBNEP.

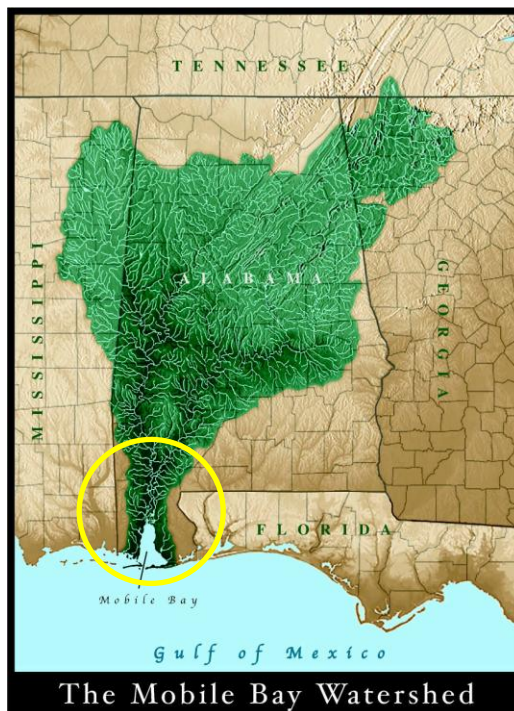
Geographic Distribution

Although the actual watershed for Mobile Bay encompasses more than three quarters of the State of Alabama and portions of Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee, MBNEP’s primary target area is limited to southern Alabama, including all of Mobile and Baldwin Counties, from the eastern edge of coastal Alabama its western coastal border. In addition it extends seaward to the three-mile state jurisdictional limit. MBNEP’s target area also includes Mississippi Sound, up to the Mississippi/Alabama boarder. Major waterways include the Tombigbee, Tensaw, Mobile, Alabama, Dog and Fowl rivers; and the Chickasaw, Norton, Three Mile, and Eight Mile creeks.

Community Partnerships

The Management Conference of the MBNEP is composed of leading representatives of local, state and federal governmental agencies, representatives of all resource management organizations, and a wide variety of interested citizens and community stakeholders interested in protecting and conserving the living resource and habitat base of the Mobile Estuary.

These community leaders set direction for the MBNEP as well as advise on the routine operation of the Program office. A key principle of the Management Conference is to coordinate and cooperate with other ongoing resource management activities to avoid unnecessary duplication. *In this regard, the program office plays a major role in coordinating estuary projects and outreach activities, thus providing a more far-reaching benefit than that of simply CCMP project management.* This cooperation and coordination is key to successful CCMP implementation.



MBNEP Goals and Accomplishments

Program Accomplishments and Transferable Success Stories 2005-2006

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program is currently managing two other NEP/EPA Grants. The first grant represents activities funded from FY2003 and prior years EPA allocations (Grant #400). The second grant combines Year 8 (FY2004), Year 9 (2005) and Year 10 (2006) (Grant #417). The first grant is nearing completion and will be closed out in June, 2007. The second grant will be closed out by June 2008.

Steady and substantial progress is on going for these grants and expenditures are maintaining pace with progress. Due to the fact that the MBNEP staff is currently working on projects identified in both work plans, the following section, *Programmatic Goals Achieved during 2005-2006* will address both grants.

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program had some notable successes this year. These include:

Strategic Planning

During the past program year, MBNEP has been engaged in an extensive strategic planning effort to focus its limited resources on areas of the CCMP most critical to sustaining the estuary and to develop the organizational structure necessary to best implement action. With a goal of revitalizing efforts already underway to implement the CCMP, MBNEP worked with stakeholders to revisit CCMP objectives and action plans, evaluate gaps in implementation and develop a strategy that included priorities for implementation, updating of objectives, and modifications to the CCMP as needed. Such activities included:

Customer Satisfaction Assessment - As part of citizen input into the strategic plan, a customer satisfaction assessment was conducted of the MBNEP's Management Conference (the Policy and Management Committees) to determine what worked well and where improvements were needed in operating the program. Results included educating members of the Management Conference on the CCMP and how it relates to them, improving relationships with the community particularly with municipal and county governments, and improving public outreach and education.

Coastal Planning Summit- Citizen input also came from over 100 of Mobile and Baldwin Counties' top leaders, when they came together at the Coastal Planning Summit to identify priorities and opportunities for action to safeguard our coastal environment (October, 2005.) Needs identified during this meeting included **governmental changes** including regional home rule, **regional planning** that employs ecosystem based, holistic and/or smart growth concepts, better **data management** practices related to land use/land cover and GIS analysis/evaluation, **resource management** related to fisheries, invasive species, and upstream monitoring, **economic development activities** to support a sustainable environment, **transportation alternatives** and **public access** opportunities, **protection, restoration and preservation of habitats and flora/fauna** unique to this area, an **educated community**, knowledgeable about and holding great value for our unique coastal environment and quality of life, and a community with the **highest water quality** obtainable reflecting the value placed on our greatest coastal asset: our water.

Foot Note: During January 2006, MBNEP held a half day meeting, *Developing an Infrastructure for Improving Water Quality: Building the Case for Constitutional Change*, to follow up with one of many issues identified at the Coastal Planning Summit. Nearly seventy people came together to listen to Mr. Buddy Sharpless, Association of County Commissions of Alabama, Mr. Butch Ellis, County Attorney for Shelby County, Hon. Lindsay Allison, Chair of the Shelby County Commission, and Hon. Bradley Byrne, State Senator, as they spoke about how to establish greater levels of Home Rule locally. The common denominator derived from the meeting was that overall, regional comprehensive planning is necessary to develop more sustainable zoning for development along the coast.

Joint Management Conference CCMP Prioritization Workshop- Finally, in January of 2006, a CCMP Evaluation Workshop was held for members of the Management Conference to assess CCMP Action progress and develop priorities for its continued implementation. During this workshop, modifications, additions and deletions to the CCMP were recommended based on the existing components of the document plus any other priorities that were identified during the Coastal Planning Summit.

The MBNEP Strategic Plan is currently being compiled based on the information gathered from the above activities. This plan will be available for comment during the summer of 2006 with the hope of it becoming active by October 1, 2006. *The Year 11 Action plan is consistent with the priorities established in that strategy.*

Water Quality Monitoring

Sub-Estuary Monitoring During the program year, MBNEP continued its commitment of support to monitoring activities throughout the estuary. Through a contract with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, water quality assessments of five sub-estuaries along the perimeter of Mobile Bay are being undertaken. ADEM monitored for parameters including but not limited to in situ water chemistry, turbidity, ammonia, DRP (ortho-phosphates), chlorophyll a, and pathogens. In addition sediment sampling was conducted for approximately 15 metals of concern, PAHs and pesticides. During the current program period, the Bon Secour Estuary was completed and the Bayou La Batre Estuary monitoring began.



Real Time Monitoring In addition to the sub-estuary monitoring, a major accomplishment was the re-establishment of the real time monitor of hydrological and meteorological conditions at Meaher Park was completed after its destruction during hurricanes Ivan and Katrina. This site is now up and running and information generated can be viewed at www.mymobilebay.com. This website, in development, will be connected to a larger network of stations as part of the Gulf Coast Ocean Observing System. Information to be made available to the public will include research reports, maps, and other information.

Eight Mile Creek The MBNEP made strides in moving forward on a project to identify potential and actual pathogen inputs to segments of Eight Mile Creek and Gum Tree Branch. During this period, ADEM collected two geo-means during the months of December and January. Data from these monitoring activities show that all problems/exceedences have been found in the Gum Tree watershed or in the mouth of Eight Mile Creek. During the reporting period, problems were encountered with the collection of information including- number of septic systems, storm and sewer pipe systems for Prichard and Chickasaw, AL. Efforts to obtain this information were thwarted due to a pending lawsuit against the City of Prichard. However, project managers are developing alternative methods for getting at sensitive information and are confident that the project will continue to move forward.

Coastal Alabama Clean Water Partnership MBNEP entered into contract with the Alabama Clean Water Partnership to host the Coastal Alabama chapter. This program works toward clean water integrity throughout Alabama through pilot projects and outreach. This award parallels current CCMP activities and provides an opportunity to work outside the existing MBNEP program boundaries. Current programs include event participation, stream restoration activities, and development of a bacterial source tracking workgroup. The project is part of the State of Alabama's CWA Section 319 implementation strategy.

Supporting Living Resources

Historical Fisheries Data Study During the reporting period, a historical analysis of 20 years of fisheries data was completed with a final draft of the report to be published within the next month. The preliminary results of this analysis indicated that there has been no significant change in fish populations throughout the coastal Alabama. However, the analysis did suggest additional sampling of brown shrimp and blue crab to confirm trends in their populations.

Historical SAV Study Another major accomplishment during the past year was the completion of a study of SAV Historical Coverage and Changes (since 1940). In 2002, MBNEP commissioned the first aerial photographic baseline study for current SAV coverage in Coastal Alabama (Photos can be accessed at <http://gulfsai.usgs.gov/>). Aerial true color digital orthophotoquads were produced for the areas along the AL coast. Certain photographic signatures indicated various plant species and once identified in aerials, interpretation was “ground-truthed” by physically checking the plants in the field. Maps of SAV coverage were then created. In a follow-up study completed this past year, historical aerial photosets of Mobile County from 1940 and Baldwin County from 1955 and 1966 were obtained to compare to the 2002 photosets. Findings of this study included a decrease in SAV acres in Mobile County from 1924 acres to just 855 acres between 1940 and 2002. Most of the loss was south of Dog River, and 691 fewer acres along the western shore. Baldwin County analysis revealed a disturbing 88.3% loss between 1955 and 2002. The 1955 photoset revealed SAV from just north of Point Clear south to Bon Secour Bay. In 2002, no SAV were identified from that area. Between 1966 and 2002, the northeastern shore of Mobile Bay lost 328 acres or a 71% decrease. This report is currently available on <http://www.mobilebaynep.com>.

Oyster Gardening The MBNEP completed its 5th year and second with the impact of a major hurricane. Roughly 75% of materials and oysters were lost due to Hurricane Katrina from 50 volunteers. Despite this 11,000 oysters were placed onto local reefs. Volunteers also began receiving a quarterly newsletter and data was available on the mobilebaynep.com website. The MBNEP is working local AUMERC and MASGC partners to transfer the program operation completely to them for FY2007.

Assessing Critical Habitats

Emergy Analysis In 2004, MBNEP contracted with TAI/Strand Associates to conduct a study that would provide an analysis of economic values across a wide variety of resources, both man-made and natural such as wetlands, using the formal process of Emergy Analysis. Emergy is a measure of the available energy required, directly and indirectly to make a product or service. It is a way of calculating the value of both natural and man-made items on an equal basis and indicates their true contribution to the human economy. Emergy analysis can be used in the design of



sustainable development at all scales of the environment. The Emergy analysis of wetlands, coastal zones and their restoration, and of entire watersheds may lead to the development of sustainable designs in harmony with both man and nature. The cost benefit analysis of large-scale environmental restoration projects can be accomplished using the tools provided by Emergy analysis. This project, which was completed during the winter of 2005, is focused on wetlands particularly in the area of Fish River in Baldwin County. This pilot project serves as a valuable reference for local valuation and characterization of wetland resources in our coastal area.

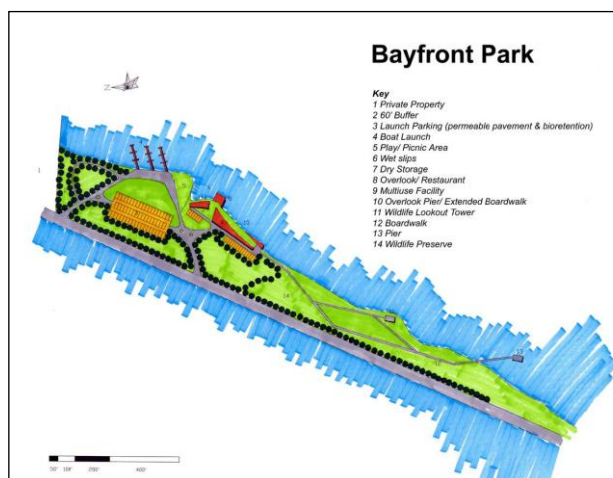
Priority Habitats Atlas In 2004 MBNEP was awarded a grant by the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program to conduct a strategic assessment of habitats throughout Mobile and Baldwin Counties that would identify

priority sites for acquisition and restoration. At the same time, The Nature Conservancy of Alabama (TNC) was going through an internal process to identify priority habitats. Recognizing their common objectives, MBNEP and TNC decided to partner and conduct a one-year conservation planning effort using this ecosystem based process to focus on the following conservation areas: Perdido River Corridor, the Gulf Islands, the Mobile Bay & Delta, and the Grand Bay. This effort resulted in the identification of 17 priority sites for acquisition (or other conservation protection options) and over 30 other sites/ habitat types where restoration and/or enhancement are considered necessary.

During the reporting period, these sites were put in an “Atlas” to be used by governments and other community organizations to more effectively guide resource management activities in coastal Alabama. Some state and local agencies and organizations have already acquired or are already working to acquire certain sites on the list. Similarly, restoration activities are underway or being planned in a number of the identified areas.

Examining Human Use Issues

Public Access Feasibility Study During the month of July, 2005, Auburn landscape architecture students designed and conducted a survey to count the numbers of boat trailers utilizing public access points on Dauphin Island and along the DI Causeway. In addition to the count, they asked questions to assess people’s feelings about alternative launch/fishing sites. This data was analyzed and graphics were prepared to depict different scenarios.



In March, 2006 (project was delayed due to Katrina) MBNEP and DISL hosted a public meeting to share the results of the student’s work and to seek further citizen input on potential public access sites throughout Mobile County. During the meeting, each of the following locations was discussed: Bay Front Park, Dauphin Island Airport, Heron Bay Cutoff, Dauphin Island Causeway and Theodore Industrial Canal. Follow up from this meeting resulted in the planning and implementation of a public access improvement project at Heron Bay Cutoff with future plans to improve Bay Front Park.

Hydrological Modification Impact Study on the Causeway Beginning in 2004 and culminating in 2005, a committed partnership of scientists and hydrologists from the DISL, the MBNEP, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Alabama Power Co., the Scenic Causeway Coalition and Mobile Bay Watch, Inc. /Mobile BayKeeper performed a study to more accurately gauge the impact of the structures on the productivity of the Delta. This included its freshwater and brackish water estuarine components and the relative impacts of each of the structural modifications by using an extensive battery of monitors and sampling techniques. The study was performed to determine whether or not alternations in freshwater flows upstream and impediments to salt water movement at the mouth of the causeway have affected the zone of fresh and saltwater mixing. This study pointed out several crucial needs for research, to further clarify the relationship between environmental conditions and the magnitude and extent of movement of salt water into the Delta including but not limited to further study of: an analysis of the durations and spatial extent of salinity levels in the Delta; use of non-linear regression methods to further evaluate the thresholds above or below which inflow magnitudes, Bay Specific Conductance, and Bay water surface elevation affect salt water movement into the Delta; the effects of the duration of low-inflow conditions; effects of meteorological conditions and events on salinity in the Bay and Delta; and whether seasonal variation in environmental conditions affect the patterns and extent of salt water movement into the Delta.

D'Olive Creek Accelerated erosion within the watersheds of D'Olive and Tiwassee creeks in Daphne and Spanish Fort, Alabama and the increased sediment inputs into D'Olive Bay and Mobile Bay, have served as a "poster child" for the impacts of increased storm water run-off and sediment loading in coastal Alabama since the mid-1970's. Due to the negative environmental impacts resulting from its development as one of Alabama's then largest subdivisions, the CCMP includes an action to conduct a comprehensive biological, hydrologic, and engineering study of D'Olive Bay that would develop a stepwise strategy for returning the area to a more natural hydrologic condition.

In July 2003, MBNEP began a process to provide a community forum to review erosion, sedimentation and flooding in these watersheds; establish a baseline understanding of the human and natural processes at work; and identify perceived problems, causes, and contributors. This process included representatives of 14 federal, state and local groups but lacked necessary political and property owner support to take necessary actions. In late 2005, after recognition that solution to the problem involved the need for a regional approach, local political and property owner representatives again approached MBNEP regarding leadership of a renewed effort to take action. MBNEP has since that date been actively leading efforts to begin the systematic and scientific approach to addressing these non point source issues.

During the reporting period, the above group began a systematic approach to addressing erosion and sedimentation issues associated with three contributing streams as well as the current partially-filled condition of the lake in Lake Forest subdivision. Where previous examinations began and ended with consideration of the impacts on the lake, there is now a widespread recognition that erosion and sediment loading throughout the watersheds of D'Olive Creek, Tiwassee Creek, and even Yancey Branch as well as the loss of the lake as a functioning retention system are all contributors to the increased sediment loadings into Mobile Bay. Systematically addressing this larger regional problem will result in solutions for more localized problems such as the lake condition.

The efforts of this task group have already produced results: The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) re-ordered its priorities to initiate a long-needed watershed assessment in October of this year, two years in advance of previous plans. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs' (ADECA) Office of Water Resources stepped up and volunteered to supplement ADEM's assessment with additional streambed analyses. In addition, several short-term actions are already in progress. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service/Baldwin County Soil and Water Conservation District is working through the City of Daphne on several local projects including two in the Lake Forest Subdivision for stream clean-out and restoration using funding from the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. These two projects total over \$176,000. Another project in Daphne targets degraded conditions in Yancey Branch by restoring its original streambed. Similarly, two projects with the City of Spanish Fort for correcting erosion problems in the affected watershed total another \$90,000. These projects are expected to begin within the next month.

Regional Storm-water Management In March 2004, the City of Fairhope and MBNEP jointly hosted a local workshop by the National Association of Flood and Storm Water Management Agencies (NAFSMA). NAFSMA represents municipal and public agencies responsible for management of storm-water run off nationwide. Ms. Susan Gilson, Executive Director, and the Director of the Denver, Colorado Storm Water Management Authority presented experiences with Storm Water Management issues and the effectiveness of regional associations. Dr. Andy Reese of AMEC Consultant Engineers presented programs and organizational requirements to manage all aspects of storm water run off and reviewed N.P.D.S. phase II regulations as they impact storm water run off control.

Since this meeting the City of Fairhope, through its Environmental Advisory Board and special commissions established by the Mayor (such as the Blue Water Commission), have been grappling with ways to control and manage storm water runoff. In late 2005, they invited Dr. Reese back to the area and began examining the steps to create a storm water management authority. The City of Fairhope asked the MBNEP to

participate in these discussions. Since this time, the City has, with the support of the MBNEP and other organizations, been successful in gaining county and other municipality support for conducting a feasibility analysis and developing an outline plan for creating a regional Storm Water Management Authority in Baldwin County.

In April 2006, Mayor Kant of Fairhope asked for the support of all other Mayors in the county to examine this issue. At present, plans call for the MBNEP to issue a contract to AMEC to conduct this analysis. The project would be funded by the municipalities, the county and the MBNEP. The plan would include numerous community workshops to gauge public acceptance, development of draft legislation and creation of a step by step plan of action for creating a regional management authority. MBNEP will manage this contract using a team from each of the participating municipalities.

Coastal Community Planning- MBNEP is currently participating with MASGC and ADCNR to assist the Town of Dauphin Island with the creation of a Long term Strategic Plan to ensure the long-term community, economic and environmental sustainability of the island. This plan will address infrastructure; economic opportunities including tourism; housing needs/opportunities; recreation, public access, and beach stabilization; environmental sustainability and smart growth land management and government financing and revenue streams.

Educating the Public about the Estuary

Estuary Live In 2005 the MBNEP partnered with the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Moss Point, Mississippi to conduct a live internet program, “Estuary Live”. The program’s original location was at the Grand Bay Reserve but due to Hurricane Katrina, the live site was relocated to Dauphin Island, Alabama. Due to Hurricane Rita the live site was once again relocated to the office of the MBNEP in Mobile, Alabama. Despite the difficulties, the program received over 250 questions from 44 schools with roughly 225 schools registered to watch the program.

Workshops For the 2005 / 2006 fiscal year the MBNEP held three workshops by May 2006 with three more in the planning stages. One series of workshops is called, “Community Leader Training Program” targeting elected and appointed municipal officials. Topics in these programs have been storm-water management, new onsite sewer regulations, and alternative wastewater treatment methods. This program is co-hosted by the Alabama Coastal Foundation and the Weeks Bay Reserve Coastal Training Program. Other workshops included Bacterial Source Tracking with the Ocean Conservancy, and a teacher workshop on non-point source pollution solutions that will be held in June. In addition a regulatory issues workshop on storm-water, waste water, and on-site sewer regulations as well as waste water management alternatives will be examined by the Alabama Marine Resources Division is planned for fall, 2006. Attendance at these programs runs between 30 and 60 participants.

Events While some events were cancelled due to Hurricane Katrina, the MBNEP facilitated, organized, and/or participated in a number of events including: Household Hazardous Waste Amnesty Day, Mobile Regional Science Fair, Bay Area Earth Day, Coastal Kids Quiz, International Migratory, Bird Fest, Discovery Day, Coastal Alabama Birdfest, Derelict Crab Trap Recovery Program, Women in Science - Expanding Your Horizons, The Dog Paddle, Baldwin County Groundwater Festival, Environmental Studies Center Open House as well as others. Attendance varied widely from 300 to nearly 5000 participants.



Over 1000 cars were processed in the amnesty day, over

400 traps were collected in the derelict event, and more than 200 students participated in the Regional Science Fair.

Crab Watch Working with the Alabama Marine Resources Division, the MBNEP instituted a volunteer program to measure recreational blue crab catch. Much information is known about commercial crab fishing but little data is available concerning recreational efforts. Data is collected by volunteers and submitted to the MBNEP. In addition, any unusual by-catch is also documented.

Awards MBNEP and the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, University of Southern Mississippi received a first place ***Gulf Guardian Award for 2005*** in the Partnerships Category, for the “Alabama-Mississippi Rapid Assessment Team (AMRAT)”. The Alabama-Mississippi Rapid Assessment Team is a continuing cooperative project to search for, and catalogue non-indigenous aquatic species in Mississippi and Alabama coastal waters. Coordinated and led by the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and the Center for Fisheries Research and Development at USM’s Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, over 100 participants from more than 22 organizations worked together to complete surveys of the Alabama and Mississippi coasts in 2003 and 2004.

Major Goals and Focus for 2006-2007

Overall

Our major goals for Year 11 are to begin implementation of a strategic plan that sets out priorities for MBNEP; to increase water monitoring support within coastal Alabama; to institutionalize atmospheric deposition monitoring for mercury and to expand the program to include other federal agencies such as NOAA, to look at plume tracking and speciation; to complete the Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan; to determine the feasibility of creating a regional storm-water management authority on the eastern shore; to continue examining opportunities for improving public access to Alabama coastal waters; to complete a wetlands status and trends study as well as an ongoing wetlands mapping for Mobile and Baldwin Counties; and to work with the members of the Coastal Habitats Coordinating Team to populate an online database to track habitat conservation, restoration and enhancement projects in Mississippi and Alabama.

In addition, MBNEP will produce an initial indicator report to the community that will serve as the basis for periodic environmental status reports, complete its three year Implementation Review, to expand outreach and education through workshops, greater media coverage, and increased involvement with area grassroots organizations.

Finally, the MBNEP will continue to serve as a catalyst and advocate for the CCMP action plans in Coastal Alabama.

Issue Areas

Strategic Planning

The purpose of engaging in strategic planning is to focus limited resources on areas of the CCMP that are most critical to sustaining the estuary. The goal of this effort is to revitalize efforts already underway to implement the CCMP. As stated above, many activities have culminated in the development of a Strategic Plan for the MBNEP as it continues to implement the CCMP. This strategic plan will provide guidance in allocating limited staff and monetary resources to the MBNEP and will aid in focusing the organization’s attention on issues of high priority throughout coastal Alabama.

Water Quality

MBNEP has continued to support ADEM in its efforts to expand its water monitoring programs along Mobile Bay and up into the Delta. In the next year, MBNEP will increase that support to allow ADEM to expand its sub-estuary monitoring program to include Fowl River.

During this program year, MBNEP will investigate other options for funding Atmospheric Deposition monitoring over the long-term by seeking out opportunities within other public organizations to adopt this monitoring as part of an ongoing program. MBNEP will engage in discussions with NOAA as well as other federal agencies to fund examinations of plume tracking and speciation.

Living Resources

Over the course of the past year, MBNEP has provided extensive support for the development of an Alabama Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan through participation on a Governor's appointed Task Force and its steering committee, assistance with website development, and contractor management. During this next program year, MBNEP looks forward to completing this plan for public distribution.

Human Uses

Again, as noted above, MBNEP has been highly supportive of several communities along the eastern shore who have come together to determine the feasibility of creating a regional storm-water management authority. During the coming year, MBNEP has offered to manage a project to determine the feasibility of creating such an entity and anticipates providing ongoing support for building the capacity of such an entity in its early stages.

In furthering its public access feasibility study along the southeastern edge of Mobile County, MBNEP plans to continue examining access to Alabama coastal waters. MBNEP will support the design of public access opportunities including boat launches, native planting, and recreational park development in southeastern Mobile County.

Habitat Management

MBNEP will work with ADCNR to complete a wetlands status and trends study as well as an ongoing wetlands mapping for Mobile and Baldwin Counties based on the results of a multi-year effort to identify and map wetlands and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in Mobile and Baldwin Counties.

For the past year, Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant Consortium has been working with the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and MBNEP to create a Habitat Conservation, Restoration and Enhancement Database to establish a mechanism for tracking habitat projects along both states coasts. MBNEP will work with the members of the Coastal Habitats Coordinating Team to populate this online database over the next year to capture both current and past activities.

Education and Public Involvement

MBNEP will produce an initial indicator report to the community that will serve as the basis for periodic environmental status reports, complete its three year Implementation Review, expand outreach and education through workshops, greater media coverage, and increased involvement with area grassroots organizations.

This past year, MBNEP proposed to investigate the possibility of creating a county-wide EMS system. However, with the arrival of hurricane Katrina, plans were delayed. In the coming year, MBNEP will redouble its efforts to assess the possibility of creating a county wide EMS by bringing together local industry and EPA.

Status of Existing EPA Grants # CE-98405902-4 (400) # CE 97491303-2 (417)

At present MBNEP is managing two separate EPA grants- CE-98405902-4 which covers Year 6 and all Prior Years, and CE 97491303-2 which covers Years 8, 9, and 10. Both of these grants are significantly underway with CE-98405902 expected to be closed out by June 2007 and CE-97491303-2 which is anticipated to be closed out by June of 2008. **Table 1: Budget Status of Existing EPA Grants ----** provides budgets, expenditures and existing balances as of 3/30/2006. These balances in large part reflect the execution of multi year projects, including the ADEM sub-estuary monitoring contract that will be carried out through June 2007, and a habitat acquisition and restoration project that is currently delayed due to ongoing negotiations with the owner.

Table 2: Ongoing Projects (through May, 2006) - Narrative Status provides an update in narrative form of milestones achieved, any delays that have occurred, and any notable products available.

Both of these tables may be found in the Appendix to this document.

MBNEP CCMP Implementation: Project Detail for FY 2007 (Year 11)

The MBNEP CCMP identifies priority actions to be taken in five main issue areas. For each issue area specific objectives and sub-objectives have been identified. This section of the FY 2007 Year Ten Work Plan identifies the activities that will be performed to address these five issue areas and to accomplish the identified objectives. (This information can also be viewed in **Table 3: New Projects Budget** in the Appendix.)

This section is divided into five main subsections, 1) Water Quality, 2) Living Resources, 3) Habitat Management, 4) Human Uses and 5) Education and Public Involvement. Each subsection is introduced by stating the objective for that issue area. Individual activities are then listed under the appropriate sub-objectives. Some activities may contain elements that contribute to other issue area objectives. The activity is listed under the issue area for which it is most relevant.

I. Water Quality

Attain and/or maintain water quality sufficient to support healthy aquatic communities and designated human uses by 2010.

Sub-objective A Develop allowable water quality-based loadings sufficient to maintain water quality standards (or total maximum daily loads, where required) for pathogens, nutrients, toxic chemicals, and other conventional pollutants, for Mobile Bay and sub-basins, by the year 2003, and incorporate them into appropriate resource management strategies by the year 2008 (beginning in 2004).

Action Item WQ-A1 Assess data to identify problems, if any, related to pathogen introduction, toxic chemicals, and nutrient or organic enrichment from various sources both within and outside the MBNEP area.

WQ-A1.2: Real-Time Water Monitoring in Mobile Bay-Continuing

Performing Organization	DISL
Project Lead	Mike Dardeau
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$
Match	donated labor hours
Leverage	GOMP- \$136,000- (\$68,000 x 2 years)
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$60,000
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	\$25,000 MBNEP CIAP, \$40,000 WBNERR, \$30,000 USA/ACES Oyster Restoration funding in FY04 for monitoring instrumentation
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Director

This is a continuation of the Water Monitoring Program begun in the Year Seven (FY 2003) Work Plan and funded by CIAP. The Water Monitoring Program consists of developing and implementing a comprehensive, Bay-wide, water quality monitoring program. It provides an opportunity to collect water quality data over a long term in Mobile Bay and along the Alabama coastline including: 1) new and innovative technologies for real-time monitoring/measurement: data from single, multi-sensor probes used to measure standard meteorological measurements plus dissolved oxygen, salinity, water temperature, pH, turbidity, and

fluorescence will be transmitted to an internet web site every 15 minutes; 2) appropriate information management, processing, and delivery: transmitted data via cellular modem will enter the data management center server and be made available on the internet web site; 3) real-time communication of information to the public through www.mymobilebaynep.com, and lab analyzed water samples will be reported in the local newspaper. The data collected will greatly assist in determining the designated water use criteria for the State of Alabama and providing baseline readings for 303(d) improvements.

Project Objectives: Implement a multi-faceted approach for comprehensive water quality monitoring for the Bay and establish additional monitoring sites; establish agreed upon sample collection, handling, storage and analysis protocols for implementing the monitoring plan; collect water quality samples at designated sampling sites consistent with agreed upon protocols; maintain analyses results in a database and report them on a prescribed basis to MBNEP DIMS, ADEM, the general public, any other appropriate agency, and place in EPA’s Storet water quality data management system.

WQ-A1.2: Water Monitoring in Mobile Bay tributaries- Continuing

Performing Organization	ADEM
Project Lead	Mark Ornelas
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$40,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$40,000
Match	
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$162,000
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	\$
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Deputy Director

This program will provide increased funding to ADEM to conduct water monitoring in tributary streams for Mobile Bay as outlined and identified in the accepted MBNEP Monitoring Plan. This funding will augment current monitoring activities in Fish River/Weeks Bay, Bon Secour and Bayou La Batre by expanding this program to include Fowl River or other sub-estuary. This Task is identified in prior year Work Plans as “Monitoring Program Implementation”.

Project Objectives: Provide support to implement the monitoring plan in area tributaries; establish agreed upon sample collection, handling, storage and analysis protocols; use a “probabilistic” sampling scheme to be able to make statements regarding water quality; collect water quality samples at designated sampling sites; maintain analyses results in a database and report them on a prescribed basis to MBNEP DIMS.

WQ-A1.5: Atmospheric Deposition Monitoring Support- Continuing

Performing Organization	National Atmospheric Deposition Program
Project Lead	ADEM
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$35,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$35,000
Match	
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$109,000
Prior Year Match	Un-recovered but allowable indirect costs (DISL), cash
Prior Year Leverage	ADEM Personnel (Federal) \$33,000 (\$11,000/3yrs)
Related Priority Issue(s)	Living Resources
MBNEP Coordinator	Director

Continue operation of two sites in Mobile and Baldwin Counties for Mercury and nutrient monitoring. These funds support a contract with the University of Illinois and the National Atmospheric Deposition Program to provide chemical analysis of air samples collected at these sites to identify problems related to toxic chemicals and nutrient and/or organic enrichment from various sources to further promote water quality improvements within the MBNEP area. (During this program year, MBNEP will investigate other options for funding this monitoring over the long-term.)

Project Objectives: Maintain the monitoring sites to include sample collection and analysis according to standard protocols. Sampling includes: Ca, Mg, Na, K, NH₄, NO₃, Cl, SO₄, pH, inorganic nitrogen and total Mercury. Report analyses results on a prescribed basis to EPA, ADEM, the general public, and any other appropriate agency through NADP website. As appropriate, deliver this information into the DIMS of the MBNEP.

Action Item WQ-A2: Incorporate water quality-based loadings information into the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting process and the nonpoint source control planning process to allow attainment of applicable water quality standards.

No activity currently identified.

Action Item: WQ-A3: Develop a resources management strategy for maintaining groundwater quality.

No activity currently identified.

Action Item WQ-A4: Develop a resource management strategy to ensure added protection and maintenance of High Quality Waters in the Mobile Bay estuary.

No activity currently identified.

Sub-objective B: Reduce nutrient loads in identified, problem sub-basins by 2006, with increased management of both nonpoint and point source nutrient loads in other MBNEP sub-basins or from the Mobile River drainage basin as a whole (by supporting efforts of others with jurisdictional authority), until levels are established based on allowable loadings or total maximum daily loads.

Action Item WQ-B1: Reduce or eliminate problems from excessive loadings within the MBNEP and individual sub-basins.

WQ-B1.1: Emerging Issues- Storm Water Management

Performing Organization	Baldwin County Commission/Mayors Association
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$20,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$20,000
Match	\$35,000 cash (Cities, County, WBNERR, AL Coastal Foundation)
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	
MBNEP Coordinator	Director

MBNEP will work with local governments in Baldwin County to investigate alternatives for stormwater detention and retention in order to reduce nutrient and/or organic loadings by partnering to fund as assessment of the feasibility of forming a regional stormwater funding mechanism/program. The end product will be a Stormwater Action Plan that is agreed upon by participating governments which will provide organizational options, funding, and function recommendations. This will be a multi-government, regional enterprise.

Project Objectives: Coordinate Baldwin County participating cities and County for the purpose of raising the necessary funding and hiring a contractor to assess the feasibility of developing a storm water management authority.

Action Item WQ-B2: Support efforts to reduce nutrient input to the Mobile Bay estuary from the upstream river basin.

No activities currently identified.

Sub-objective C: Minimize introduction of pathogens sufficient to protect public health from in port ship ballast exchange, marine waste from commercial and recreational vessels, sewage system failures, point source discharges, stormwater/nonpoint source discharges (including urban, agricultural, and other sources), and septic systems by 2010.

Action Item WQ-C1: Reduce opportunities for pathogen introduction in the Mobile Bay estuary. No activities currently identified.

Sub-objective D: Evaluate the sources and loads of toxic chemicals to MBNEP area waters by 2006, and reduce, if necessary, such discharges to meet applicable water quality standards by 2010.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item WQ-D1: Assess problems related to sediment quality, in terms of contamination, in the MBNEP area and reduce and/or eliminate, if possible, toxic chemicals in identified problem areas.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item WQ-D2: Offer opportunities for citizens to properly dispose of household and agricultural hazardous waste.

No activities currently identified.

II. Living Resources

Maintain native populations within historical ranges and natural habitat and restore populations that have declined.

Sub-objective A. Gather the information necessary for the conservation of economically and/or ecologically important species, including threatened and endangered species (within the MBNEP area) by analyzing 75% of relevant, available data sets by 2003 and by continued monitoring and assessment.

Action Item LR-A1: Increase the level of monitoring of living resources in the MBNEP area.

LR-A1.5: Data Information Management System (DIMS)- Continuing

Performing Organization	DISL
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$ 30,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 30,000
Match	un-recovered indirect charge on DIMS
Leverage	Community Agency funded data set development
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$ 172,178
Prior Year Match	\$67,561; DISL waives administration charge on GIS/DIMS and provides 43% in-kind match, Equipment and hardware provided by DISL; Mobile Bay Watch Water monitoring Database
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Deputy Director/Education Coordinator

Continued development of data management systems that capture information from a variety of agencies and activities to provide a basis for the monitoring and status reporting of living resources, water quality conditions, and CCMP activities. Two online databases are currently under construction: a Habitat Conservation, Restoration, and Enhancement Database and a CCMP Inventory Database. In addition, www.mymobilebay.com provides real time monitoring of meteorological and hydrological parameters of selected locations in the bay and delta. Plans are to develop a water quality monitoring database that will contain information on other water quality monitoring efforts in the bay and throughout the estuary.

Project Objectives: Establish web and other electronic linkages to make DIMS accessible; identify Data Management needs and assess methods/organizations and/or technology needed; continue Data Management associated with Environmental Monitoring; continue development of protocols, participate in regional data monitoring activities/organizations.

Sub-objective B Prevent, where possible, the introduction of non-native species into native environments; manage, as necessary, the introduction of non-native species used in conservation management programs under controlled circumstances; control/reduce known nuisance and/or introduced species; and gather information on unknowns by the year 2006.

Action Item LR-B1: Identify species and develop management plans for each nuisance species to dampen or control negative effects on habitats and/or water quality within the MBNEP area, thus restoring ecological relationships.

No activities currently identified.

Sub-objective C Maintain and/or increase, if feasible, within natural variability, present catch levels of commercial and recreational fisheries resources.

Action Item LR-C1: Examine how to efficiently measure fishing effort.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item LR-C2.1: Examine the possibility of increasing fisheries resources.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item LR-C3: Examine the possibility of decreasing or controlling effort as needed (e.g., limited entry for stressed fisheries in concert with commercial fishers, encourage catch-and-release as a means to control recreational fishing effort).

No activities currently identified.

III. Habitat Management

Provide optimum fish and wildlife habitat in the Mobile Bay system by effectively preserving, restoring, and managing resources to maintain adequate extent, diversity, distribution, connectivity, and natural functions of all habitat types.

Sub-objective A Protect, enhance, restore and manage valuable public lands and work with private property owners to accomplish habitat protection goals on important, privately held lands, including the acquisition of 15 additional high priority sites by 2009 through purchase or through other instruments, such as easements.

Action Item HM-A1 Identify and prioritize sites of particular sensitivity, rarity, or value in the MBNEP area for potential acquisition and/or restoration, maximizing the contributions of existing preservation and management sites and the capabilities of all agencies and organizations involved in these programs. Develop a non-regulatory, incentive-based program for habitat restoration, management, and protection, utilizing a multi-species approach.

HM-A1.2: CHCT Habitat Restoration Incentive Program-Continuing

Performing Organization	MBNEP
Project Lead	TBD
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$ 35,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 35,000
Match	\$35,000 cash, land value
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$ 81,742
Prior Year Match	\$ 50,000
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	Living Resources
MBNEP Coordinator	Director/Deputy Director

MBNEP will continue capitalization of a fund to provide non-regulatory, incentives for the acquisition and/or restoration of prioritized sites of particular sensitivity, rarity, or value throughout the MBNEP focus area as identified by the Coastal Habitats Coordinating Team. MBNEP will issue requests for proposals or partner with other agencies to conduct habitat restoration projects. Selection of projects will be guided by the habitat/living resource benefit to be derived compared to cost effectiveness of the proposal. The intent of this restoration program is habitat improvement with some degree of permanence (25 years or greater). Accordingly, guidelines for the USDA WRP or CRP programs may also be considered in project selection. The “permanency” requirement ensures that available funds go to projects that will produce lasting wildlife benefit. Each proposal will be considered on its merit but strong consideration will be given to those demonstrating matching or leveraged funds, in-kind match and a strong outreach demonstration and inclusion in the CHCT Priority Habitats Atlas.

Project Objectives: Increased wildlife habitat; restoration of coastal watershed; support of Gulf-wide habitat goals; increased public involvement and leverage.

Sub-objective B Maintain existing native Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAVs) at 2001 levels and increase acreage by 3% of known areas where native SAVs occur by the year 2006.

Action Item HM-B1 Protect or Restore SAV Habitat within the Mobile Estuary

No activities currently identified.

Action Item HM-C1 Maintain and/or Improve Beneficial Wetland Functions within individual watersheds of the MBNEP area by a) reducing the loss in quality and quantity of existing wetlands, b) preparing a strategic mitigation plan for coastal Alabama and c) restoring degraded marsh habitats

No activities currently identified.

Sub-objective D Protect existing natural shoreline, beach and dune habitat and restore previously altered habitats, where feasible, including the rehabilitation of altered shoreline by 1000 feet per year.

Action Item HM-D1 Reduce the loss of beach and dune habitat through development of coastal regulations that examine projects for impacts on beach and dune habitat.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item HM-D2 Determine the impacts of dredging activities and disposal practices on natural beach erosion processes and develop alternative dredge material disposal techniques to improve shoreline areas.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item HM-D3 Research the extent of shoreline erosion due to boat wakes and other factors and reduce the loss of bay/sound/bayou intertidal habitat due to bulk heading the impacts of bulkheads.

HM-D3.2 Emerging Issues: Boat Wake/Erosion Study

Performing Organization	USACE
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$ 10,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 10,000
Match	\$10,000 volunteer hours; contractor services or equipment
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$
Prior Year Match	\$
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	Living Resources
MBNEP Coordinator	Director/Deputy Director

This study will research the extent of shoreline erosion due to boat wakes and other factors, including recent storms in an effort to quantify baseline erosion rates, and include research on how other states have

addressed boat wakes and erosion of natural shorelines. This study will focus on both the eastern and western shores of Mobile Bay and will be conducted in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers or other agencies.

Project Objectives: Work with USACE to determine scope of study, ensuring a public participation component; complete study; present to affected communities.

Sub-objective E Maintain and protect nesting habitat for colonial and migratory birds and reduce declines in nesting habitat due to human disturbance and alteration.

No activities currently identified.

IV. Human Uses

Provide consistent, enforceable, regional land and water use management that ensures smart growth for sustainable development and decreases the negative impacts of growth related activities on human health and safety, public access, and quality of life by developing and implementing plans consistent with the CCMP by 2006.

Sub-objective A Enhance quality of life by improved planned and managed development.

Action Item HU-A1 Develop and implement land use planning that ensures smart growth for sustainable development designed to abate sprawl and loss of aesthetically pleasing environment.

No activity currently identified.

Sub-objective B Reduce the negative hydrologic effects of inadequately planned and/or managed development on human health and safety, specifically:

(1) Maintain or adjust stream flows to minimize the negative effects of flooding, erosion, and adverse changes in estuarine salinity, as necessary and where feasible.

(2) Protect, manage, and/or restore 1,000 acres of floodplains by 2006 to minimize upstream and downstream flooding and erosion.

(3) Protect, manage, and/or restore 5 miles of natural stream banks and bottoms to minimize erosion and loss of natural habitat by 2006.

(4) Reduce locally generated sediment loads by 10% in Mobile and Baldwin County waterways by 2006 to reduce loss of navigation and to reduce adverse impacts on water quality, recreational activities, and aquatic communities.

Action Item HU-B1 Assess and remediate negative hydrologic effects of past land management decisions.

No activity currently identified.

Action Item HU-B2 Restore to more natural hydrological conditions, where feasible, MBNEP waters that have been adversely impacted by artificially created structures.

No activity currently identified.

Action Item HU-B3 Reduce the impacts of erosion and sedimentation on stream banks and bottoms from construction, road building and unimproved roads, agriculture, silviculture, waterfront property development, dirt/soil mining and utilities work site runoff.

No activity currently identified.

Sub-objective C

Increase public access and Eco-tourism opportunities.

Action Item HU-C1

Encourage eco-tourism, increase public access sites and awareness of sites and expand camping and recreational facilities in the Mobile Bay NEP area.

HU-C1.2: Improving Public Access Opportunities

Performing Organization	MBNEP, ADCNR
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$ 20,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 20,000
Match	\$
Leverage	\$
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$
Prior Year Match	\$
Prior Year Leverage	\$ 10,000 ADCNR; \$6,000 Auburn, \$4,000 DISL
Related Priority Issue(s)	Living Resources, Habitat Management
MBNEP Coordinator	Director/Deputy Director

This funding will be provided for the development of public access opportunities including boat launches, native planting, and recreational park development in southeastern Mobile County as identified at a Public Access community meeting held March, 2006. Three different sites will be further evaluated for improvements and at least one site will be improved. These sites include: Heron Bay cutoff, Bay Front Park, both located in south Mobile County and Luscher Park located in the City of Mobile. Additional public access feasibility is planned for Baldwin County sites.

Project Objectives: Conduct community meetings to identify potential sites for public access expansion, development; hire contractor to develop site designs; recruit partners to implement.

V. Education and Public Involvement

Increase awareness of natural resource issues and promote understanding and participation in conservation and stewardship activities.

The Education and Public Involvement Workgroup of the MBNEP developed two sub-objectives and two Action Plans in order to reach the Management Conference objective. Sub-objectives focused on areas of Public Awareness and Public Participation and Monitoring. Tasks in this Work Plan are presented under the appropriate sub-objectives and action item for which they most closely apply.

Sub-objective EPI-A Increase public awareness of environmental issues among all stakeholders, including local, state and federal political leaders, agencies and citizens, by developing and implementing Coastal Environmental Education Campaigns.

Action Item EPI-A1 Continue existing public outreach efforts included in the MBNEP Work Plan while developing and/or enhancing Coastal Environmental Education Campaigns focusing on identified areas of concern and targeted to specific user groups and audiences.

EPI-A1.2: Participation in Area Events-Continuing

Performing Organization	Multiple Agencies
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$ 11,500
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 11,500
Match	\$25,000 volunteer hours; other in-kind or direct funding
Leverage	\$25,000 other agency, corporate support
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$ 44,700
Prior Year Match	\$ Volunteer labor, contributions
Prior Year Leverage	not available
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Education and Outreach Coordinator

Participation in trade shows and festivals provides regular exposure for the MBNEP and can serve as additional outlet for distribution of CCMP-related materials. It is also necessary to support other agencies and organizations that perform CCMP related events. Prior support and participation has included Hazardous Waste Amnesty Days, Coastal Kid’s Quiz, children’s fishing events, and Bay Area Earth Day.

Project Objectives: Participate in and / or support area environmental events

Events that will be supported during **2006-2007** include:

Event	Budget
Birdfest	2,500.00
Dog River Dog Paddle	500.00
ACF Kids Quiz	500.00
Bay Area Earth Day	500.00
Ground Water Festival	1,000.00
Stewardship Award(s)	1,500.00
<i>Community Requests</i>	<i>5,000.00</i>
Total	11,500.00

EPI-A1.2: Development of Stakeholder/Indicators Report

Performing Organization	TBD
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$15,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 15,000
Match	
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$9,000
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Deputy Director

This supports the continuation of an indicator program. MBNEP will partner with ADEM and Geological Survey of Alabama to produce a State of the Bay Report that provides information on the indicators identified in the workshop held February, 2005. This report will include graphic as well as narrative information providing a baseline report to the community of the health of our estuary. This document will also serve to share new information about the MBNEP and its conference members and highlight continuing issues and concerns about the water quality and living resource base of the bay and delta.

Project Objectives: Produce indicator report/publication.

EPI-A1.2: Newly Elected Officials Environmental Orientation Program

Performing Organization	MBNEP
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$5,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 5,000
Match	
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Director/Outreach and Education Coordinator

MBNEP will develop and implement a comprehensive coastal environmental education program for newly elected officials. This will be designed as a full day workshop that includes site visits and presentations on current and emerging environmental challenges facing coastal Alabama. This activity was identified as a request from a member of our local legislative delegation.

Project Objectives: Educate newly elected officials about environmental challenges facing coastal AL; provide hands on training to those with decision making ability in government; provide networking opportunities for government officials and area resource managers.

EPI-A1.3: New Outreach and Education Initiatives

Performing Organization	MBNEP
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$10,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 10,000
Match	
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Outreach and Education Coordinator

This fund is being established to work with community groups and educational agencies to develop curriculum units and other continuing education programs that address the water quality, living resource, human use, and habitat management issues and priorities of the CCMP.

Project Objectives: educate the community about the issues of the CCMP in a coordinated manner; institutionalize the education of environmental issues related to our local area into the school system and other avenues of public education.

Sub-objective EPI-B Increase public participation by developing and implementing a comprehensive citizen-based-monitoring program.

No activities currently identified.

Action Item EPI-B1 Increase public participation by developing and implementing a comprehensive citizen-based-monitoring program.

No activities currently identified.

Management and Administration

The MBNEP Program Office works closely with all of the MBNEP Management Conference members on initiatives relating to the CCMP. The MPA budget will provide resources for the Program Office to continue program planning, development, implementation, evaluation, and reporting. Staff will provide organizational and logistical support for all of the Management Conference committee meetings and coordinate / communicate as necessary with appropriate groups, including user groups, state, local and Federal agencies, and professional groups relevant to CCMP development and implementation. Staff will provide overall coordination for implementation of the CCMP; prepare EPA required documents; administer grants/contracts; monitor projects including coordination of work plans, progress reports, and draft/final reports with Project Leads; coordinate project work plans and activities with other local, state and Federal agencies; provide for overall program coordination.

MPA: Management and Program Administration

Performing Organization	MBNEP
Project Lead	MBNEP
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$453,100
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$ 453,100
Match	\$166,104 un-recovered indirect from DISL
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$962,838
Prior Year Match	in-kind value of truck DISL
Prior Year Leverage	\$5,000
Related Priority Issue(s)	All
MBNEP Coordinator	Director

This amount is more than that of last year (\$320,670) due to an addition of a watershed coordinator that will work as a basin facilitator with the Coastal Alabama Clean Water Partnership part time as well as with the Community Action Committee; a substantial rent increase, and salary increases due to evolving job functions. In addition, increased funding has been allocated for the development of outreach products. This amount includes all the necessary items for program administration including salaries, benefits, rent, supplies, equipment, phone, internet services etc.

Indirect costs charged by our host institution to administer the grant are included (\$90,339 which equals 15% of our total projected cash resources of \$692,600.)

Staff Position	Employee	Responsibilities	Main Activities
Program Director	David W. Yeager	General Oversight, Acceptance, and Implementation of Program	Generates financial and political support for program; participates in regional and national initiatives associated with program; engages in project identification and design; builds collaborative teams for accomplishing objectives; liaison between program and local governments and other public agency leaders; spokesperson for estuary related activities and needs throughout the community; Oversees all office activities.
Deputy Director	Roberta Arena Swann	Conduct activities and identify, design and develop projects that further the implementation of the CCMP	Executes strategic and organizational planning for program; conducts project design, development and implementation; assists with financial resource development and management; oversees CCMP indicator program; prepares EPA plans and reports; prepares contracts with local entities; and other activities as deemed necessary
Outreach/Education Coordinator	Lee Yokel	Coordinate all outreach and education activities of the program	Coordinates MBNEP participation in workshops and special events; oversees development of all public relations materials; manages program website; assists with volunteer monitoring programs; develops special educational programs that provide for technology transfer; and other activities as deemed necessary
Project Coordinator	Kara Lankford	Develop and coordinate volunteer involvement programs	Coordinates oyster gardening, crab watch volunteer programs, and Clean Water Partnership Program; other activities as deemed necessary
Business Manager	Tiffany England	Overall business and office management	Maintains budget, project files, financial record keeping, grant reporting; coordinates notices, agendas, and logistics for all committee meetings; and other office management duties

Indirect Cost charged at a rate of 15% on all cash input (grant and matching funds) to the MBNEP by Dauphin Island Sea Lab. DISL allowable Indirect Cost negotiated rate with Federal Government is 43%. The un-recovered indirect of 28% is provided to the MBNEP by DISL/MESC as an in-kind matching contribution. Additional in-kind and support services not covered by indirect costs are also provided to the MBNEP by DISL on a case by cases basis.

MPA: *Travel*

Performing Organization	MBNEP
Project Lead	Director
FY 07 NEP Funding	\$13,000
FY 08 NEP Funding	\$
FY 09 NEP Funding	\$
Total Current Plan Funds	\$13,000
Match	
Leverage	
NEP Prior Year Funds	\$ 48,000
Prior Year Match	
Prior Year Leverage	
Related Priority Issue(s)	N/A
MBNEP Coordinator	Director

Program staff will participate in regional, state, and national conferences and meetings relevant to estuarine management. EPA requires through an earmark \$10,000 of program funds for travel related to outreach and technology and information transfer. Attendance at Association of National Estuary Programs workshops and EPA workshops / meetings will be stressed. The remaining portion of the funds will be utilized as earmarked.