



**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Oyster Sub-Committee**  
**Pensacola & Perdido Bays Estuary Program**  
**August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 05:30 - 06:45 CT**  
**Hybrid Meeting (In-Person/Virtual)**  
[Recording Link](#)

**ATTENDEES**

Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Donald Killorn	PPBEP
Matt Posner	Escambia County/PPBEP
Anne Birch	TNC
Andrea Graves	TNC
Christian Wagley	Healthy Gulf
Amanda Croteau	UWF
Beth Fugate	FDEP
Chris Verlinde	UF/IFAS Santa Rosa County Extension
Haley Gancel	UF
Matthew Davis	FWC
Brandon Smith	Grayson Bay Oyster Co.
Tommy Pugh	Rollo's Seafood
Shana Alford	Avalon Aquaculture
Robert Turpin	Escambia County MRD
Barbara Albrecht	UWF/BFA
Donald McMahon	Pensacola Bay Oyster Co.
Thomas Derbes	Emerald Coast Oyster Co.
Tanya Linzy	Santa Rosa County
Shelley Alexander	Santa Rosa County
Darryl Boudreau	NFWFMD
Portia Sapp	FDACS

1. Welcome and Introductions
  - a. For everyone to get acquainted, participants in-person and online introduced themselves and stated their affiliation.
2. Approval of the June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Meeting Minutes
  - a. Beth Fugate (DEP) made a motion to approve the minutes. Anne Birch (TNC) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. Restoration Project Implementation overview (*See presentation PDF*)
  - a. A. Birch presented a pilot oyster restoration project draft concept that she has been working on as part of a larger planning effort with The Nature Conservancy. In addition to working on an oyster management plan for the state of Florida, Anne has been working with colleagues to develop a draft concept of a multi-site, multi-objective restoration project for oysters in the Pensacola Bay System (PBS). This project would assist in implementing the Priority 1 strategies identified in the Oyster Fisheries and Habitat Management Plan.
  - b. D. McMahon expressed interest in assisting to secure potential funding sources for this large-scale project and developing future collaborations. There was also discussion surrounding the incorporation of the Habitat Suitability Model outputs and oyster mapping efforts into project planning and the new permitting authorization from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS).
4. East Bay Oyster Restoration Project Update
  - a. A. Birch gave a brief overview of the status of the NFWF/GEBF funded restoration project that is being conducted in East Bay. The project has experienced setbacks due to storms and the pandemic, but 1 reef unit has been fully constructed with 2 more close to completion. She also mentioned that D. Boudreau (NFWFMD) will be collecting drone footage during the reef construction process on a regular basis.
  - b. A. Birch offered to give a more in-depth presentation on the project with videos and photos at a future meeting.
  - c. More information on this project will be presented at the Lunch & Learn webinar on September 20<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 – 12:00pm CT ([link to register](#))
5. Oyster Sub-Committee Leadership Vote
  - a. W. Scheffel announced that the two candidates that volunteered to serve as co-chairs at the last sub-committee meeting were Beth Fugate (DEP) and Chris Verlinde (UF/IFAS).
  - b. W. Scheffel asked if any other members were interested in serving as chair or co-chair or if a member would like to nominate someone for the role. There were no additional volunteers or nominations.
  - c. A. Birch made a motion to select B. Fugate and C. Verlinde as co-chairs of the sub-committee. D. McMahon and P. Sapp seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. National Estuaries Week
  - a. Logan McDonald (PPBEP) presented a calendar of upcoming events in celebration of “National Estuaries Week” (Sep. 18-26). Some of the activities include a Lunch & Learn virtual tour of the East Bay Oyster Restoration Project led by TNC, Community Grant Symposium at the Studer Community Institute, and an Oyster Boat Tour on the Pensacola Bay ferry.
  - b. For more information on these events and to find links to register, please visit our website ([www.ppbep.org/get-involved](http://www.ppbep.org/get-involved))!
  - c. Logan offered the opportunity for sub-committee members to get involved in the oyster boat tour on Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>.
7. Oyster Video Discussion
  - a. Logan presented on a future opportunity of the PPBEP to create a documentary style video on oysters in the PBS, including the history, value, aquaculture industry, and ongoing restoration efforts.
  - b. Logan asked if members could provide input on individuals to interview (e.g., oyster harvesters, farmers, restoration specialists, long-term residents). If you have someone in mind that may want to get involved or if you have anything that you would like to see highlighted through this effort, please contact Logan ([lmcdonald@ppbep.org](mailto:lmcdonald@ppbep.org)).
8. Sub-Committee Goals and Priorities
  - a. Discussion continued regarding the importance of identifying potential funding for oyster projects/programs and potential partners that are interested in getting involved.
  - b. Future meetings will highlight the priorities of the sub-committee including revisiting the priority 1 strategies from each of the themes in the Oyster Management Plan.
9. Around the Room/Announcements/Public Comment
  - a. B. Smith (Grayson Bay) asked if there were any plans to divide the PBS into smaller sub-sections or grid system for referencing specific projects on a smaller scale or targeting future project locations. S. Alexander (SRC) commented that there will be a Living Shoreline Suitability Model output from a NFWF funded project that would provide additional information regarding target areas for improvements in the PBS.
10. Next Meeting (tentatively scheduled for October 28, 10:00 – 12:00pm CT (virtual))
11. Adjourn