The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and its Management Conference

Government Networks Committee Meeting
August 10, 2012

Who is in the Audience Today?
Who is the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program?

What is the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program’s Mission?
To promote the wise stewardship of the Mobile Bay Estuary

Digital elevation model overlay of Mobile and Baldwin Counties. Blues and reds indicate lower and higher elevations. (NASA, 2011)
Why?

- This estuary receives the fourth largest freshwater inflow in the United States.
- It provides vital nursery habitat for commercially and recreationally important fish species.
- It contributes to our local and State economy.
- The Mobile Bay estuary is where we live, work, and play.
- It is our home...Two counties dependent on the quality of life that this estuary provides.
So - What is putting stress on our estuary's productivity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1974 Class ➔ 2008 Class</th>
<th>1974 Class (Acres)</th>
<th>Converted (Acres)</th>
<th>Percent Converted (Acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open water ➔ Urban</td>
<td>450543</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barren ➔ Urban</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland herbaceous ➔ Urban</td>
<td>180295</td>
<td>9570</td>
<td>7.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-woody wetland ➔ Urban</td>
<td>37475</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland forest ➔ Urban</td>
<td>493301</td>
<td>44182</td>
<td>34.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woody wetland ➔ Urban</td>
<td>203704</td>
<td>2663</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over 1/3 of this estuary's habitats have been converted from natural to developed land.

Bayou Sara 1974
Bayou Sara 2008

Lower Bay Minette Creek 1974
Dauphin Island 2008

Little Lagoon 1974
Another potential Stress...

The Alabama State Port and the size of the ships moving through the bay continue to grow.
The Alabama State Port is a \textit{SIGNIFICANT} contributor to the State's economy...

How does the bay contribute to our Quality of Life?

Which of the following features of Mobile Bay’s environment has the greatest impact on your \textit{quality of life}?

- Fish/shellfish habitats
- Beach/shoreline and/or waterfront
- Wetlands/adjacent forested habitats
- Bird/waterfowl habitats
- Other wildlife habitats
- Other

It’s All About the FISH and the Water
The Question - How do we ensure the environmental health of this nationally significant estuary and protect the economies that depend upon it?

Mobile and Baldwin Counties and the BAY are incredibly valuable assets to the State of Alabama
What is Asset Management?

- understanding what you have and where it is
- who controls it
- who possesses it
- its true value
- what can be done to decrease losses related to it.

Our Forests
The Mobile Tensaw Delta

Our Streams and Rivers
Our Bay

Our Beaches
The Charge of the MBNEP Management Conference

- understanding what we have and where it is
- who controls it
- who possesses it
- its true value
- what can be done to decrease losses related to it.

How does the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Work?

[Diagram showing the structure of the MBNEP Management Conference]
MBNEP’s Charge is to Coordinate Efforts

- Assess trends
- Identify causes
- Develop relationships
- Develop Collective plan (CCMP)
- Coordinate collective implementation
- Monitor effectiveness

- Champion protection and restoration efforts through cultivation of partnerships
- Lead watershed protection by coordinating collective actions to measurably improve water quality, habitat management and living resource management
- Establish a community of committed environmental stewards

On the Horizon...

Community Stakeholders Develop Priorities
Coastal Planning Summit, Fall 2012
Draft CCMP- Public Comment
Final Draft (December)
Environmental health comprises those aspects of human health, including quality of life, that are determined by physical, chemical, biological, social and psychosocial factors in the environment. It also refers to the theory and practice of assessing, correcting, controlling and preventing those factors in the environment that can potentially affect adversely ... the health of present and future generations.