



Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Project Implementation Committee

August 13, 2020, 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
GoogleMeet Virtual Meeting



Agenda

Meeting Objectives:

- a) Management Conference Committee Status Review
- b) A Journey Across the Watersheds Presentations
- c) EPA-NEP Program Evaluation Team Q & A

1. Welcome and Introductions

PIC Co-Chairs:

- Judy Haner, The Nature Conservancy
Patric Harper, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

2. Review and Approval of Minutes

3. Old Business

- a) Management Conference Committee Status Review

4. New Business

- a) A Journey Across the Watersheds Presentations:
 - Overview of Watersheds
 - Bayou La Batre: Meg Goecker, Moffatt Nichol and Judy Haner, The Nature Conservancy
 - West Fowl River: Chris Warn, Environmental Science Associates
 - Fowl River: Christian Miller, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
 - Dog River: Debi Foster, Dog River Clearwater Revival
 - Western Shore: Lee Walters, Goodwyn, Mills, Cawood
 - Three Mile Creek: Jenn Greene, City of Mobile
 - Mobile Tensaw Delta: Jeanette Kelson, Wood PLC
 - D'Olive: Ashley Campbell, City of Daphne
 - Fly Creek: Suzanne Sweetser, Thompson Engineering
 - Bon Secour: Paige Felts, Volkert
 - Weeks Bay: Casey Fulford, Alabama Association of Conservation Districts
 - Gulf Frontal: Wade Burcham, Geosyntec
 - Wolf Bay: Leslie Gahagan, City of Foley
- b) EPA-NEP Program Evaluation Team Q & A
- c) Schedule next meeting

5. Adjourn



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Project Implementation Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 13, 2020, 2:00 – 4:00 pm
Virtual Meeting through Google Meet
Meeting Minutes**



Attendees:

Katie Baltzer (The Nature Conservancy)
Don Blancher (Moffatt & Nichol)
Mary Kate Brown (The Nature Conservancy)
Wade Burcham (Geosyntec)
Ashley Campbell (City of Daphne)
Ryan Collins (Dix-Hite Landscape Architecture)
Benji Elmore (Alabama Forestry Commission)
Walter Ernest (Pelican Coast Conservancy)
Jay Estes (Allen Engineering & Science)
Mike Eubanks (Thompson Engineering)
Paige Felts (Volkert)
Carl Ferraro (Stantec)
Debi Foster (Dog River Clearwater Revival & the Peninsula of Mobile)
Casey Fulford (AL Association of Conservation Districts)
Leslie Gahagan (City of Foley)
Meg Goecker (Moffatt & Nichol)
Jenn Greene (City of Mobile)
Heather Griffin (ADEM NPS Unit)
Judy Haner (The Nature Conservancy)
Patric Harper (U.S. Fish & Wildlife)
Kathy Hill (Indian River Lagoon NEP)
Byron Hinchey (S&ME)
Nicholas Hunter (ALDOT)
Matthew Jones (Mobile County)
Steve Jones (GSA)
Jeanette Kelson (Wood PLC)
Jeremiah Kolb (ADCNR)
Nicole Love (Alabama Audubon)
David Ludwig (City of Mobile)
Shannon McGlynn (ADEM NPS)
Melissa Mehaffey (Goodwin Mills and Cawood)
Logan McDonald (Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program)

Don Mroczko (USACE)
Romell Nandi (US EPA)
Amy Newbold (US EPA – Gulf of Mexico Div.)
Joyce Nicholas (Mobile SWCD)
Amy Paulson (Environmental Science Associates)
Greg Pierce (Geological Survey of Alabama)
Matt Posner (Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program)
Chris Plymale (US EPA)
Melissa Pringle (Allen Engineering & Science)
Evan Reid (Volkert)
Justin Rigdon (ADEM Water Quality)
Tina Sanchez (Mobile County Commission)
Whitney Scheffel (Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program)
Eric Scheider (ESA)
Kari Servold (Moffatt & Nichol)
Randy Shaneyfelt (ADEM Coastal NPS)
Mike Sharp (NFWF)
Jason Shaw (ALDOT)
Mike Shelton (ADNCR – State Lands Division)
Sam St. John (Logical Computer Solutions)
Mollie Taylor (Geosyntec)
Woody Speed (OBA)
Susan Summerlin (ADEM)
Sabra Sutton (Alabama Association of Conservation Districts)
Suzanne Sweetser (Thompson Engineering)
Nigel Temple (Ecology & Environment Inc.)
Memphis Vaughan (Tetra Tech)
Lee Walters (Goodwin Mills and Cawood)
Connie Whittaker (Weeks Bay Foundation)
Chris Warn (ESA)
Barja Wilson (Groundworks Mobile County)
Emma Witherington (Stantec)

MBNEP Staff Present: Christian Miller, Jason Kudulis, Bethany Hudson, Katie Dylewski, Roberta Swann, and Tom Herder.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:07 pm by Patric Harper.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Patric Harper called for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 20, 2020 meeting. Jay Estes made the motion, and Mary Kate Brown seconded. The motion carried.

3. PE Team Introductions:

Romell Nandi: US EPA Headquarters Coordinator for Mobile Bay and lead on Trash Free Waters Program

Chris Plymale: US EPA Region 4

Kathy Hill: Deputy Director for Indian River Lagoon NEP

Duane De Freese: not present due to health issues

4. Presentations

➤ MBNEP Management Conference Update:

1. Government Networks Committee: has been involved in coal ash pond closure education, keeping abreast of watershed planning status around the Bay, and legislative activities affecting implementation of the CCMP.
2. Project Implementation Committee: has been busy with watershed planning and implementation. Status of key projects include restoration of the headwaters of Twelve Mile Creek, with expected bidding for December construction, TNC's Lightning Point, with construction completed two months ahead of schedule, and many more. Several shoreline projects are currently in engineering and design.
3. Finance Committee: continues to develop a strategy for long-term sustainability for the NEP.
4. Science Advisory Committee: is building a more robust stressor evaluation framework, reviewing watershed modeling efforts undertaken to date, and initiating a decadal comprehensive study of the Mobile Bay Watershed and specifically how oysters, blue crabs, and speckled trout respond to changes in their environment, similar to the canary in the coal mine.
5. Business Resources Committee: has been focusing on encouraging support for wild oyster restoration by oyster farmers, investigating availability of water bottoms for new farm leases, providing access to capital for new and expanding fishery operations, and raising awareness of the industry through education and marketing
6. Community Resources Committee: is developing a work plan to address the problem of trash, litter, and marine debris all grouped under the committee charges of Action, Policy and Legislation, Education (and Awareness), and Enforcement.
7. Community Action Committee: has been focused on citizen science and heard presentations on monitoring of water quality, flooding, sanitary sewer overflows, phytoplankton, dissolved oxygen, invasive and native plant species, and other data collection opportunities.

➤ Watershed Management Planning Status Update: To date, nine watershed plans have been completed across 16 "HUC-12s," or small drainage basins. The Wolf Bay Plan is out for public comment, WMPs for Fly Creek, Gulf Frontal, the Mobile Tensaw-Apalachee Delta, and the Western Shore are all under development, along with the update for the D'Olive WMP. On deck are the West Delta, East Delta, and Dauphin Island. East and West Delta will need Marlon Cook to do baseline assessments prior to starting the WMPS, but Dauphin Island should be able to get going sooner because a sediment study analysis from Marlon is not needed.

➤ Bayou La Batre Watershed: Judy Haner and Meg Goecker presented. The WMP was completed a couple of years ago and the primary issues to be addressed in the watershed were stormwater runoff (nutrients, sedimentation, and pathogens) and trash. Two large projects address stormwater runoff and water quality – a lift station and extension of effluent force main from the water treatment plant (both funded through

RESTORE Bucket 3), scheduled to start next Spring. Lightning Point restoration project has collected five tons of trash so far and they hope to leverage this for future projects in other watersheds. Lightning Point construction wrapped up at end of July 2020, which included 2.5 miles of jetties and breakwaters, 40 acres of habitat, 2 miles of tidal creeks, and 240,000 cubic yards of beneficially used dredged material. They are now working on public amenities including an ADA fishing platform and pavilion. The City Docks project and the water distribution system upgrade will both help the community. Local municipalities including Mobile County, the Mayor, and City Council have been great partners for WMP implementation. Living room meetings in the beginning of watershed planning really helped establish feelings of trust with partners and community members. Auditorium meetings would not have worked in this community. MBNEP encouraged the firm working on the WMP to adapt to the needs of the community, which really helped ensure future project success and community buy-in down the road. They have kiosks and signage up to help raise awareness at the Lightning Point restoration site. The Mayor will be leaving his post in November and the project team sees this as a place where they might have to adapt depending on who steps in his place as he has been a large supporter of their work in the Bayou, specifically of Lightning Point. Other areas for adaptive management include using education and outreach to avoid rumors and the spread of misinformation as well as continuing open communication for implementation activities with affected parties and partners. Lightning Point addressed the environmental side and the Bayou City Docks Project will address the economic component. They will be launching a website and surveys for the project in October 2020 to begin engaging the public for the City Docks project, which is central to the community.

- [West Fowl River](#): Chris Warn presented. West Fowl River WMP was completed in 2019 and is in very early stages of implementation. The watershed is mostly an undeveloped, rural area covering 20,489 acres in unincorporated Mobile County with no municipalities, which did make outreach challenging. Three main basins are Bayou Coden, Bayou Heron, and West Fowl River. Bayou Coden is a federally authorized channel where boat building and seafood processing take place. Bayou Heron is scenic and predominantly wetlands. West Fowl is the primary tributary and is rural, natural gas, cattle, row crop, and oyster farm. WMP wrapped up last year. A hydrological model was completed to for the watershed and pathogen study requests have been submitted. Septic sewer conversions are being undertaken, dirt roads are being paved, and MBNEP has it's "Trash Bow, Stow It" campaign in the watershed. TNC has submitted a funding request for the West Fowl River Corridor and the State has purchased the Delta Port Marina to improve public access. Outreach focused on partnering the community with scientists, engineers, agency staff, and elected officials to address issues of concern. Surveys, flyers, watershed tours, and focus group meetings (churches, businesses, farmers, schools) were used. The close knit community of the watershed needed a local champion, which was Chris Collier, to help be a bridge builder for the outreach team to the community. Mobile County Commission, NRCS, and just about every state and local agency were part of the team. A major concern is pathogens in the watershed and to this end DISL/MBNEP along with the USFDA performed pathogen investigations, a pollutant loading model was developed, potential pollutant sources were identified, and EPA and Sea Grant funding has been secured for further source investigation.
- [Fowl River](#): Christian Miller presented. This watershed is rich in cultural heritage that pre-dates the 1500s. In 1698, two brothers, d'Iberville and de Bienville settled in the area and invited French colonists to join them there. The settlers noted the abundance of wildlife and waterfowl and called it Fowl River. Even to this day, it is used heavily for recreational purposes. The Fowl River WMP was the first plan funded through NFWF GEBF and wrapped up in early 2016. Compared to other watersheds in the area, this is still a relatively undeveloped watershed. However, there is some urbanization along main

transportation thoroughfares in the watershed. There was a disconnect between the northern and southern parts of the watershed during development of the WMP due to the northern part of the watershed being rural and unaware they were within Fowl River watershed. Overall water quality is relatively good in this watershed and it is tidally influenced up to Fowl River Rd. bridge. Marlon did a baseline assessment and determined there were some sediment transport issues but there was also a lack a sediment moving through the system to re-nourish some of the marsh areas in the watershed. There may be a blockage/choking point holding the sediment back mid-way up in the watershed and future work may need to alleviate this. Fish consumption advisories are in place for mercury. Agriculture, development, and stormwater are creating nutrient loading issues as well. Trash is also a major issue in this watershed. Salinity increases, marsh loss, and sea level rise (SLR) are all issues that will be addressed. The Fowl River Area Civic Association (FRACA) has spear headed citizen water quality monitoring and is working with MBNEP on marsh/shoreline projects that are underway. A hydrologic model was also completed for the watershed a couple of years ago. Mobile County passed a resolution of support in 2016, which is a typical practice for the beginning of implementing a WMP and states that they will help with implementation and understand the importance of the WMP. RESTORE funds have been set aside to pave dirt roads to reduce sediment loading. The County acquired Memories Fish Camp to make another public access point. NRCS put in some conservation easements in the watershed. Mon Louis Island restoration funds were awarded at the same time as the WMP was being developed. Lessons learned at Mon Louis will help with future shoreline restoration projects and currently the Fowl River Spits restoration is in engineering and design.

- [Dog River:](#) Debi Foster presented. Dog River Clearwater Revival (DRCR) is a relatively small nonprofit that has been in existence for 26 years. Their mission is to improve the water quality of, access to, and enhance awareness of Dog River, which is the City of Mobile's largest urban watershed (95 sq. miles, 127 linear miles of shoreline). Their biggest issues have been stormwater (trash), sediment, and SSOs. The WMP was completed in 2000 and updated in 2018. The Dog River WMP is used to inform the DRCR annual workplan. Debi showed a map with water quality monitoring sites, which are continuing to be monitored and have been for about 20 years. The map also shows litter capture devices, SSO reduction projects, and preservation projects. A table was shown with projects that are in progress. MAWSS upgrades are underway in the Halls Mill and Perch Creek areas. Restoration projects are underway in Perch Creek and Bayshore Park and they have begun species management with Gulfcorps through the Student Conservation Association. An EPA Gulf of Mexico Program grant was awarded to create a comprehensive trash abatement program for the watershed. Partners include MBNEP, Mobile Baykeeper, Partners for Environmental Progress (PEP), and Osprey Initiative. Their goal is to reduce trash by 50% in one reach of Dog River. The outcome will be a comprehensive trash control strategy delivered to the City of Mobile. DRCR did a MLK day of service and removed over 3,000 lbs of debris from a stream segment on Eslava Creek, which is an economically underserved area of Mobile. MBNEP helped DRCR get a hydrologic model created and that is being used to inform where litter hotspots are located which, so far, have been congruent with areas where they are actually finding the most trash. Halls Mill Creek is their success story where they restored the area and have kept it open for public use. DRCR has also been working with partners on the purchase of more than 300 acres of pristine upland forest in the watershed, which they have been working on for about 5 years now.
- [Western Shore:](#) Lee Walters presented. GMC is currently working on this WMP. The Western Shore Complex includes the three watersheds that run parallel along the Western Shore – Garrows Bend, Deer River, and Delchamps Bayou. They have a lack of water quality data and intend to address that through a comprehensive water quality monitoring program. There is also a lack of access to the water and they

want to make public access more prominent. Other priorities include improving resilience, stormwater management (especially in Garrows Bend and the northern part of the watershed, which is more urbanized), and shoreline restoration/protection with about 30 miles of shoreline. The average rate of shoreline retreat is two feet per year making coastal erosion a top priority to be addressed. Shoreline priorities include restoring critical habitats (shoreline, marsh, oyster, finfish, and seagrass) and adopting living shorelines as a practice because about half of the western shore is hard armored. So far, they have identified about five miles of shoreline for protection. Restoration projects are being prioritized based on whether they have high shoreline retreat rates, habitat impairment, and their potential for success. The unique long and linear shape of the watersheds has led to a diverse group of partners with varying interests. Steering Committee selection was critical to best represent the watershed and get interest groups active and engaged in the development of the WMP. Adaptive management has been COVID-19 related. When the pandemic began, they had already held three public meetings, but they had to shift and find better ways to engage virtually. They used the GoTo Meeting platform and Poll Everywhere (interactive polling tool). They also sent informative postcards through snail mail to be sure they reached those that are not virtually engaged.

- [Three Mile Creek](#): Jenn Greene presented. Jenn is the acting director for Programs and Project Management at the City of Mobile. Three Mile Creek is an urban watershed with the WMP completed in 2014. WMP goals include improving water quality, protecting fish and wildlife, providing safe access, restoring heritage/cultural connection, and planning and preparing for resilience. MBNEP has been a valued partner and leader in WMP development and implementation. Some of the major projects underway include the City's stabilization of Twelve Mile Creek and dredging of Langan Lake, MBNEP's restoration of the headwaters of Twelve Mile Creek, MBNEP's apple snail abatement in Langan Park, implementation of a watershed-wide invasive species control plan, MAWSS trunk line and SWAT tank upgrades, a greenway trail system that runs along Three Mile Creek, and many more. Lessons learned include better budgeting for projects that are planned five years prior to when the project will actually be funded. Other challenges include strategic planning for environmental project development, identifying projects and funding available, and staffing up for projects so they have someone to execute the projects. Two projects were highlighted: apple snails abatement and the greenway trail system. Work on the apple snails has been an ongoing partnership effort with the City, MBNEP, and volunteers. The greenway trail project is still waiting on their funds from the US Dept. of the Treasury so they can get back underway. RESTORE funding will be used East of I65 to MLK. The greenway trail will provide safe access and allow residents to cross the stream. The City hopes to move forward with continuing design and construction of the trail system later this year.
- [Mobile Tensaw Apalachee \(MTA\) Delta](#): Jeanette Kelson presented. MTA is the largest watershed to date studied by MBNEP and covers 370 sq. miles. There are six HUC 12 watersheds in the MTA. The Wood Group began their work on the WMP in January 2020 and will wrap up in August 2021. The key priorities of the WMP include habitat conservation and management, public and stakeholder approval of the WMP, resiliency to SLR and climate change, legacy contamination issues especially along the west banks, and preserving recreational use. They are currently wrapping up the watershed characterization and watershed conditions. The climate vulnerability assessment is in progress along with community engagement. To date, a virtual boat tour, GIS Story Map, and project survey have been completed by the team. They are currently building their Steering Committee with many potential partners and are looking to establish a local champion. COVID-19 changed an in-person boat tour to virtual with Barry Vittor as the narrator and the virtual boat tour can be found on the MBNEP website.

- [D'Olive](#): Ashley Campbell presented. Ashley started with an aerial image of a sediment plume from D'Olive Bay entering Mobile Bay. Years ago, the City of Daphne had a lot of complaints and needed help addressing the issue. MBNEP stepped in to help. The D'Olive Watershed Working Group (DWWG) was established and continues to grow. A watershed assessment was completed by Marlon Cook and it was determined that they had a lot of issues with sedimentation. Five streams in the watershed were 303(d) listed. MBNEP guided the City of Daphne as they grew into a responsible municipality. Joe's Branch was their first project identified for restoration and gave them an opportunity to partner with the City of Spanish Fort. They won two awards for partnerships due to their diverse group of partners. Following Joe's Branch, with their WMP in hand, they received the very first NFWF GEBF funding from the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. D'Olive watershed was awarded \$12M and with that, they have restored 10,755 linear feet of stream, restored 74 acres, reduced erosion by 5,050 tons/year, reduced nitrogen by 55.6 tons/year, and reduced phosphorus by 10.4 tons/year. To date, four restoration technology workshops have been held to build capacity within local municipalities and contractors for large- and small-scale restoration work. The WMP has been implemented over the past ten years. The City of Daphne created new stormwater regulations with the help of MBNEP. All three of the local municipalities within the D'Olive watershed have personnel working with MBNEP. A segment of Joe's Branch was delisted in 2020 and that is their success story!
- [Fly Creek](#): Suzanne Sweetser presented. Fly Creek WMP is just getting started and had their kick off meeting with MBNEP just last week. The Jordan Brooks subwatershed was also added to their WMP study area. The WMP will focus on climate resilience, stormwater, and shorelines. Fly Creek is listed for stormwater due to agricultural runoff. They intend to make living shorelines more appealing to local residents in the watershed. There are underserved audiences in this watershed: older adults, rural, children, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBT, etc. and the team will engage these audiences to make sure their voices are heard. COVID-19 has been the biggest challenge due to community engagement being virtual from start to finish.
- [Bon Secour](#): Paige Felts presented. Bon Secour WMP includes Bon Secour, Skunk Bayou, and Oyster Bay. The WMP determined that the major issues were lack of water quality monitoring data, litter, stormwater management, and public education. Skunk Bayou and Oyster Bay also have issues with habitat protection, preservation, and public education. The two major partners in WMP implementation are the City of Foley, City of Gulf Shores, USFWS, and MBNEP. They currently have four sites being actively monitored for water quality (three are maintained by the City of Foley and one by a volunteer water monitor) and are about to add a fifth site. The litter gitter was installed in 2018 on a tributary to the river and to date, has collected 610 lbs of disposable and recyclable trash and 692 lbs of debris. Watershed signage has also been installed in both Oyster Bay and Bon Secour watersheds to raise awareness. The Bon Secour Wildlife Refuge acquired 241 acres through NFWF funding. The Oyster Bay and Wenzel tracts were close to 800 acres and the City of Gulf Shores was able to acquire for conservation. The Bon Secour Headwaters restoration project is ongoing and planning to go to construction in 2021. This project will restore 1,500 linear feet of stream, construct 2,300 linear feet of an offline stream channel and associated forested wetland floodplain for nutrient uptake and sediment reduction, construct a 15 acre constructed wetland, construct 770 linear feet of stream channel and associated floodplain that will connect the constructed wetland back to the river, and enhance the existing wetland through invasive plant management.
- [Weeks Bay](#): Casey Fulford presented. Weeks Bay WMP was finalized in November 2017 and the first Watershed Implementation Team (WIT) started up in September 2018. They came up with three management measures to bring forth and implement through the development of subcommittees. These

management measures are to identify/reduce hot spots for pathogens, identify/reduce sediment hot spots, and to create HOA/POA stormwater inspection guidelines and conference. Nineteen out of 33 management measures have made some sort of progress to date. Their lesson learned was that a watershed coordinator or someone to get everyone together is needed to keep implementation efforts rolling forward. Casey held the watershed coordinator position for a while but unfortunately, that position is no longer being funded. Their WIT meets quarterly to discuss what the subcommittees are moving forward with on specific projects. Casey highlighted a constructed wetland feasibility study to utilize borrow pits as a target for reducing flooding, pathogens, and sediment while creating conservation habitat off the Magnolia River. It is currently out for public comment and they will be forming a steering committee soon for this project.

- [Gulf Frontal](#): Wade Burcham presented. Gulf Frontal is just starting and working on watershed characterization, watershed conditions, climate vulnerability, and community engagement. Water quality, fish and wildlife, and beaches and shorelines are the top priorities, which is not surprising given that about 50% of this watershed is comprised of water. This watershed gets a lot of leading to huge demands placed on the infrastructure systems in the area especially during peak seasons. Nutrients and pathogens are both issues for this watershed. Fish and wildlife concerns are related to habitat displacement and conversion. Hardening of shorelines (about 25% of the shorelines are hardened in this watershed) have really decreased habitat for wildlife. Some places in the watershed are in need of shoreline nourishment and losing up to five feet of shoreline per year. Community engagement means have been through virtual meeting platforms and one-on-one discussions. One-on-one interactions have been key to engage underserved audiences as they will not typically attend any public meetings. Social media engagement has also been utilized. Little Lagoon Preservation Society is extremely engaged and supportive to help get the word out. Lessons learned include making a plan and keeping it simple, defining goals early, and using the data that you have rather than waiting for theoretical data. Succession planning is really helpful for the Steering Committee to stay on top of what is coming down the road. They have also learned that their watershed has a couple of issues that other WMPs do not typically address such as no boat wakes in intercoastal waterways and fishing limits. Other challenges include issues and concerns outside of the watershed such as incoming flows, interstate waters, and groundwater pollution sources outside of the watershed. Their success story is their level of collaboration so far for the development of the WMP. Many of the groups found out that they all had common goals and interests for the watershed at planning meetings, and these groups working toward a common goal is going to be key when implementation rolls around.
- [Wolf Bay](#): Leslie Gahagan presented. Wolf Bay comprises three HUCs – Sandy/Wolf Creeks, Milflin Creek, and Graham Bayou. The WMP is currently out for public notice and comment. The WMP identified the major priorities as water quality (nutrients and pathogens), invasive species, and erosion and sedimentation. Litter was originally discussed but ground truthing proved that it wasn't a major issue. Two stream segments have been 303(d) listed for pathogens. Several streams are experiencing mass wasting due to urbanization. However, the public outcry was concerns for future development and growth. Subdivisions are sprouting up and they are bracing for the effects of development in areas that were previously forested. Additional recreational access and conservation areas are also areas of concern for the general public. Wolf Bay Watershed Watch has been the local champion for over 20 years. They have been conducting volunteer water quality monitoring, providing education to the community, and have been instrumental in pushing this plan forward. Other major partners are the City of Foley and Riviera Utilities. Many residents were active in watershed planning, which will help drive implementation efforts. They have a couple of projects they are hoping to get funded through NFWF. Wolf Creek Headwaters

Restoration is proposed and would include the design of three small projects including stream and habitat restoration, streambank stabilization, and a constructed wetland and floodplain enhancement. They are also pursuing land acquisition for some large parcels and they are partnering with the City of Orange Beach to hopefully acquire these parcels. Their success story is a 1,500 linear feet stream restoration project that was completed in 2013 on the headwaters of Wolf Creek. This reach of restored stream had no wildlife present and low to now DO but now supports fish and native wildlife with DO levels well within the healthy range.

4. EPA PE Team Questions/Comments:

- Romell Nandi commended the PIC for all we are doing. There is not another NEP program in the country that comes close to MBNEP and its partners' efforts for watershed planning and implementation.
- The Program Evaluation (PE) is typically an in-person site visit where US EPA will visit restoration sites and meet with MBNEP staff. However, due to COVID-19, this PE had to be virtual. The PE is about the NEP showcasing its good work and for US EPA to recommend potential pathways for exploration and improvement within their program.
- Romell Nandi's Questions:
 - What role do local or state governments play in development and implementation of the WMPs?
 - Debi Foster commended the City of Mobile stormwater management team for their help in her work. The current administration has been very actively engaged in environmental issues, but one challenge is staff turnover because this means education of local government administration has to start all over again. The City has stepped up to inventory vacant lands, which has been very helpful to Debi's work. Both the City and the County have established a Green Team, which took folks from the top level of both municipalities to bring it to fruition.
 - Casey Fulford commented that the nine municipalities in their watershed have all stepped up and contributed much to projects and supported their efforts.
 - Lee Walters highlighted Ashley Campbell (City of Daphne) and Leslie Gahagan (City of Foley) because although MBNEP gets everyone together, they are the boots on the ground really making these projects happen. The biggest success of all these projects is collaboration among teams.
 - The current monitoring framework does not have shoreline monitoring protocols in it. Is this something that the PIC would find useful and is it a need to have standard protocols for shoreline monitoring?
 - Suzanne Sweetser commented that she would be interested in seeing those and that it would be helpful.
 - Wade Burcham agreed that if we were doing our monitoring consistently that it would make a greater impact.
 - Lee Walters commented that more data is always beneficial.
 - Jason Kudulis mentioned that many of the engineering teams on the Western Shore were engaged regarding monitoring requirements for shoreline project permits and having consistent, uniform data across projects. Monitoring cohesion is definitely needed.
- Chris Plymale's Question:
 - What are the benefits or drawbacks to lumping a few HUCs into a watershed plan vs a single HUC WMP?

- Leslie Gahagan chimed in and stated that she has been in two of the combined watershed (complex) planning efforts. In both cases, combining a few HUCS into a single WMP allowed for better resource alignment, more diverse partners and stakeholders, and better community buy-in. When grouped by political area and who the users are – you get better buy-in and bigger bang for your buck. Also helps with implementation because you get the same players to the table for multiple areas.
 - Wade Burcham agreed and said that Gulf Frontal has had a similar experience. Many groups had overlapping goals but had never even been in the same room. Rival groups are realizing that they can work together to achieve a common goal.
 - Debi Foster has had experience with a single HUC WMP and a complex WMP. She has found both processes to be very similar. For the Western Shore, she attended all three meetings in urban and rural parts of the watershed, and she found that they all had similar concerns. There was no urban versus rural, their concerns were the same.
 - Don Blancher commented that grouping it by complex is better resource management and that stakeholders get the whole picture not just portions of it.
- Kathy Hill's Comment:
- All of her questions were answered during presentations. She says it is astonishing to see how all of the partners work together and collaborate.

5. Announcements

- The National Nonpoint Source Training Workshop is November 16 - 19, 2020.
- GISAA is scheduled for the week of November 16 but it may end up being canceled.

6. Adjourn

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 4:03 pm by Patric Harper and seconded by Don Blancher.