



Technical Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 11th, 2025

10:00 – 11:30 CST

[Virtual Meeting Recording](#)

1. Attendees

Whitney Scheffel	PPBEP
Matt Posner	PPBEP
Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Bailey Walkinshaw	PPBEP
Zach Schang	PPBEP
Haley Gancel	PPBEP
Shelley Alexandar	Santa Rosa County
Katie Baltzer	TNC AL
Joy Brown	NWFL Sentinel Landscape
Darryl Boudreau	NWFWMD
Jane Caffrey	UWF
Amanda Croteau	UWF
Kate Dawson	Moffatt & Nichol
Mike Fazio	Santa Rosa County
Jeff Helms	Moffatt & Nichol
Jacob Howell	CSS Inc. (NOAA NCCOS Affiliate)
Heather Hyde	CDM Smith
Tyler Jacobs	Moffatt & Nichol
Jackie Lane	Friends of Perdido Bay
Paul Looney	WRA
Genevieve Patrick	Moffatt & Nichol
Erin Pereira	FWC
Rebecca Perry	The Conservation Fund
Samantha Pitts	Escambia County
Ted Reese	ESA
Olivia Rockett	Drummond Carpenter
Eric Schneider	ESA
Chris Verlinde	Santa Rosa County
Christian Wagley	Healthy Gulf
Mike Wessel	ESA
Stella Wilson	NOAA

1. Call to Order

Kate Dawson (Moffatt & Nichol) called the meeting to order at 10:10 on March 11th, 2025.



2. Welcome and Introductions

Kate Dawson (Moffatt & Nichol) asked for new Technical Committee (TC) attendees to introduce themselves. Joy Brown (NWFL Sentinel Landscape) and Erin Pereira (FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management) introduced themselves as new members of the Committee.

3. Approval of November 12th, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Jane Caffrey (UWF) made a motion to approve the November 12th, 2024, meeting minutes. Paul Looney (WRA) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Guest Presentation

Jake Howell (Consolidated Safety Services, Inc.) – Analysis of Common Water Quality Parameters Across the Gulf.

Jake Howell provided an overview of the Gulf Coast Monitoring and Assessment Portal (CMAP), which was a NOAA led effort in 2021 to work with stakeholders to collaboratively develop a repository of mapping and monitoring programs across the Gulf. This current project will add to the existing repository and develop a summary of water quality parameters and analytical methods that monitoring groups use currently. Outputs of this effort will be a data dashboard that will allow users to look at available water quality data and the relevant methods per watershed. The specific visualizations of the final dashboard are still under development. Currently, there are over 350 water quality monitoring programs in the library. The aim of this project is to provide information to develop protocols and guidelines for monitoring groups to make data more accessible and improve comparability across the Gulf. Next steps are to send out draft products for review to the Gulf Monitoring Forum and to host a workshop at Gulf of America Alliance's All Hands Meeting on May 5th. For more information, visit their [website](#).

5. Staff Updates

a. 2024 Annual Impact Report

W. Scheffel (Senior Scientist) announced that PPBEP released the Program's first [Annual Report](#). This report reflects on activities that PPBEP completed over the last fiscal year (2024-2025) and highlights priorities for the upcoming fiscal year (2025-2026).

b. 2025 State of the Bays Report

W. Scheffel announced that there will be a sneak peek of the 2025 State of the Bays Report during the Annual Management Conference meeting on April 16th. This is the Program's second State of the Bays Report, and PPBEP is updating the data and adding a new indicator, fisheries, to the report. PPBEP is working with the same design team, Background Stories, to develop the new webpage and archive the 2023 report.

c. Living Shoreline Assistance Program

W. Scheffel announced the launch of the [Living Shoreline Assistance Program](#). Earlier this spring, PPBEP launched the program in Perdido Bay and plans to launch in Pensacola Bay in August. PPBEP hosted its first open house in Perdido on February 28th and had 25 attendees and received 14 applications. The PPBEP team will begin site assessments for current applicants later this month. Another open house is scheduled for May 1st at the Perdido Key Community Center from 2:00 to 8:00 PM.

d. Community Grant Program – Pre-Applications

W. Scheffel announced that PPBEP's Community Grant Program will be restructured for this upcoming cycle, increasing the maximum award funding from \$50,000 to \$75,000 and extending the award period from October 1st, 2025 – December 31st, 2026. This is



the first year PPBEP has requested voluntary pre-applications. Pre-applications are requested to help applicants with the materials to be developed for submittal. Pre-applications were due April 1st at 11:59 PM. Applicants that submit pre-applications will receive feedback from staff by May 15th.

e. Project and Monitoring Updates

i. Water Quality Monitoring Collaborative

W. Scheffel announced that the EPA Gulf Division has tentatively awarded PPBEP and its participating partners a 3- year \$750,000 grant to form the Water Quality Monitoring Collaborative for the Pensacola and Perdido Bays watersheds. This project will allow PPBEP to expand spatial and temporal coverage of water quality monitoring by leveraging existing partnerships. This grant proposal was submitted as a direct action that was developed at the PPBEP Comprehensive Monitoring Workshop held in February 2024.

ii. Pensacola Bay Oyster Restoration Initiative

Zach Schang (PPBEP Project Coordinator) provided an update on the Pensacola Bay Oyster Restoration Initiative project. In February, PPBEP and Jacobs hosted a two-day oyster restoration design workshop with oyster harvesters and farmers, local, state, and federal government; non-profit, and academic partners and community members. During the workshop, participants provided input to further explore potential locations for oyster restoration across the bays based on updated models. Teams were challenged to design several oyster reef "templates" that could be used in different conditions and for different purposes. Participants had to consider current and future conditions of Pensacola Bay, cost and feasibility, in addition to designing reefs for multiple purposes such as sanctuaries and harvestable areas. This summer, PPBEP will be hosting a follow up community engagement event. PPBEP is planning to collect oyster larval recruitment and spat data that will inform the 600-hectare oyster restoration design. Ten spat arrays will be deployed throughout the Pensacola Bay System from May to October 2025.

iii. Carpenter Creek Restoration

Z. Schang announced that PPBEP is in contract negotiations with Moffatt & Nichol to start design work for the Carpenter Creek Restoration Project.

iv. Microbial Source Tracking (MST)

W. Scheffel provided an update on the MST Project. This MST study will be conducted in 9 sub-watersheds spanning both watersheds. PPBEP in partnership with Escambia County WQLM staff are currently compiling and synthesizing existing datasets as well as preparing for next steps in the project. These activities include preparing for future stakeholder engagements and developing a field sampling plan.

f. Annual Management Conference

- i. April 16th at Sanders Beach – Corinne Jones Resources Center

6. Around the Room/Announcements

- a. Joy Brown (NWFL Sentinel Landscape) shared an update about the National Coastal Resilience Fund, suggesting that it will continue to receive funding and she encouraged others to prepare proposals, if interested.



- b. Matt Posner (PPBEP Executive Director) congratulated Whitney Scheffel on her 5-year anniversary with PPBEP.

7. Adjourned