



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Project Implementation Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 20, 2020
Virtual Meeting through Google Meet**



Attendees:

Katie Baltzer (The Nature Conservancy)	Nicole Love (Alabama Audubon)
Mark Berte (Alabama Coastal Foundation)	Shannon McGlynn (ADEM NPS)
Chris Blankenship (ADCNR)	Melissa Mehaffey (GMC)
Mary Kate Brown (The Nature Conservancy)	Michelle Melton (City of Mobile)
Wade Burcham (Geosyntec)	Amy Newbold (US EPA – Gulf of Mexico Div.)
Dottie Byron (DISL)	Joyce Nicholas (Mobile SWCD)
Casi Callaway (Mobile Baykeeper)	Autumn Nitz (ADEM Coastal NPS)
Ashley Campbell (City of Daphne)	Steve O’Hearn (Thompson)
John Curry (Hydro, LLC)	Amy Paulson (Environmental Science Associates)
Benji Elmore (Alabama Forestry Commission)	Greg Pierce (Geological Survey of Alabama)
Troy Ephriam (Ephriam & Associates)	Chris Plymale (US EPA)
Walter Ernest (Pelican Coast Conservancy)	Melissa Pringle (Allen Engineering & Science)
Jay Estes (Allen Engineering & Science)	Casey Rains (City of Spanish Fort)
Mike Eubanks (Thompson Engineering)	Evan Reid (Volkert)
Carl Ferraro (Stantec)	Justin Rigdon (ADEM Water Quality)
Casey Fulford (AL Association of Conservation Districts)	Mark Saunders (Thompson Engineering)
Leslie Gahagan (City of Foley)	Eric Scheider (ESA)
Meg Goecker (Moffatt & Nichol)	Kari Servold (Moffatt & Nichol)
Heather Griffin	Randy Shaneyfelt (ADEM Coastal NPS Program)
Judy Haner (The Nature Conservancy)	Mike Sharp (NFWF)
Patric Harper (U.S. Fish & Wildlife)	Jason Shaw (ALDOT)
Ashley Henderson (SWCC)	Mike Shelton (ADNCR – State Lands Division)
Jason Hermann (MRD)	Sam St. John (Logical Computer Solutions)
Byron Hinchey (S&ME Inc.)	Susan Summerlin (ADEM)
Timothy Jensen (3MC Partnership)	Nigel Temple (Ecology & Environment Inc.)
Matthew Jones (Mobile County)	Memphis Vaughan (Tetra Tech)
Jeanette Kelson (Wood PLC)	Chris Warn (ESA)
Jeremiah Kolb (ADCNR, State Lands)	Barja Wilson (Groundworks Mobile County)
	Emma Witherington (Stantec)

MBNEP Staff: Christian Miller, Jason Kudulis, Madison Blanchard, Katie Dylewski, Kelley Barfoot, and Roberta Swann

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:37 pm by Patric Harper.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Patric Harper called for a motion to approve the minutes from the past two meetings (September 12, 2020 and February 20, 2020). Mark Berte made the motion, and Carl Ferraro seconded. The motion carried.

3. Presentations

- MBNEP Restoration Team Update: a video was provided by MBNEP to update the PIC on the status of MBNEP watershed management plans, restoration projects, and the impact that COVID-19 has had on

these projects. Most project timelines have not been seriously impacted by COVID-19; however, the pandemic has increased electronic communication, created a demand for virtual meetings and thinking outside of the box to engage stakeholders and project partners. The MBNEP Restoration Team Update will be added to the Mobile Bay NEP website.

- Lightning Point Restoration Project: Mary Kate Brown provided an update on TNC's Lightning Point project. The purpose of this project is to restore and protect the shoreline of Bayou La Batre and create additional coastal habitat, which includes building 1.5 miles of breakwater and jetties and creating up to 40 acres of coastal habitats. Construction for this project began in September 2019 and is anticipated to be complete in August 2020. Dredging is complete. Next steps involve marsh plantings, more surveys, and additional landowner agreements for additional four breakwaters to the east. TNC is working with Moffat Nichol to develop a long-term sustainability program to ensure project will last longer than 25-year design. Lots of wildlife has been observed including Least Terns, Avocets, and Black Skimmers to name a few. COVID-19 has not affected project schedule. Drone footage of the project site was shot by Moffat and Nichol and can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/kmTzDfaFQzg>
- Point aux Pins Living Shoreline Restoration: Jeremiah Kolb provided an update for this project on behalf of ADCNR. The purpose of this project is to install approx. 3,000 linear feet of pre-cast wave attenuating units. The erosion rate of the shoreline will also be monitored for the next five years. ADCNR is currently working to award the project and once awarded, the contractor will have 165 days to complete it. This project has not had any obvious impacts due to COVID-19.
- Dauphin Island Causeway: Mobile County's Matthew Jones provided an update on the DI Causeway Project. The purpose of this project is to stabilize and restore 3.2 miles of shoreline creating a living shoreline and enhanced aquatic and wetland habitats with the 1917 shoreline as the design target. Geosyntec is working now to finish the design alternatives analysis. Approx. 850,000 cubic yards of sediment are needed for this project and they plan to beneficially use USACE sediment. Considering trucking it to the site as it would already be de-watered, which would reduce turbidity and protect adjacent oyster reefs. Project is being designed to allow marsh to adapt to SLR. COVID-19 has not affected this project other than increasing electronic communication among team members.
- Bayfront Park: Mobile County's Matthew Jones provided an update on the Master Plan to improve Bayfront Park. Bayfront Park is located on the Northern end of the DI Causeway Project. The Master Plan will include new park features such as water access through a two-acre pocket beach. The 90% design submittal has been received as well as the 100% design for the architectural component. The USACE permit has been applied for and concurrence on EFH (Essential Fish Habitat). They are currently awaiting the 60% design submittal for the pocket beach. COVID-19 has not affected this project other than increasing electronic communication among team members.
- D'Olive Bay Dredging: Jeremiah Kolb provided an update for this project on behalf of ADCNR. The purpose of dredging the D'Olive boat channel is to improve access at the only public boat launch in Daphne. They will dredge approx. 22,000 cubic yards (5.5 acres) of silty sand material, which will improve access to Mobile Bay and Tensaw River Delta. The channel will be dredged to a maximum of seven feet mean low water. This is the City of Daphne's first dredge project and is expected to be completed soon. There are no COVID-19 related impacts to this project.
- Tiawasee Creek Watershed Stormwater Facility Enhancement: Ashley Campbell from the City of Daphne provided this update. The purpose of this project is to restore and enhance two existing stormwater facilities. This includes complete re-design of two stormwater management facilities to address water quality and quantity (existing design only addressed water quantity). Jade Consulting is at 95% engineering and design. COVID-19 has delayed USACE permit issuance and made it challenging for

project partners because they have not been able to meet on site. They hope to begin construction in September 2020 and finish up by the end of the year.

- Forever Wild D'Olive Bay Land Acquisition: Ashley Campbell from the City of Daphne provided this update. The purpose of this project is to purchase acreage along D'Olive Bay to preserve acreage on Valentine Island. As a result of this project, approx. 100 acres on Valentine Island have been purchased along with 210 acres on D'Olive Bay. A Bald Eagle nest on the purchased acreage can be seen from the Causeway. The City hopes to add additional parcels along the road and aims to finalize the purchase by the end of the year. There have been no impacts to this project due to COVID-19.
- Bon Secour Headwaters Restoration: Leslie Gahagan gave this update on behalf of the City of Foley. The purpose of this project is to restore the headwaters of the Bon Secour River and reduce the impacts of urbanization through the implementation of a constructed wetland. This project was identified in the WMP as a top priority. The stream will be diverted into a stormwater wetland that removes nutrients, sediment loadings, and captures floatables. They will also remove invasive plants as part of this project. Engineering and design are complete, and the property has been purchased. The USACE permit is currently in process. There have been no impacts to this project due to COVID-19.

4. Questions/Comments

- RE: Point aux Pins: someone asked if there is a need for marsh planting behind the breakwater. If so, maybe this is a future project we could address? There are sea grass beds along Point aux Pins shoreline, which adds to the complexity of adding any sediment to create additional marsh.
- RE: Point aux Pins: Wade asked if there would be marsh creation behind the breakwaters and who is doing the monitoring. There are no plans to do any marsh creation behind the breakwaters and Tetra Tech is currently the monitoring engineer on site.
- RE: Point aux Pins: What is the height of the breakwater – will it be underwater at high tide? Emergent at high tide.
- RE: DI Causeway: someone asked if there is any fear that a contractor may pass on the project due to its proximity to oyster reefs and whether there would be any early contractor coordination to determine if this is an issue or not. Wade responded that they have talked to a lot of contractors and so far, all are very interested in the project although proximity is a concern. Mechanically placing material from the land is generally perceived as lower risk.
- Patric Harper commented that he can help with National Coastal Wetlands grants since this is a USFWS grant program. This grant focuses on land acquisition, improvement, and maintenance of coastal wetlands.

5. Announcements

- Jason Kudulis announced that Joes Branch has officially been removed from the final updated 303(d) list from ADEM, which is the direct result of all of the hard work from many of the PIC members.
- The next PIC Meeting will likely be September 23 or 24 and Katie Dylewski will send out a doodle poll to confirm the day and time.

6. Adjourn

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 3:52 pm by Judy Haner and seconded by Carl Ferraro.