

Meeting Minutes

March 2023 Steering Committee Meeting

Eastern Delta Watershed Management Plan

March 29, 2023, 12:00, Spanish Fort City Hall

Attendees

Shannon McGlynn	ADEM
Jennifer Barker	Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)
Ryan Peek	Alabama Forestry Commission
Sarah Ballard	Anchor QEA
Rob Howell	Anchor QEA
Clair Dorough	City of Bay Minette
Cody Ledet	City of Spanish Fort
Mike McMillan	City of Spanish Fort
Robin Delaney	Delaney Company
Lee Walters	GMC
Mike Bunn	Historic Blakeley State Park
Shemika Brown	MBNEP
Christian Miller	Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP)
Joey Koptis	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Sandy Page	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Missi Shumer	Shumer Consulting
Tim Thibaut	Vittor & Associates

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- A presentation of the Eastern Delta Watershed Management Plan (WMP) was given by Christian Miller (MBNEP), Rob Howell (Anchor QEA), and Missi Shumer (Shumer Consulting). The presentation is provided in Attachment 1.
- After the presentation, the following items were discussed:
 - The main concerns with the Eastern Delta watershed are land use, development, and stormwater drainage.
 - The City of Spanish Fort expressed the following concerns:
 - Erosion issues in Spanish Fort Estates
 - Public access to water and piers (the City recently acquired 144 acres on Bay Minette Creek for future public access and park)

- Finding funding sources has been an issue in the past
- Mayor McMillan requested a detailed map of the watershed
- Lee Walters of GMC requested any information the City of Spanish Fort has on drainage issues.
- Lee Walters stated that historically, priority projects identified through Watershed Management Plans within surrounding watersheds have been highly successful at receiving funding. The goal of the Committee is to help us identify the top two or three projects that could be funded and built in the watershed to address priorities.
- The Alabama Forestry Commission stated that urbanization is its main concern; its primary goal is to maintain as much forested land within the watershed as possible. The Forestry Commission suggested a potential stewardship plan with landowners through a state or federal cost sharing program. This would entice landowners to retain forested land rather than converting properties to other land uses.
- ADEM's main concern is stormwater management throughout various areas of the watershed. It is important to look ahead at anticipated population growth and impacts to the infrastructure. The City and County should implement regulations that support and encourage strategic and sustainable growth.
- Rob Howell of Anchor QEA stated that he anticipates public comment on future land use development in the watershed. Public community outreach meetings that will be held for the WMP will provide the opportunity to educate the public on limitations that regulators have when dealing with land developers who are following set regulatory guidelines. This watershed is unique in that it is very clean, with very little litter compared to others.
- Tim Thibaut of Vittor & Associates stated that they have recorded severe degrading of stream banks in three areas north of Highway 31 in Spanish Fort (Wakefield Subdivision, Tuberville Lane, and a Malbis Plantation parcel north of Rockwell Elementary School). There has been substantial loss of sediment, resulting in sediment loading into the watershed. Tim expressed concern that these areas are not located within the Eastern Delta WMP project boundaries and were also not addressed in the adjacent WMPs. Follow-up with MBNEP will be required to determine the final project boundary for the Eastern Delta WMP to ensure these areas are addressed.
- The Natural Resources Conservation Service stated that it is currently updating soils and baseline data within the Delta. There is a national priority within the Service for coastal mapping.
- The next steering committee meeting will be held the week of May 8, 2023.