



MINUTES
Education & Outreach Committee

Thursday, February 6, 2025

12:00-1:00 PM CT

Virtual

[Meeting Recording](#)

Present Parties:

Matt Posner	PPBEP
Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Haley Gancel	PPBEP
Bailey Walkinshaw	PPBEP
Zach Schang	PPBEP
Chloe Ray	PPBEP
Thomas Derbes, Co-Chair	Florida Sea Grant
Shannon McGlynn, Co-Chair	ADEM
Darry Boudreau	NWFWMD
Meghan Colbert	Wild + Free Northwest Florida
Lara Greene	Community Member
Jimmie Jarratt	Escambia County
Jeanette Kelson	WSP
Tanya Linzy	Santa Rosa County
Paul Looney	WRA Engineering
Lawrence McDonald	CoCoRaHS
Zito Melo	Community Member
Brian Phillippi	Community Member
Samantha Pitts	Escambia County
Lawson Shaffer	WSP
Alex Steelman	Community Member
Erin Stephens	Community Member
Chris Verlinde	Santa Rosa County
Megan Wyatt	Community Member

1. Call to Order

2. Welcome and Introductions

3. Approval of November 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Samantha Pitts (Escambia County) made a motion to approve the November 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Chris Verlinde (Santa Rosa County) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



4. The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (*Lawrence McDonald, CoCoRaHS*)

Guest presenter Lawrence McDonald with CoCoRaHS gave a presentation on how interested community members can join CoCoRaHS to participate in monitoring rain, hail, and snow. Discussion was held on how the data is being used by NOAA and the National Weather Service.

5. Input on Bay-Friendly Living Booklet Topics

Staff are developing a Bay-Friendly Living Booklet for coastal residents to provide a comprehensive guide and resources on topics that affect priority goal areas, such as reducing bacteria, nutrients, and run off, increasing property resilience, and improving wildlife habitat. Staff led an activity for meeting attendees to identify topics that are aligned with the priority goals that should be included in the booklet. Chris Verlinde (Santa Rosa County) suggested for staff to look at Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's booklet on bay-friendly living for similar information.

6. Staff Updates & Discussion (*Logan McDonald, Community Outreach Coordinator*)

a. Annual Report

The Program will be issuing its first annual report this March and will cover fiscal year 2023-2024.

b. 2025 State of the Bays

The next State of the Bays Report will be coming out in April; the State of the Bays Report is updated every two years and provides a snapshot of the state of Pensacola and Perdido Bay Watersheds. The 2025 update will include fisheries data.

c. Estuary Explorers

Estuary Explorers is a program that highlights estuary locations within the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds for residents and visitors to explore. Staff are planning to develop rack cards for the Estuary Explorers program that will be distributed to visitor and community centers.

d. Upcoming Events

i. Restoration Ramble: Gulf State Park, February 15th

Staff are leading a Restoration Ramble on Saturday, February 15th at Gulf State Park, spots are still available for those interested in attending.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1117000862649?aff=oddtcreator>

ii. Foiling Week VOGs and booth, March 1st and 2nd

Staff will be tabling at the Sailing Village on March 1st and 2nd and leading a vertical oyster garden (VOG) building event with sailors on Sunday, March 2nd.

<https://foilingweek.com/landing/pensacola-2025/>



iii. Mardi Gras Bead Cleanup, March 9th

Staff are hosting the 4th Annual Mardi Gras Bead Cleanup on Sunday, March 9th in downtown Pensacola. Last year, over 600lbs of Mardi Gras beads were collected. Registration for the event is open, and staff recommend bringing a boat hook with you, if you have one.

<https://volunteer.bloomerang.co/JE/6g065hzuqu3qqt>

iv. Restoration Ramble: Jones Swamp, March 16th

The following Restoration Ramble will be held on Friday, March 16th at Jones Swamp Wetland Preserve with Samantha Pitts from Escambia County Natural Resources Department.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1228991439479?aff=oddtcreator>

v. Critter Catcher Volunteer Training, April 5th

Staff are hosting an upcoming volunteer training for Critter Catchers on Saturday, April 5th. This training is for volunteers that are interested in helping with the Summer Seagrass Sleuths program and field trips through seining, providing basic critter identification, and discussing the importance of seagrass habitats.

<https://volunteer.bloomerang.co/JE/i4i51rem0yaak1>

vi. Annual Management Conference Meeting, April 16th

Staff are holding the Annual Management Conference Meeting on April 16th at the Sanders Beach-Corinne Jones Resource Center. Community members and partners are encouraged to come to hear about the new State of the Bays Report and to provide input on upcoming initiatives. The event is free, and lunch will be provided.

<https://ppbep.wufoo.com/forms/qatbwk71qi6n32/>

7. Around the Room/Announcements

Thomas Derbes (FL Sea Grant) shared that IFAS Extension are working with University of West Florida's Archeology Institute and Florida Public Archeology Network to host an event highlighting mullet and will include ways to cook mullet as well as the history of mullet. The event will be held at the Museum of Commerce in downtown Pensacola on March 13th. Tickets are sold out for the event but interested parties can join a waitlist:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cast-nets-and-cooking-traditions-a-mullet-story-tickets-1205493967909?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=ebdsshcopyurl>

8. Meeting Adjourned