

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

Attendees – Mark Berte, Alabama Coastal Foundation; Chris Blankenship, ADCNR Marine Resources Division; Jennifer Denson, Partners for Environmental Progress; Darrelyn Dunmore, Strategic Wealth Specialists; Troy Ephriam; Dr. Mimi Fearn, Dog River Clearwater Revival; Leslie Gahagan, City of Foley; Charles ‘Skip’ Gruber, Baldwin County Commission; Judy Haner, The Nature Conservancy; 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. William Puckett, Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee; Dr. Susan Rees, U.S Army Corps of Engineers; Dr. LaDon Swann, MS-AL Sea Grant Consortium

MBNEP Staff Present: *Roberta Swann, Rick Frederick, Christian Miller, Kelley Barfoot, Paul Lammers, Bethany Dickey, Jackie Wilson*

1. Honorable Chris Blankenship calls meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.
2. Approval of Minutes
 - Honorable Blankenship asked for comments or revisions to the minutes from the February 17, 2017 meeting. Ms. Dunmore made a motion to approve and Mr. Berte seconded.
3. Director’s Report
 - **Budget vs Actual:** MBNEP has received some new funds from the EPA, which will be used to do an economic valuation of the value of the NEP using D’Olive Watershed as a case study.
 - Habitat Mapping should be done by July 31, 2017.
 - **Ecosystem Restoration:** The Coastal Habitat Restoration Plan should be completed by December 2017. The CAC is the last committee that still needs to take the survey.
 - **Watershed Planning:** The Tensaw-Apalachee and Wolf Bay are awaiting Federal Restore dollars. We are on the last major project for the D’Olive Watershed (DAF). Tip of Mon Louis Island- in adopted management phase- has been built, planted, and survived Tropical Storm Cindy. ADCNR is funding MS Sound outreach education specifically with the Dauphin Island WMP.
 - **Coastal Alabama Conservation and Resiliency Corps:** The costs are so high that the funding is in the negative right now. Roberta will be meeting with Student Conservation Association (SCA) senior managers to discuss the cost structure.
 - **Technical Assistance and Capacity Building:** Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring program is growing. Interpretive road signage has been installed in Bon Secour and Fowl Rivers. The Low Impact Development (LID) video is now complete.
 - 81% of our budget has been committed and 72% of our budget has been expended.
 - **Trash Free Waterways:** Don Bates from Thompson Engineering installed his “Litter Gitter” at Maple Street to see how it worked. We received \$25,000 from EPA to expand this pilot program with more of these litter traps (3 in Foley, 2 in Dog River, and 5 in

Three Mile Creek). The Mayor recently recognized MBNEP and Don on the success of his litter traps so far. We are seeking a grant from the Gulf of Mexico Program to have 15 more installed.

4. Committee Reports (MBNEP Management Conference Co-Chairs)

Science Advisory Committee

Fred Leslie reported on the meeting from May 24, 2017, which had a large turnout. The Marsh Restoration Project in Fowl River was discussed. Don Blancher and Meg Goecker gave an update the Tensaw-Apalachee WMP scope. MBNEP is requiring metadata from projects to be submitted to the DISL data management center. State of the Bay was briefly discussed.

Project Implementation Committee

- Judy Haner and Paul Lammers reported.
- **Coastal Alabama Restoration Tool (CART):** the clicker survey has been done at each Management Conference Committee except the CAC.
- **Bon Secour:** WMP is complete and has been closed for public comment (on NEP website). The City of Foley has passed a resolution in support of the plan. Watershed identification signs have been put up in Bon Secour and Oyster Bay.
- **Mississippi Sound Complex:** the draft version of the Bayou WMP will be out for public comment by September. MBNEP is working to get pathogen sources assessment for West Fowl River Watershed.
- **Dog River:** draft WMP should be available for public comment by September.
- **Weeks Bay:** draft WMP should be available for public comment by September.
- **D'Olive Watershed:** before/after pictures and videos of some restoration projects were shown.
- **Tip of Mon Louis Island:** completed. The Conservation Corps kids helped with the planting on this project.

Business Resources Committee

Ms. Denson, Ms. Dunmore, and Mr. Frederick provided the report. The committee has been growing and has new organizations that have joined. The BRC and PEP hosted an initial cleanup at Maple Street in November 2016. The second cleanup was on March 24, 2017. 260 pounds of plastic, styrofoam, and aluminum was collected. The "Litter Gitter" is working great in this area. Ms. Denson, Mr. Frederick, and Ms. Swann have promoted MBNEP and Create a Clean Water Future on Fox Studio Ten and 106.5 FM.

Community Resources Committee

Ms. Herrington and Mr. Berte provided a report from the June 16, 2017 meeting. The two CRC subgroups (education & advocacy) decided on their short term and long-term goals from the workplan. The CRC proposed a process for the MBNEP to have a review committee for projects selected by the Alabama RESTORE Council prior to the final selection. The projects would be looked at in how it meets the goals of the CCMP. Once the committee has come up with a plan of action on the review process they will reach out to Executive Committee Members for suggestions.

Community Action Committee

Dr. Fearn and Ms. Gahagan reported. The first story highlighting a monitoring site and its monitor has been released. Alabama Water Watch certification was held on June 14th to establish a monitoring program in Bon Secour, Oyster Bay, and Skunk Bayou. Conservation Corps members were trained as well. Jason Kudulis has completed a “how-to” manual for planning and implementing volunteer programs. There are 22 volunteer monitoring sites. Bon Secour and Weeks Bay will be the focus of getting better monitoring.

5. Old Business

Federal RESTORE Projects Update: Ms. Powell gave an update on Federal Restore Council funding. NRDA will have their annual public council meeting September 12th in Mobile. The Federal Council will have a work session in early September and she will give an update at the next GNC meeting. After changes in the administration, things are moving much smoother after the update from our last meeting.

6. Other / Announcements

- The MBNEP Annual Breakfast meeting is set for December 8, 2017.
- The LID video was shown.

Adjourned at 11:25 a.m.