



# PENSACOLA & PERDIDO BAYS ESTUARY PROGRAM

## CCMP Draft Action Plan

**About the Draft Plan:** The Estuary Program is working to finalize the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) that will be released later this summer. This draft Education and Outreach Action Plan serves as a guiding document to inform your Community Grant Program proposals. Please note that this document broadly includes relevant Action Plan objectives and is not the complete Action Plan.

**Goal 1: The PPBEP should be an unbiased, trusted, centralized source of watershed related information for our community** (*Goal 1 consists of internal actions for Program staff to complete – no submitted proposals will be accepted for this Goal*).

### Goal 2: Strengthen Community Resilience

**OBJECTIVE 2.1** Inform community planning and development decisions

- Promote the use of smart growth and best land management practices to maximize the health and resilience of our communities to natural disasters
- Identify data needs and conduct research that would be useful to help inform land development codes, planning documents, etc.

**OBJECTIVE 2.2** Facilitate wastewater management improvements throughout the watersheds

- Inventory of septic systems throughout the watersheds
- Identify potential pathogen and nutrient hot spots
- Prioritize areas for conversion or retrofits
- Educate the community on the importance of sewer and septic system maintenance and incentivize sewer connections

**OBJECTIVE 2.3** Promote the use of green infrastructure or other low-impact designs in community planning

- Enhance stormwater management by expanding the use of Green Infrastructure practices
- Promote and facilitate the development of living shorelines as a sustainable alternative to shoreline armoring to reduce erosion and sediment inputs
- Educate homeowners about the benefits of living shorelines vs. bulkheads and further hardening

**Goal 3: Improve water quality in the Pensacola and Perdido Bay systems to support economically and ecologically important and resilient ecosystems and communities**

**OBJECTIVE 3.2** Identify sources, root causes, and transport of priority water quality pollutants in the watersheds

- Develop and implement Microbial Source Tracking (MST) studies in priority areas across watersheds (e.g., impaired WBIDs)
- Evaluate and identify point and nonpoint source hotspots for nutrients in the watersheds

**OBJECTIVE 3.3** Assess water quality seasonal trends to understand impacts to natural resources, including habitats and fish and wildlife

- Evaluate seasonal trends of nutrients, chlorophyll-a, DO, and HABs and their impacts to habitats and fish and wildlife
- Partner with universities and other partners to synthesize existing data and further investigate the seasonal trends of water quality parameters

**Goal 4: Identify sediment sources in the Pensacola and Perdido Bay systems and assess the impacts on our waterways and critically important habitats**

**OBJECTIVE 4.2** Conduct a sediment study to assess sources of sediment and erosion in the watersheds

- Evaluate land use land change dynamics on soil erosion and sediment loading
- Identify major sediment sources within the watersheds using various techniques: aerial photography, sediment fingerprinting, modeling, sediment budgets

**OBJECTIVE 4.3** Address unpaved roads as a source of sedimentation

- Identify unpaved roads and their contributions to water quality impairments and prioritize for paving or removal efforts
- Identify key sources of sediment inputs in the watersheds
- Prioritize, develop, and/or design sediment remediation projects

**OBJECTIVE 4.4** Assess the effects of sediment dynamics and resuspension on benthic habitats

- Conduct benthic sediment mapping
- Synthesize existing data to assess sediment type/grain size, transport, and contours

**Goal 5: Conserve and restore critical habitat extent and condition to support wildlife across the Pensacola and Perdido watersheds**

**OBJECTIVE 5.1** Improve and support the health and resilience of oysters, including wild, farmed, and restored oysters, to promote a sustainable oyster fishery in the Pensacola Bay system

- Conduct monitoring to assess oyster condition and spat production
- Host and support oyster restoration projects in the Pensacola Bay system to improve native oyster populations
- Develop or expand oyster spat and/or oyster gardening
- Host shell bagging or oyster spat monitoring construction events
- Hold volunteer events to construct and deploy plastic free oyster reef prisms

**OBJECTIVE 5.3** Improve and support the health and resiliency of native ecosystems in the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds

- Support removal and prevention activities for invasive species

**OBJECTIVE 5.4** Coordinate with partners to identify and assess critical habitats of highest risk for imperiled and protected species

- Assess potential wildlife corridors and habitat fragmentation concerns for imperiled and protected wildlife species
- Assess and prioritize areas for land acquisition and restoration

**Goal 6: Restore and conserve fish and wildlife by coordinating monitoring and conservation efforts across the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds**

**OBJECTIVE 6.1** Support fish and wildlife monitoring efforts

- Coordinate and conduct monitoring and education/outreach within our watersheds (e.g., sea turtle nesting, shorebirds, etc.)

**OBJECTIVE 6.2** Coordinate and expand fisheries monitoring capacity within the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds

- Facilitate the regular monitoring of estuarine aquatic species assemblages with an emphasis on fisheries species and fish communities through collaboration and partnerships

**OBJECTIVE 6.3** Increase regional monitoring capacity for marine mammals