

Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Executive Committee Meeting
Original Oyster House Banquet Hall, Spanish Fort, AL
November 17, 2017, 10am-12pm.

Attendees – Mark Berte, Alabama Coastal Foundation; Dr. Ruth Carmichael, Dauphin Island Sea Lab; Jennifer Denson, Partners for Environmental Progress; Darrelyn Dunmore, Strategic Wealth Specialists; David England, Dauphin Island Sea Lab; Troy Ephriam; Leslie Gahagan, City of Foley; Charles ‘Skip’ Gruber, Baldwin County Commission; Patric Harper, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Tammy Herrington, Conservation Alabama; Phillip Hinesley, ADCNR; Fred Leslie, ADEM; James Lyons, Alabama State Port Authority; Eliska Morgan, Alabama Gulf Coast Restore Council; Patti Powell, ADCNR State Lands Division; Dr. Susan Rees (Larry Parson-proxy), U.S Army Corps of Engineers; William Sisson (Bob Chappelle-proxy), Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce; Dr. LaDon Swann, MS-AL Sea Grant Consortium; Chris Thomas, U.S. EPA; Beth Thomas, Alabama Power Company

MBNEP Staff Present: *Roberta Swann, Tom Herder, Rick Frederick, Kelley Barfoot, Jason Kudulis, Paul Lammers, Bethany Dickey*

1. Co-Chair Chris Thomas called meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.
2. Approval of Minutes
 - o Mr. Thomas asked for comments or revisions to the minutes from the July 17, 2017 meeting. Jimmy Lyons made a motion to approve and Mr. Chappelle seconded.
3. Director’s Report
 - o **Alabama Restoration Planning:** the new Habitat Mapping is almost complete. Data acquisition and watershed plan inventory of projects are in progress. The first Technical Committee meeting is set for January.
 - o **Trash Free Waters Program:** \$25,000 from EPA that will include installation of two “litter gitters” in the Three Mile Creek Watershed, two “litter gitters” in the Bon Secour Watershed, and expansion of Create a Clean Water Future website.
 - o The Dauphin Island Sea Lab Foundation recognized Don Bates with the Marine Environmental Award Individual 2017 for his accomplishments with his “Litter Gitters”.
 - o Three new videos have been released and available on the NEP website: Low Impact Development (LID) – Stormwater Doesn’t have to be a Headache, Three Mile Creek Trail Construction, and Association of National Estuary Programs. Visit www.mobilebaynep.com to view.
 - o **NFWF Funding Amendment:** The watershed planning initiative has been amended to include activities to support these future restoration implementation activities: hydrologic modeling, Bon Secour, Wolf Bay, Dog River, Bayou La Batre, West Fowl River, and Tensaw Apalachee.
 - o We are working on the scoping of the Economic Impact Analysis of the D’Olive Watershed.
4. Committee Reports (MBNEP Management Conference Co-Chairs)

Science Advisory Committee

Dr. Ruth Carmichael reported on the meeting from August 24, 2017. The Fowl River Marsh Study scope was presented to the SAC and unanimously approved. Land owner agreements have been signed and contracts are in the process of execution. The State of the Bay report should be released by September 2018.

Project Implementation Committee

Patric Harper and Paul Lammers reported on the meeting from September 21, 2017. The Dog River WMP is final, the Weeks Bay WMP will be out by the end of the year, and proposals for the Wolf Bay WMP are under review. The Highway 90 and Tiawasee stream restoration projects in the D'Olive Watershed have been completed. Mr. Lammers showed photos of Mon Louis Island and County Road 13 from the recent storms and how well the restorations have held up. An RFQ for the Twelve Mile Creek restoration will go out in the beginning of December.

Government Networks Committee

Commissioner Gruber gave the report on the Government Networks Committee meeting from November 17, 2017. A regulatory review across Mobile and Baldwin Counties is underway and will be used to develop a platform of changes to manage coastal resources. Miriam Boutwell with the City of Foley then gave a presentation on Plan Lower Alabama Now (P.L.A.N.). P.L.A.N. is a working group that has multiple meetings with stakeholders in the Weeks Bay Watershed. The goal of this group is to learn from other municipalities through guest speakers and address some of the common issues throughout the county.

Community Action Committee

Leslie Gahagan reported on the meeting from August 16, 2017, where members addressed strengths and frustrations with their volunteer monitoring activities. Coastal Alabama trainers have trained about 107 people and recertified around 12 monitors since July 2017. The Bon Secour monitoring program was established in June 2017. The Coastal Alabama Conservation Corps members monitored 5 sites in Three Mile Creek and Toulmins Spring Branch for seven weeks. A monitoring update was presented at the Alabama Water Resources Conference on September 7, 2017.

Business Resources Committee

Ms. Denson, Ms. Dunmore, and Mr. Frederick provided the report. MBNEP was awarded a \$488,711 U.S. EPA Gulf of Mexico Program Grant Award to implement a Comprehensive Trash Strategy in Three Mile Creek. Phase I includes: 10 "Litter Gitters" in Three Mile Creek, removal of legacy trash, partner with Mobile Baykeeper's SWAMP program at Vigor to provide volunteers for EPA's pilot trash assessment. Phase II includes: targeting businesses to implement more environmentally-friendly packaging, and one outreach event for Create a Clean Water Future.

Community Resources Committee

Mr. Berte and Ms. Herrington gave the report. The next CRC meeting will be November 29, 2017. Ms. Herrington proposed a 'strawman' process that was developed to suggest for the MBNEP to become the 'Review Committee' for the AGCRC submitted projects. There was a lot of feedback from the Executive Committee Members:

- Conflict of interest

- Review already currently being conducted by Volkert, Inc.
- Reputation of the MBNEP could be jeopardized
- Concern over the fact that other 'plans' exist and the 'strawman process' is only ensuring that the projects fit within the goals and objectives of the CCMP.
- Is this a process that the Executive Committee wants to take on and adopt?
- Is this a process that would benefit the AGCRC and would they take it into consideration when selecting projects for final funding?

5. Other / Announcements

- NRDA Trustee Council Annual Meeting will be held November 30, 2017.
- The MBNEP Annual Breakfast meeting is set for December 8, 2017.

Adjourned at 11:25 a.m.