



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Project Implementation Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 27, 2018
5 Rivers Delta Resource Center, Blakeley Hall**



Attendees:

Don Blancher (Moffatt & Nichol)	Andy James (Volkert)
Celena Boykin (Baldwin Co. Planning & Zoning)	Jacob Hartley (Mobile Baykeeper)
Denise Brown (Stantec)	Caroline Garsed (Thompson Engineering)
Mary Kate Brown (The Nature Conservancy)	Eddie Kerr (Mobile County)
Wade Burcham (Integrated Science & Engineering)	Veronica Klocinski (Payne Environmental)
Ashley Campbell (City of Daphne)	Dina Knight (The Nature Conservancy)
Camilla English (ADPH)	Amy Newbold (EPA GOMP)
Jay Estes (Allen Engineering)	Chris Oberholster (Birmingham Audubon)
Paige Felts (Volkert)	Chris Plymale (EPA Region 4)
Carl Ferraro (ADCNR, Coastal Section)	Justin Rigdon (ADEM)
Richard Fields (Alabama Forestry Commission)	Jason Shaw (ALDOT)
Casey Fulford (Baldwin Co. SWCD)	Brian Spears (U.S. Fish & Wildlife)
Leslie Gahagan (City of Foley)	Will Underwood (ADCNR)
Judy Haner (The Nature Conservancy)	Lee Walters (Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood)
Patric Harper (U.S. Fish & Wildlife)	Chris Warn (Environmental Science Associates)
Ashley Henderson (ASWCC)	Connie Whitacker (Alabama Coastal Foundation)
Edith Loudon (Geotechnical Engineering)	Joyce Nicholas (NRCS)
Paul Mickle (MDMR)	

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

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 1:13 pm by Patric Harper. Attendees went through a round of self-introductions.

2. Approval of the Minutes:

Mr. Harper asked for any deletions, additions, changes to the minutes from May 3, 2018. Hearing none, he called for a motion to approve the minutes. Carl Ferraro made the motion, which Lee Walters seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Update on Watershed Management Plans: Christian Miller, MBNEP

- Casey Fulford was introduced as a new member of the PIC. She is working in the newly created position of Watershed Management Coordinator for the Baldwin County Soil and Conservation District. Her initial duties will be to manage implementation of the Weeks Bay WMP. She has established a Weeks Bay Implementation Working Group of stakeholders to guide and inform the process.
- The Bayou La Batre WMP is posted on the MBNEP web page and open for public review and comment.
- The Wolf Bay WMP is in its initial planning phase. There is a public meeting scheduled on Tuesday, October 2, 2018 at Graham Creek at 6:00 PM.

4. CCMP Update for Ecosystem Restoration and Protection (ERP): Roberta Swann, MBNEP

Roberta and Judy led the group through a review of the ERP section update inputs from the August 30th CCMP Summit update meeting and the post-meeting survey. Handouts for this exercise included the draft ERP section spreadsheet with proposed updates (attached) and the ERP section rankings from the post-meeting survey (attached).

- ERP Goal 1: Improve trends in water quality in priority watersheds.
 - The PIC agreed to broaden the goal language from the previous version of ERP:1 and to delete the previous reference to impaired waters.
 - The PIC also discussed the advantages of setting separate objectives for tidally influenced watersheds (new section 1.1) and non-tidally influenced watersheds (new section 1.2) in the updated ERP strategy. The group agreed that including separate ERP objectives for the tidal and non-tidal watersheds would facilitate prioritizing, supporting, and funding non-tidal watershed management plans.
 - The PIC discussed and agreed to continue to limit the CCMP area of influence to the two coastal counties (Mobile and Baldwin Counties) for the next CCMP five-year plan before broadening the scope of the CCMP and moving efforts further north into other counties in the Mobile Bay watershed. Judy suggested the updated CCMP be worded to allow MBNEP to remain open for partnership opportunities in other counties.
 - The PIC agreed to set up a small work group (Ashley, Casey, Leslie, Joyce) to assess the opportunities and ideas (Clean Marinas, Smart Yards, etc.) listed on the ERP update spreadsheet for inclusion in future Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

- ERP Goal 2: Focus watershed management activities on priority habitats.
 - Need to review language in revised goal ERP 2 to see if it needs further refinement.
 - The PIC agreed and approved the wording for Objective 2.1: Develop a Coastal Alabama Restoration Tool (CART) in 2019.
 - The PIC approved the wording for Objectives 2.2 through 2.6 and their inclusion in the Habitat Plan.
 - The PIC agreed with Objective 2.7 to develop an Invasive Species Management Plan.

- ERP Goal 3: Restore/expand human connections to nature as a mechanism for improving environmental protection.
 - Objective 3.1: Protect and conserve priority habitats by acquisition and easement.
 - The PIC supports expanding local capacity for land trusts for land acquisitions and conservation easements.
 - The PIC discussed options of how to protect and maintain restoration projects for the long term.
 - How can maintenance be funded in perpetuity?
 - MBNEP to review and refine language in ERP Goal 3.
 - The PIC agreed to study concept of putting funds in some type of escrow account to fund long-term maintenance of projects.
 - The PIC discussed the benefit of the MBNEP management conference being expanded to include financial managers, bankers, and risk managers to further Goal 3.
 - Objective 3.2: Create 7 new access points in Mobile County: The PIC supported the idea of development of a Comprehensive Recreation Plan.
 - The PIC discussed, moved, and approved the draft ERP updated strategy spreadsheet and approved MBNEP making further language edits in line with the group discussion during the meeting.

5. Other Discussions

- The PIC members discussed the value and benefits of membership on the committee.
- The members discussed the idea of developing a member survey to seek ideas to improve PIC meetings.
- The PIC agreed to continue to hold three quarterly meetings per year. Members want to continue the current “big picture” format of the regular PIC meetings. Members stated they want meetings that include reports with updated information on big projects. Members in attendance agreed with the idea to schedule additional meetings if necessary for “deeper dives” into issues or topics.
- The PIC requested the GPRA/NEPORT report projects be shared with the group on at PIC meetings.

6. Schedule Next Meeting: The next PIC meeting will tentatively be held in January 2019.

7. Announcements

- The D’Olive Creek Watershed Management Plan is scheduled for updating sometime next spring.

8. Adjourn

Judy Haner asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:04 pm. Don Blanchard made the motion, which was seconded by Carl Ferraro.