

**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
Government Networks Committee Meeting  
Original Oyster House, Mobile AL  
February 17, 2017**

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*The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Government Networks Committee was established to bring State agencies and regional government administrators together with local officials of Mobile and Baldwin counties to more effectively communicate local needs/understand State agency functions and priorities. The goal of this committee is to articulate innovative ways to improve communications and management of our coastal environment.*

In attendance:

Joseph Abston, Washington County Commission; Howard Smith, City of Semmes; Chris Blankenship, ADCNR Marine Resources Division; Guy Busby, Baldwin County Legislative Delegation; Jeff Collier, Town of Dauphin Island; Susan Dingman, ADEM; Charles 'Skip' Gruber, Baldwin County Commission; Kae Hamilton, Town of Perdido Beach; Scott Hughes, ADEM; Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County Commission; Shannon McGlynn, ADEM; Eliska Morgan, Alabama Gulf Coast Restore Council; Patty Powell, ADCNR State Lands Division; William Puckett, Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee; Elizabeth Roney, Bradley Byrne's Office; Barry Tierce, Stantec; Josh Running, Stantec; Mike Burton, Stantec; Newton Cromer, City of Saraland; Casey Rains, City of Spanish Fort; Chris Plymale, US EPA Region 4; Joshua Gilman, Stantec

MBNEP Staff: Roberta Swann, Christian Miller, Paul Lammers, and Bethany Dickey

**Takeaways**

- NFWF-GEBF funding is entering its 5<sup>th</sup> funding cycle.
- Many communities are having issues with illegal dumping. ADEM has a Solid Waste & Recyclable Material Management Act that has a funding mechanism to help aid clean-ups.
- The State Revolving Fund, administered by ADEM, provides a low-interest loan funding source for improving infrastructure. These funds can be used on a variety of projects including waste water, drinking water, and stormwater (including LID).

Commissioners Merceria Ludgood and Charles 'Skip' Gruber welcomed participants. The meeting was called to order at 7:44 a.m. and Commissioner Gruber moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, a move to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Gruber, seconded by Jeff Collier, and the minutes were approved.

Next on the agenda, Patty Powell gave an update on Federal Restore Council funding. She met with the acting director this week to speak about foreseeable problems. Eliska Morgan gave an update on the status of RESTORE & NFWF-GEBF funding. Funding is in its 5<sup>th</sup> phase. The deadline for entering projects is February 24, 2017. Projects should be in the project portal. The deadline for Alabama RESTORE projects was in January and projects are going through the RFE (request for evaluations) process. It takes four RFEs to move a project into the next phase. Please go to [www.alabamacoastalrestoration.org](http://www.alabamacoastalrestoration.org) to sign up for e-mail updates. Deadlines, release of a plan, meetings, and information on funding are all on the website.

Christian started the presentation with an overview of the results from last meeting's assessment of community priorities and how much regulatory barriers there are for each. Access and Heritage received over 90% of votes as a community priority. Following are: Habitat and Shorelines with over 80%, Stormwater with about 80%, Waste water with over 70%, and Resilience with under 70%. The regulatory hurdles for each are as follows: Access and Heritage – under 70%, Habitat and Shorelines – under 60%, Stormwater – over 40%, Waste water – about 50%, and Resilience – over 50%.

<http://www.cleanwaterfuture.com/>

Floor was opened for communicating ways that the GNC could help each community with the major issues they have been having. Illegal dumping is a problem in most communities. The Town of Dauphin Island provides dumpsters 2 days a week for people to come dump their trash to minimize the illegal dumping in that area. The City of Spanish Fort is in the process of passing a Clean Water Ordinance. Scott Hughes let the committee know that there is a Solid Waste & Recyclable Material Management Act that has a funding mechanism to help clean up illegal dumping. The Town of Perdido Beach has an issue with maintaining their shorelines.

Scott Hughes provided the following information related to ADEM's program for cleaning up illegal dumping:

- The Department has a robust program of working with innocent landowners to cleanup illegal solid waste dumps that have been established on their property. The program is funded by a \$1.00/ton fee that is assessed on materials that are disposed of in permitted landfills.
- A similar program is designed to work with innocent landowners on the removal of illegal scrap tire dumps that have been established on their property. This program is funded by a \$1.00/tire disposal fee that is assessed when individuals purchase new tires.
- Both programs have been tremendous successes in ridding Alabama's landscape of illegal solid waste dumps and illegal scrap tire dumps both of which can cause significant environmental impacts and serve as vectors for mosquitoes and rats.
- Both programs are administered by the ADEM Land Division and Otis Todd (334/371-7767) is a good point of contact.

Next, Susan Dingman gave a presentation on ADEM's State Revolving Fund (SRF) Program. The Clean Water SRF and Drinking Water SRF are low interest loan programs intended to finance public waste water and drinking water infrastructure improvements in Alabama. They are funded with a blend of state and federal funds. To be eligible you must be a local government unit, have an ability to repay, project must be ranked on the priority list, and projects must clear environmental review. Pre-application starts October 1<sup>st</sup> for the next fiscal year.

[www.adem.alabama.gov](http://www.adem.alabama.gov)

Josh Running with Stantec gave a presentation on Cost/Benefit Analysis of Stream Restoration as a Nutrient and Sediment Offset. Degraded and eroding urban streams can be a significant source of sediments and nutrients. Their case studies and monitoring show that the most cost effective way to reduce pollution is stream restoration on a dollar/pound basis.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 AM