

**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Project Implementation Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 11, 2014
Blakely Classrooms, 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center**

Minutes

Attendees:

Emery Baya (Thompson Engineering)	Mark Berte (Alabama Coastal Foundation)
Wade Burcham (Thompson Engineering)	Celena Boykin (Baldwin County)
Doug Heatwole (Ecology & Environment)	Leslie Turney (USACE-Regulatory)
Judy Haner (The Nature Conservancy)	Patric Harper (USFWS-Coastal Programs)
Sam St. John (ACF/Baykeeper)	Bob Howard (EPA Region IV)
Teddy King (ADPH-Baldwin County)	Phillip Hinesley (ADCNR/State Lands Division)
John Mareska (ADCNR-MRD)	Dan Van Nestrand (NOAA-Restoration Ctr)
Paul Johnson (Ecology & Environment)	Dan Bond (City of Gulf Shores)
Byron Hinchey (AMEC)	David Stejskol (CH2MHill)
Roger Burke (Tetra Tech)	Ashley Campbell (City of Daphne)
Sherry Allison (Allen Engineering)	Leslie Gahagan (City of Foley)
Christian Miller (ACWP)	Randy Shaneyfelt (ADEM-Coastal)
Thomas Doyle (LASouth)	L.G. Adams (ADCNR, Weeks Bay Res.)

MBNEP Staff: Roberta Swann, Linda Sierke

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 by PIC Co-Chair Patric Harper (FWS). Introductions were made around the room.

2. Approval of the Minutes

PIC Co-Chair Patric Harper asked for any deletions, additions, changes to the minutes for June 12, 2014. There were none, the minutes were approved as written.

3. Status Update: Joe's Branch Phase II

- A status update of Joe's Branch Phase II, was given by Mr. Wade Burcham of Thompson Engineering. Mr. Burcham began by pointing out there are 6 or so projects in the conceptual phase identified in the NFWF grant. He is currently working on developing alternatives to get to the 30% design for the first priority segment to present to NFWF and MBNEP on September 15, 2014. Mr. Burcham then expressed that he hopes to come away from the presentation with direction for moving into detailed design. Mr. Burcham stated this is just a quick overview of where we are with planning and would be happy to answer any questions. There were no questions from the group and continued to the next item on the agenda.

4. Status Update: NFWF Report

- Ms. Roberta Swann with MBNEP took the floor and gave the group a status update on the NFWF grant proposals. She began with discussion of the Fowl River Projects. The first piece of the restoration is the sediment analysis which is done as a precursor to watershed planning. Ms. Swann showed a map that included the selected sites for sampling, informing the group Marlon Cook has been contracted to do the work and is getting underway.
- Ms. Swann moved on to the Mon Louis Island Tip Restoration, stating that Thompson Engineering has been contracted. She then discussed sediment issues plaguing the Project as Thompson Engineering has gotten into the preliminary planning, which is resulting in a substantial increase in cost. A meeting with NFWF is scheduled for September 15, 2014 to discuss this Project and others that are in preliminary stages and how to handle the cost differentials.
- The update continued with a report on the Fowl River Watershed Management Plan. Ms. Swann stated Goodwin, Mills, Cawood is under contract and has begun to put together their initial steering committee for community engagement. They have developed a work plan and are coming up with a site assessment plan of action.
- Ms. Swann then showed a slide of the completed Joe's Branch Phase I Restoration and complimented Thompson Engineering and Southern Excavating on a job well done. Ms. Swann continued the discussion moving into Joe's Branch Phase II update and reminded the group about the 100 year storm in April that has resulted in severe, rapid degradation of many of the stream segments. She informed everyone that this basically took all the funding we requested. We plan to have discussions with NFWF about what course of action to take: give us more money to do the restoration proposed in the grant (that has greatly changed due to the 100 year storm), or rework the design and get as much as possible done with the funds already allocated.
- Ms. Swann then reviewed the current NFWF proposal (round 2) and the requested funding for the 7 Watershed Management Plans, as well as high resolution habitat mapping, SAV mapping and creation of a habitat restoration plan for the 2 coastal counties. She stated MBNEP has gotten comments back from NFWF and we have more work to do on the proposal. NFWF has their board meeting in November and we should hear something by the end of that month. Ms. Swann expressed that we are on the cutting edge among the 5 states in the way we are methodically going through the planning process to get to the restorations and have received a lot of positive feedback from NFWF in that regard.

5. Watershed Evaluations

- PIC Co-Chair Ms. Judy Haner of The Nature Conservancy then took the floor to begin the evaluations of the remaining intertidal watersheds. Ms. Haner expressed the importance of getting these evaluations done so that we are set for the next round of funding coming down next spring. The evaluations began with Delchamps Bayou. The discussions continued working through all remaining watersheds:

Palmetto	Upper and Lower Bay Minette, Whitehouse
Caney, Lower Blackwater, Lower Styx	Bayou Sara, Gunnison
Magnolia	Lower Chasaw
Fly, Yancey, Gum	Garrows Bend

The group worked through each watershed slated for evaluation, providing input and coming away with a basis of issues, needs and resources for all discussed.

- Mr. Patric Harper then wrapped up the discussions and the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.
- **Next Meeting-Dec 16, 2014: This will be our annual meeting! Time and Place TBD!**