



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Community Resources Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 20, 2021
Virtual Meeting through Zoom**



Attendees:

Carol Adams-Davis, Mobile Sierra Club
Mark Berte, Alabama Coastal Foundation
Casi Callaway, Mobile Baykeeper
Walter Ernest, Pelican Coast Conservancy
Debi Foster, Dog River Clearwater Revival/The Peninsula

Kara Lankford Fox, Audubon
Tammy Monistere, Conservation Alabama
Angela Underwood, ADCNR-SLD

MBNEP Staff: Roberta Swann, Herndon Graddick, Tom Herder, Bethany Hudson

Meeting Takeaways:

- 1) The CRC Trash Abatement Database is under development.**
- 2) The CRC Trash Abatement Work Plan, a living document, will be reviewed by working subgroups to review and refine metrics and develop subcomponent #7, Behavior Changes.**
- 3) CRC members were asked to submit non-trash-related agenda items for discussion at scheduled meetings.**

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm by CRC Co-Chair Walter Ernest IV. Participating CRC members currently on the video call were acknowledged.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2020 meeting. Corrections needed include updating Kara Fox and the last paragraph of the minutes to include the upcoming meeting schedule. Mark Berte provided the motion, which was seconded by Carole Adams Davis. The motion carried.

3. Development of the CRC Trash Abatement Database: Tom shared the beginning of a database Excel file with several rows representing MBNEP trash initiatives. He noted that he understood each cell should contain one discrete datum, using single, quantifiable metrics with common units, if possible. Initiatives listed included Ditch the Disposables, MLK Day of Service (held the previous Saturday), both Trash Blows campaigns (conducted during the 2018 and 2019 Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, and Take Pride in Toulminville. He noted the first column contained start dates with year and month to facilitate chronological sorting. It continued with organization and project/initiative name, funder, finish date, and a cell which should contain a link to an online final report (rather than including a narrative in the database). He suggested that securing links to final reports will present a challenge, since for many historical efforts, they don't exist.

As he discussed entries on this spreadsheet, he noted that the primary goal of the Ditch the Disposables campaign was *data collection* to inform pricing and packaging – a market analysis – rather than one of the Work Plan's subcomponents. Primary goals of other initiatives clearly fell under those subcomponents, but, he argued, that in this case, litter reduction was not the goal or outcome of the initiative, although there were components of education and awareness. During the discussion, the purpose of the database was reiterated,

and it included 1) determining how different projects could support each other without duplication or redundancy, and 2) to ensuring that data is tracked, accurate, and shared.

Behavior change was suggested as a goal, but with that subcomponent as yet undeveloped, a metric was not obvious. Measuring behavior change is difficult. Everything in the Work Plan will increase awareness, and changing behavior, likewise, is likely to be an outcome of all Work Plan initiatives. It was suggested that we leave this issue and metrics to be developed later. There was some agreement that raising awareness is the first step in changing behaviors. It was suggested that Debi Foster share Dog River Clearwater Revival data to establish clear and concise fields for the database. The importance of using enough columns to capture the range of metrics was mentioned. Establishment of a work groups to vet issues was suggested with positive feedback from meeting participants. The discussion was shifted to the Work Plan, which was shared on the screen.

Casi reviewed the seven subcomponents and reiterated that Changing Behavior, subcomponent #7, needed further development and suggested that Angela Underwood, Herndon Graddick, and others might be qualified to review and develop this subcomponent. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting. Subgroups of the CRC could review issues related to Work Plan metric development. Some discussion followed about overlap between subcomponents, including litter prevention and education (or awareness). With only minutes remaining in the meeting, we were charged with adding our organizations, to review teams/subcommittees via email and indicating whether our organizations fit at all into the Work Plan. Audubon, for example, concerns themselves with the effects of marine debris on bird populations, but none of the Work Plan components fit well with Audubon's mission. Casi said she would prepare and distribute an email for distribution with the Work Plan to ascertain where participants see themselves or their organization fit into the Work Plan.

As the CRC does not exist solely to deal with litter, we should discuss “non-litter” topics at each meeting to support one another in other initiatives.

From November 10: “There was a suggestion for more but shorter meetings, and meetings every other month, beginning in January. It was suggested that the first meeting be of a longer duration, perhaps 90 minutes to two hours, with most monthly meetings only an hour in duration. We agreed upon six bi-monthly meetings (January, March, May, July, September, and November) with a longer meeting in January and perhaps in July. Membership agreed the third Tuesday of these months was better, from 1:00 pm until 2:00 or (2:30/3:00 pm) for the longer meetings.”

The next CRC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 16 at 1:00 PM. Casi made one more plea for participants to participate in or chair subgroups to refine Work Plan items and suggestions for non-trash agenda items.

Debi noted that 101,000 lbs of litter was retrieved from the Dog River Watershed in 2020. The Alabama Coastal Foundation's Coastal Kids Quiz will be held virtually this week, and the Sustainability Summit will be held next Thursday and Friday. MBNEP will advertise those events on social media.

4. Adjourn The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.