



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Government Networks Committee Meeting
September 28th, 2018
Original Oyster House
3733A Battleship Pkwy
Spanish Fort, AL 36527
7:30 am -9:00 am**

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions

Baldwin County Commissioner Skip Gruber
Mobile County Commissioner Merceria Ludgood

2. Review and approval of minutes

3. Old Business

- a. NFWF GEBF/RESTORE update – Chris Blankenship, ADCNR

4. New Business

- a. CCMP Meeting Review
- b. Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan Update- Strategy Review
- c. Other/announcements

5. Adjourn



Minutes

In attendance: Scott Bannon, ADCNR-MRD; Chris Blankenship, ADCNR; Diane Burnett, SARPC; Guy Busby, Baldwin County Legislative Delegation; Joe Faust, AL House; Skip Gruber, BCC; Bill Hightower, AL Senate; Scott Hughes, ADEM; Merceria Ludgood, MCC; Mike McMillan, City of Spanish Fort; Chris Plymale, US EPA; William Puckett, AL SWCC; Casey Rains, City of Spanish Fort; Rickey Rhodes, SARPC; Elizabeth Roney, Bradley Byrne’s Office; Sandy Stimpson, City of Mobile; Dennis Sullivan, City of Chickasaw; Margie Wilcox, AL House; Howard Smith, City of Semmes; Griffin Powell, City of Orange Beach; Matt Anderson, City of Mobile

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

Takeaways

- To date, Deepwater Horizon funds in Alabama have been committed to 114 projects totaling \$660 million dollars.
- Gov. Ivey is hosting a Restoration Summit at City Hall in Spanish Fort on October 11th starting at 3:00 PM.
- A need was identified to assess/work with planning commissions and other land use managers over the course of the next five-year CCMP.

Meeting was called to order at 7:49 A.M.

Merceria moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting which was seconded by Mike McMillan.

Chris Blankenship gave a report to the group on the status of Deepwater Horizon funded projects. To date, Alabama has committed funding to 114 projects totaling approximately \$660 million dollars. There is ~\$700 million remaining to be allocated. These funds will be committed over a series of Funded Priority Lists every three years through 2032.

Gov. Ivey will be hosting a Restoration Summit on Tuesday, October 11th at City Hall in Spanish Fort. There will be two concurrent afternoon sessions

from 3:00 – 5:15 P.M. A “RESTORE 101” which is geared to people who are unfamiliar with the RESTORE

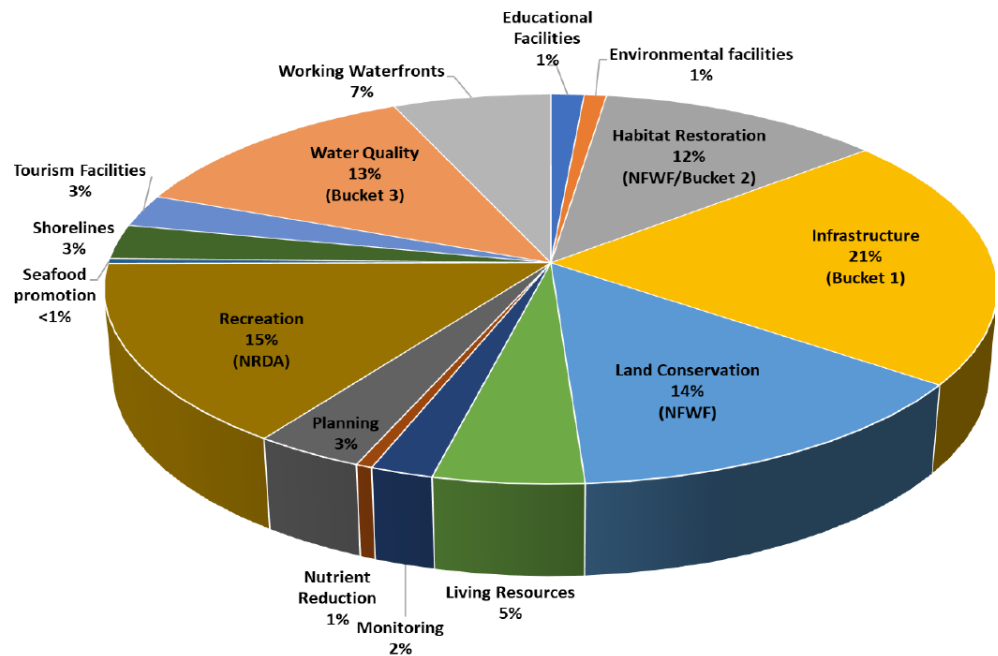


Figure 1. Total Deepwater Horizon Projects by type.

Act and its funding mechanisms and provide information on how to engage in Alabama’s restoration efforts. A “Program Evaluation and Adaptive Management Session” is aimed towards a more technical audience and will help inform Alabama’s approach to evaluating the progress of restoration projects funded by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. At 5:15 P.M. Gov. Ivey will speak about restoration progress in Alabama, and the public will have an opportunity to provide comment on restoration priorities.

For more information on the status of Deepwater Horizon funded projects see the Alabama Current Connection newsletter: http://www.mobilebaynep.com/images/uploads/library/AL_CC-V12-Issue_1_Summer_2018-R2Final.pdf

Next, Christian gave an overview the process of updating the MBNEP’s five-year Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. Over 170 people participated in the CCMP update meeting held on August 30th. The information gathered at the meeting was synthesized and a survey was conducted to prioritize opportunities and challenges. Approximately 80 people completed the survey. Themes identified for the GNC included:

Opportunities	Challenges
Regulatory Changes	Buy-In/Lack of Political Will
Incentives/Innovative Financing	Funding
Education	Development Pressures
Legislative Action	Inconsistencies/Lack of Regulations
Infrastructure Improvements	Stormwater Management

Roberta asked the group why they participate in the GNC,

Sandy Stimpson, “I’m here to learn, see what is going on and what others’ challenges are and what part we can play in this association.”

Margie Wilcox, “My childhood was spent around Dog River and the Bay and this is my one opportunity to work on a committee that is helping protect the areas I loved growing up.”

Rickie Rhodes, “Our role is to partner and support wherever we can in our three-county area to improve quality of life.”

Bill Hightower, “The coastal region is the stepchild a lot of times at the State level, and I want to make sure I can represent it well.”

Mike McMillan, “I feel it gives us the opportunity to learn how to get to the point we need to go to achieve the things we want for our communities.”

Merceria Ludgood, “I was the typical elected official, I knew nothing. Through the NEP I learned how interconnected everything is. I came to understand the challenges we face on the coast.”

When we developed this strategy five years ago there were three prongs to it, one was to educate local officials on the interconnectedness of the environment to our economy and quality of life. We want economic growth, but we don't want to be burdened with the unintended consequences of that growth. The second was to improve the regulatory framework to better protect coastal resources. The third is working to educate local municipal staff to learn how we can better protect coastal resources.

Next, the group reviewed the suggested GNC-related goals and objectives in the Technical Assistance and Capacity Building strategy:

TAC 3 "Build capacity of local governments to manage and enhance coastal environmental resources"

Diane mentioned that the smaller municipalities that SARPC works with have a gap in both staff and resources compared to the larger municipalities. It's at the planning commission level where the issue is. If you address stormwater management in the subdivision regs than the builders will develop to that level. Roberta asked if we should be more actively working with the local planning commissions. Sandy recommended talking with the planning commissions to see what they know and if we could be of assistance. Merceria recommended adding "planning commissions and any other land use decision makers" to the targets under TAC-3.1 Sandy also recommended talking with Shayla Beaco (and others) to see what is being done to educate planning commissions. It was recommended that an inventory of local planning commissions be conducted to gain a better understanding of who was doing what across both coastal counties.

Merceria mentioned that everyone is going to be watching the City of Mobile to see how the stormwater utility works and will rush to implement their own if proven successful. Sandy suggested sitting down with Diane Irby to make sure that the stormwater utility is something that can serve as a model for the other communities.

Margie talked about a need to educate developers and Roberta mentioned the efforts going on through the BRC to establish an incentive program to fund implementation of green infrastructure to better manage stormwater. There is also a new partnership with the U. of South Alabama Mitchell School of Business to get students involved in local environmental issues (currently focusing on trash-related issues in the City of Mobile).

Scott Hughes said that ADEM has funded the production of signage that can be placed at local access points. These signs have a QR code that can be used to access environmental information (sanitary sewer overflows, municipal sewage discharge points, coastal beach monitoring, water quality, fish consumption advisories). If you are interested contact Scott for more information on getting signs for your community.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 A.M.