# PARTNERSHIP FOR A RESILIENT APALACHICOLA BAY

MONTHLY MEETING #26
Wednesday, September 23, 2026 – 12 Noon to 3:30 PM EST
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research
Reserve 108 Island Drive, Eastpoint, Florida

---

**Facilitator:** Betty Webb

**Members Present:** Ottice Amison, Ken Jones, Cameron Baxley, Anita Grove, Roger Mathis, Grayson Shepard, Shannon Hartsfield, Gayle Johnson, Huey Page

**Advisory Members & Visitors:** Joel Trexler, Sandra Brooke, Sharon Cilano, Doug Brown, Grace Lawhorn, James Dewitt, Carrie Jones, Kim Miller

**Online:** Jenna Harper, Chad Hanson, Betsy Mansfield, Michelle Smith, Hannah Bleth, Cameron Jaggard, Matt Chasse, Morgan Eason, Andy Kane

**1:00** - *Call Monthly Meeting to Order - Ken Jones, Treasurer*

**1:05 -** *Meeting Welcome*
*Introductions - New Meeting Participants and Visitors*

- James Dewitt - Former Director of Franklin County Mosquito Control Director & oysterman
    - Interested in joining the board
- *Review Agenda: Betty Webb, Facilitator*

***1:08 -*** *Organizational Business:*

1. *Meeting Notes Approval Decision – August 26, 2026 Meeting*
    - Shannon motion, Roger second – <u>August Meeting Notes Approved</u>
2. *Finalize Organization Chart and Committee Task Outlines*
    - Only change since last meeting is the 'Education and Outreach Committee' is changed to 'Communications and Outreach Committee'
    - Betty sent out updated copy to all board members after August meeting
    - No proposed changes to chart
    - Roger motion, Grayson second - <u>Organization Chart Approved</u>
    - Grayson motion, Anita second- <u>Committee Tasks Approved</u>
3. *Review Bay Map*
    - Carrie - Shared Shellfish Harvesting Area Classification Map from FDACS
        - Shows approved, conditionally approved, and prohibited areas of AB
        - FDACS monitors data from over 80 stations throughout the bay that look at various parameters (salinity, fecal coliform, temp., etc.)

- FDACS Management plan and boundaries have been updated for this map as of Sept. 1, 2026. The major reassessment and map updates take place every ~10 years.
    - Look at data yearly, and can make changes before 10-year mark if necessary
- Betty will email map out, and upload to Partnership website
- There is a discrepancy between the FDACS recommendation and the FWC guidelines. FWC season won't open until October, and FDACS recommendation is May – Sept.
- Joel - "Is the data this map is based on available to the public?"
    - Carrie - Yes, available on FDACS site in 'Shellfish Harvesting Classification' page

- Updated AB map from Joel and Beatriz at FSUCML
    - Updates:
        - Labels on natural reefs (Dry bar and Cat point)
        - Natural oyster reefs label changed to historic oyster reefs
    - Betty: "Any other updates needed?"
        - Ken - Should label every site, especially east of the bridge
        - Grayson - Add harvesting areas from last season and upcoming season
        - Update the colors so they're easier to differentiate
    - Joel: Beatriz is able to update this map on demand for your needs. Reach out to her if there's anything specific you want to see
    - Sandra will share the ABSI field maps and shapefiles with Beatriz
    - Technical and Communications committees will look at final draft and discuss
    - Anita can provide a large format for the meeting when the map is complete

4. *Other Organizational Business*
    - ***Nov. and Dec. Joint meeting – Thursday, November 19th***
    - Think about adding Dewitt to board. We'd need to vote to add a 16th member.

**1:48-** *Sharon Cilano, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Director*

*Presentation will focus on an update of the UF/IFAS Extension program opportunities IFAS provides to the community and the Gulf Scholars Program*

- Betty will share FL Sea Grant impact report
- Currently taking recommendations for project ideas, can send along to Sharon
- UF going through a restructuring, extension office will focus more on coastal issues and the community than they have in the past

- Current projects include:
    - Curriculum development for EdCorps, OysterCorps, and Food to Table
    - Outreach to school groups on oysters and history of AB
    - Northwest Artificial Reef Workshop on October 29th in Panama City
    - Goal is helping people understand where their food comes from
- Gulf Scholar Program: Current funding opportunity to bring on an intern to work with Sharon, ANERR and the Partnership to create infographics and maps, work on the website, and attend outreach events. Will be open to undergrad student
    - Partnership will not incur any costs, just will require time from members to meet with intern
    - Ken: "Will the intern be available to help the Partnership?"
        - Yes, but they need to be used for specific tasks
    - Letter of support: Grayson Motion, Ken Second – Motion Approved

**2:03 -** *20 Minute Break and Networking*

**2:25 -** *Morgan Eason, FWC - UPDATES:*

1. *October 2026 Harvest Season*
    - Currently handing out tags at Carabelle Law Enforcement office until Feb 28th
    - Emails and letters have all gone out to everyone - approved and denied both commercially and recreationally
    - FWC will hold a practice session using the reporting app with FWC and law enforcement on Sept. 24th at the Armory from 1–6 pm
2. *Current Bay Restoration Project*
    - The restoration project is COMPLETE!

**2:32 -** *Committee Updates*

1) *Agency Communication Committee - Chair Shannon Hartsfield*
    - Working to schedule meeting with technical committee for coming weeks
2) *Education and Outreach Committee - Chair Anita Grove*
    - Met last week
    - Logo in process of being developed
    - Have a few options for a tagline, email Anita with any other suggestions
        - Current frontrunner "Restoring, Strengthening, Sustaining"
    - Upcoming Events: FL Seafood Festival (Nov. 6-7) and Oyster Cookoff (Jan 16)
    - Melanie from ANERR created an oyster reef coloring sheet
3) *Finance Committee - Chair Ken Jones (Friends of the Partnership)*
    - $3,374 left in account, can pay for printing handouts and coloring sheets for outreach events
    - Betty will apply for another $5,000 grant for next year
    - Dewitt: "Can individuals donate to the partnership?"

- Yes, anyone can & it's tax deductible

4) *Technical Committee - Chair Chad Hanson*
    - No updates

**2:48 -** *Other Business / Announcements / Comments from Board Members & Attendees*

- FSUCML Postdoc Lauren Rice will present during November meeting on mortality data from AB
- Cameron – Steve Leitman presented at the ACF Stakeholders meeting on 2016 – 2026 flow data for Corps. Basically 40% of the time they're storing water over flood pool storage but won't release it.
    - Ken – Trying to outline a more specific framework for what to do with that water. Trying to emphasize summer issues and low flow/drought concerns
    - Anita – The Sustainable Rivers project? Ken reported it has been selected but has no funding. Partnership voted last year to possibly work on another project proposal for this.

**3:03 –** *Meeting Adjourned*

*Next Meeting:* ***October 28, 2026***