



**Meeting Minutes**  
**Education & Outreach Committee**

February 16, 2023 at 5:30 pm CT  
Pensacola Library | 239 N. Spring St., Pensacola, FL

[Meeting Recording](#)

**Present Parties:**

Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Madi Ross	PPBEP
Molly McDaniel	PPBEP
Carrie Stevenson, Chair	UF   IFAS
Chasidy Hobbs, Co-Chair	UWF
Julie Parsons	Community Member
Lee Yokel	EcoSolutions Inc.
Lee Anne Winchester	BWFP, WRC
Rick O'Connor	Florida Sea Grant
Stacy Ross	Community Member
Steve Garner	Community Member
Tanya Linzy	Santa Rosa County
Thomas Derbes	The Well

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Introductions**

Carrie Stevenson opened the floor for new members to introduce themselves.

**3. Approval of December 13, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

Rick O'Connor (Florida Sea Grant) made a motion to approve the December 13, 2022, Meeting Minutes. Lee Anne Winchester (BWFP, WRC) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. 2023 Chair Nominations/Election**

Rick O'Connor (Florida Sea Grant) self-nominated himself as the new 2023 Education & Outreach Committee Chair. Chassidy Hobbs (UWF) seconded the nomination. The nomination passed unanimously.

**5. Staff Updates** (*Logan McDonald, Community Outreach Coordinator*)

**a. B-WET Grant Update**

Staff provided an update on the program's NOAA Bay-Watershed Education & Training (B-WET) Program grant. The project includes teacher professional development that includes the creation of a new oyster curriculum to foster



long-lasting student scientific knowledge and participation. Students will be engaged in the 2023-24 school year.

**Teacher Applications are due March 19, 2023.**

**Workshop Date: June 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**b. State of the Bays**

PPBEP staff is working on the first State of the Bays report and will launch the digital platform at the PPBEP 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Management Conference in May 2023. The report will provide an overview of how conditions have changed over time, the current condition of the bays, and the efforts that are underway to improve the condition of the bays. The four main indicator groups are water quality (dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll-a, total nitrogen, total phosphorus, turbidity), habitat (oysters, seagrass, wetlands, longleaf pine forests), bacteria (beach advisories, sanitary sewer overflows), and wildlife (manatee sightings). The scale for ecosystem health is categorized as improving, stable, declining, critical, and undetermined. Additional indicators and metrics will be added in future iterations of the State of the Bays Report.

Anyone interested in reviewing the State of the Bays web-based platform should contact [Logan McDonald](#).

**c. The Humble Oyster Documentary**

The Humble Oyster documentary that explores the past, current, and future conditions of oysters in the Pensacola Bay System was completed. A premiere and panel discussion event will be held with WSRE. Registration will open in March.

SAVE THE DATE:

May 23, 2023

Time, Evening TBD

Jean & Paul Amos Performance Studio

Kugelman Center for Telecommunications

1000 College Blvd. Pensacola, FL 32504

**d. Community Grant Program Update** (*Madi Ross, Community Outreach Assistant*)

**1. Escambia County Coastal Landscaping Workshop and Native Plant Giveaway**

Starting in March, Escambia County will host Coastal Landscaping Workshops in Pensacola and Perdido to educate homeowners on best practices of coastal landscaping.

[Escambia County News Article: Escambia County to Host Coastal Landscaping Workshops, Plant Giveaways](#)

Plant Giveaways



Pensacola Beach event: <https://fb.me/e/PI5EEW9G>

Perdido Key event: <https://fb.me/e/YzJK3SFH>

**2. UWF Zooplankton Ecology and Water Quality Monitoring of Perdido Bay**

Researchers led by Dr. Amanda Croteau from the UWF Center for Environmental Diagnostics and Bioremediation have been collecting monthly water quality and zooplankton bioindicator data across Perdido Bay. The research team is monitoring 20 sites, including Tee Lake, Elevenmile Creek, and Soldier Creek.

**3. UWF Streambank Erosion Monitoring of the Pensacola Bay and Perdido Bay Watersheds**

UWF Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences researchers in Dr. Lieben's lab have been collecting data across the watersheds to evaluate streambank erosion. This information is crucial for the management of sediment issues in watersheds, including restoration efforts, because bank erosion has been shown to be a major source of sediment in many fluvial systems. This data will provide insight into erosion's severity to inform future stream and restoration projects' management. Researchers have completed 10 out of 20 streambank surveys at sites across the watersheds, including Perdido River, Blackwater River, Hollinger Creek, McCurtin Creek, Joe's Creek, Cowpen Creek, Brushy Creek, and Bellefontaine Creek.

**4. Blackwater Soil and Water Conservation District No-Till Seed Drill Rental Program**

In January 2023, the Blackwater Soil and Conservation District acquired the No-Till Seed Drill for their Rental Program. Their team is currently drafting the rental agreement to initiate the program. This project will be renting out the drill to local farmers as a low-cost rental to aid in cover-crop plantings to lower sedimentation inputs from unplanted fields during the off-season. A release ceremony will be announced soon.

**e. Bay Ambassador/Critter Collector Training**

Staff is hosting volunteer trainings in March to train dedicated community members to serve as Bay Ambassadors and Critter Collectors. Bay Ambassadors will assist staff at festivals and events and provide community presentations. Ambassadors will receive training on PPBEP's mission and work, the State of our Bays, and communication.



**f. OB Seafood Festival Volunteers**

PPBEP is hosted booths at the Orange Beach Seafood Festival in the adult and children's section of the event.

**g. Mardi Gras Cleanup** (*Madi Ross, Community Outreach Assistant*)

PPBEP hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mardi Gras Bead Tree Cleanup of Palafox and Garden Streets to recover leftover beads from the Downtown Mardi Gras Parade and reduce the number of beads that will enter the waterways. A total of 32 volunteers collected over 400 pounds of beads.

**h. Estuary 101 Campaign**

Staff continues to work with Impact Campaigns and Hatchmark Studios to finalize the Estuary 101 Campaign. The campaign includes information on estuarine habitats and wildlife, how businesses, organizations, and individuals can advocate for the estuaries, and locations for community members to explore. The Estuary 101 Campaign launched in March 2023.

**6. Discussion Items**

**a. Committee Feedback on Estuary 101 website/content**

Staff presented the Estuary 101 web platform for committee review before the site launched. Discussions were held on the individual, business, and organization levels of the Get Involved category. Carrie Stevenson (UF|IFAS) and Rick O'Connor (Florida Sea Grant) provided insight on the common language used when referring to pesticide and herbicide use and links to include for additional information and resources and the addition of the phrase 'pervious material' instead of 'pavers' in the Individual section. In the Business section, comments were presented for including a list of trained contractors and information on the use of recycled oyster shell in the Living Shoreline category.

**b. 2023 Committee Roles**

Staff opened the floor for members to choose specific focus groups within the committee based on individual experience. Role subjects include:

- Curriculum/Education
- Signature Event Support/Planning Committee
- Volunteer
- Fundraising
- Photo/Video Support

**c. Bay Day 2023 Escambia County**

PPBEP is interested in reviving Escambia County Bay Day in 2023.

Discussion was held on participating schools, locations, and date and time options. Tanya Linzy (Santa Rosa County) informed the committee of the Santa Rosa County Bay Day date, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Escambia County Bay Day could potentially be planned for Fall 2023.



**d. Trash Free Waters Outreach Campaign**

Molly McDaniel (PPBEP) updated the committee on education campaign ideas for the Trash Free Waters Project that were discussed at the Trash Free Waters Workshop in Summer of 2022. The ideas discussed were:

- Receptacle/signage around creek sites
- Love & Protect the Creeks Campaign
- Contractor/Developer Education
- Anti-littering and Cultural History of the Creeks Campaign

Discussion was held on potential ideas for the campaign focus. Lee Yokel (EcoSolutions Inc.) suggested creating a campaign of short stories from residents to share the impact of the Pond Creek system. Lee Anne Winchester (BWFP, WRC) suggested the inclusion of Bagdad Mill Site Park as a potential site for a Pond Creek Awareness Day and engaging people by hosting a paddle along Pond Creek into Blackwater Bay.

**e. City of Pensacola Resilience Pilot Project Ideas**

Molly McDaniel (PPBEP) provided an update on the Pensacola Resilience survey results. Using the results, a pilot project will be incorporated into the project to increase community education on resilience. Pilot project ideas include a Flood Insurance Educational Campaign, educational signage informing residents on flood issues, and a small demonstration garden in the City of Pensacola hosted in community areas.

**7. Around the Room/Announcements**

Rick O'Connor (Florida Sea Grant) shared upcoming events and dates.

- [Living Shoreline Course: NW Panhandle](#)
- March Citizen Science Training Month Events
  - o Florida Horseshoe Crab Watch Training, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM, Escambia County Extension Office, 3740 Stefani Rd,
  - o Panhandle Terrapin Project Training, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM, Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation Center,
- Panhandle Outdoor Live Paddles
- 2023 Weed Wrangle
- Cuban Treefrog Survey Workshop

Carrie Stevenson (UF|IFAS) shared upcoming events and dates.

- [Florida Master Naturalist: Coastal Systems](#)
- Stormwater Professional Training Workshop/Webinar, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, May 17<sup>th</sup>
- OAR Fest, April 21<sup>st</sup>

Lee Yokel (EcoSolutions Inc.) received the Outstanding Educators Award from the Southern Association of Marine Educators (SAME).



**PENSACOLA  
& PERDIDO BAYS  
ESTUARY PROGRAM**

**8. 2023 Meetings & Events**

- a. May 4<sup>th</sup>: Annual Management Conference Meeting
- b. August 3<sup>rd</sup>: Education & Outreach Committee
- c. October 12<sup>th</sup>: Fundraiser Gala (tentative)
- d. December 14<sup>th</sup>: Education & Outreach Committee

**9. Meeting adjourned**