



MINUTES
Education & Outreach Committee
Pensacola & Perdido Bays Estuary Program

March 18, 2021
4:00-5:00 pm CT
Virtual Meeting
[Recording](#)

Chasidy Hobbs	UWF, Chair
Chris Verlinde	UF/IFAS Santa Rosa, Vice Chair
Donald Killorn	PPBEP
Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Emerson Cheney	PPBEP
Matt Posner	PPBEP/Escambia County
Amanda Crouteau	UWF
Chelsea Conley	CBEP
Darryl Boudreau	NWFWMD
Gary Baine	UWF
Glenn Conrad	Community Member
Haley Gancel	UF
Kaya Man	Visit Pensacola
Lee Yokel	Community Member
Rick O'Connor	FL Sea Grant
Ryan Caver	Clean Horizons
Samantha Bolduc	Escambia County
Shawn Brown	Visit Pensacola
Sonia Vedral	NGOM Sentinel Site Coop, MSU Extension

1. Call to Order

2. Introductions

3. Staff Updates

a. Storm Drain Marking

Estuary Program staff continues to work with local stakeholders, educators, and community partners to expand the storm drain marking efforts in the PPBEP watersheds. High school teacher, Matt MacGregor, and a group of several students were the first group to engage in a successful storm drain installation in partnership with the Estuary Program. The Estuary Program acquired the storm drain markers through a partnership with Chasidy Hobbs and her community engagement through environmental science class at UWF. The Estuary Program is now working to gain permission from local governments to extend storm drain marking efforts to neighborhoods throughout the watershed.

b. Trash Free Waters Project

The Escambia County Procurement Office is finalizing a contract for the fabrication and assistance with maintenance of floating trash capture devices, which will be used to collect waterborne trash in three local creeks. Once a contract is approved, the contractor will begin creating trash capture systems that will best suit the conditions of the three creeks in the Trash Free Waters project. These trash capture systems are critical for monitoring the type and quantity of waterborne litter in each creek system. Assessments of the type and quantity of litter captured by each capture system will inform future efforts aimed at helping major contributors reduce their impact on the creek systems.

c. Dialogue Sessions

The Estuary Program has begun its rebranding efforts to solidify the messaging and communication of the program. The Estuary Program has partnered with idgroup, a local branding company, to develop a singular identity, communication strategy, and marketing guidelines for the Program. The first stage of that process involves hosting dialogue sessions, which are discussions that are held to get stakeholders and leaders who are invested in the program talking about their visions and ideas of the Program. These discussions will be used to develop a brand identity for the Program, which will serve as the backbone of future communication and marketing efforts.

d. B-WET Grant

Estuary Program staff was working to create a proposal for the 202 B-WET funding opportunity. B-WET funds projects that are designed to provide students and educators with high-impact watershed experiences. However, the Program did not receive educator commitments in time to submit a competitive proposal. The plans made during this funding cycle will be applied to develop a full proposal for the grant opportunity next funding cycle. The proposed project revolves around oyster education and awareness.

e. Job Posting

The EPA grant that stood up the Estuary Program includes funding slated for two additional staff positions. Program staff is working with Escambia County HR to finalize job descriptions and posting for the two additional positions. One of the positions will be an Education and Outreach Assistant.

4. Bay Day 2021

- Committee participants discussed how the Estuary Program could move forward with Bay Day 2021.
- Committee participants weighed the pros and cons of developing an in-person versus a virtual Bay Day event. Bay Day is an event that has been supported historically by the BARC and continues to be a highlight event for the Estuary Program and its partners in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties.
- Participants also discussed the possibility of expanding the Bay Day event, which is normally geared towards elementary school students, to be a large public facing event.
- Complications arising from COVID-19 and the multijurisdictional nature of the Program make organizing a large Bay Day event that is accessible to everyone in the watershed challenging.
- Program staff will follow up with individuals interested in pursuing the event further to come up with a more concrete plan for organizing a Bay Day event in 2021.

5. Earth Day

- Participants did not have any updates on Earth Day events for the Spring of 2021.

6. Oyster Awareness Week/Month

- Participants discussed how the Estuary Program might be able to lead an oyster awareness initiative.
- Chasidy Hobbs, UWF & Co-chair, warned against organizing too many large-scale events independently since organizing large events like festivals requires a lot of time and energy and resources.
- Participants seemed to agree that it would be a good idea to organize a small oyster-centric component in coordination with the Pensacola Seafood Festival.
- Visit Pensacola also has additional contacts and resources that might be well equipped to help develop an oyster ‘trail’ or another participatory event where individuals who are interested in oysters can support local restaurants and aquaculture and learn more about local oysters.

7. Outreach Strategic Plan

- Logan McDonald, PPBEP, reviewed the priority actions and topic areas that were identified in a previous outreach strategic plan workshop.
- Program staff would like to organize a meeting on April 20th at 4:00 pm to discuss the outreach strategic plan further.

8. Around the Room/Announcements/Public Comment

a. Chronolog

Chasidy Hobbs shared a new education and outreach tool called Chronolog, which is a citizen-based environmental photographic monitoring platform. Chronolog provides an information placard and a smart phone alignment device that attaches to nature trail boardwalks and other infrastructure. Citizens can use the alignment tool to take uniformly positioned photographs of a natural system that can then be uploaded to the Chronolog online platform, which holds and displays the photographic data.

b. CoCoRaHS Rainfall Observers

CoCoRaHS is another citizen science initiative that provides citizens with tools to measure rain fall data at home.

c. Ryan Caver shared the story of his new coastal cleanup organization called Clean Horizons. Mr. Caver and his team held their first cleanup event on Perdido Key, which engaged around 100 participants and resulted in the removal of over 1000 lbs of trash. Clean Horizons is taking steps to be a leader in coastal cleanup efforts.

9. Next Meeting

- a. Strategic Plan Meeting: April 20th at 4pm
- b. General Committee: May 20th

10. Adjourn