



*A glimpse into the past, present, and future of
Mobile Baykeeper
and 2016 Annual Report*



IT STARTED WITH ONE CHEMICAL PLANT

These are our founding members.



“People here love their homes and they love Mobile Bay. That’s how it all got started.”

- Jack V. Greer



“I wanted to be able to breathe and know that it was safe. To me, it was all about the air quality.”

- Logan Gewin



“The more we looked into it, the more we didn’t want the future of the bay defined by these chemical companies.”

- Jean Downing



“We wanted our children and grandchildren to be able to enjoy Mobile Bay the way we enjoyed it growing up.”

- Skeeter Morris



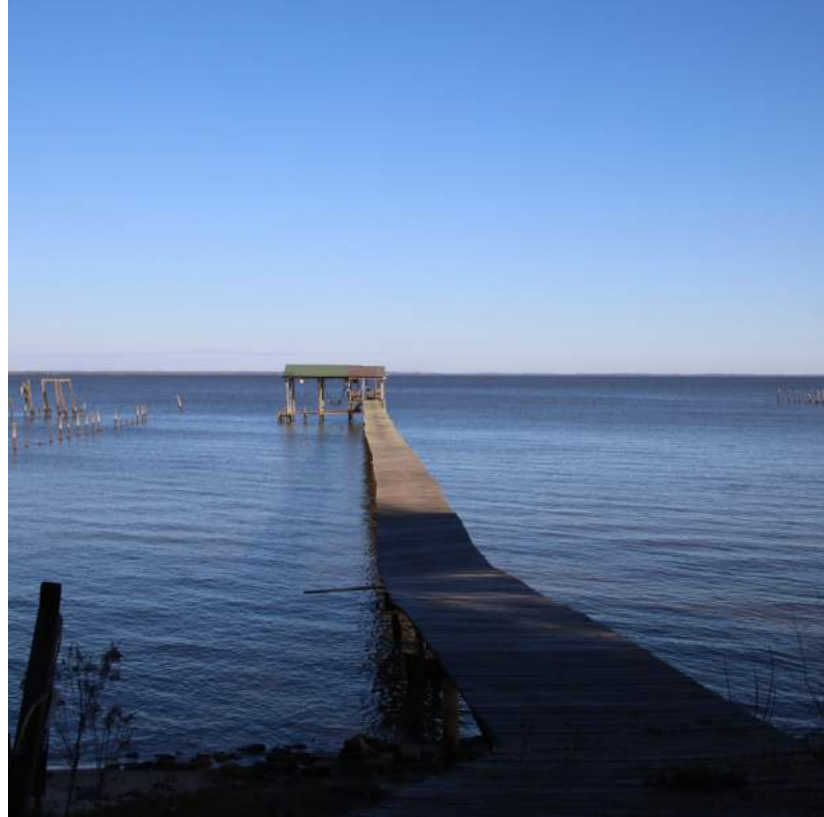
“We wanted to protect our way of life so we could continue to enjoy these resources for generations to come.”

- Page Stalcup



“It was truly a community effort to join together, defend our homes, and protect the beautiful area of South Mobile County. That’s what I’m most proud of.”

- Bob Evans



This is their story.



Twenty years ago, it suddenly became known that a big development was coming to the west side of Mobile Bay. The folks with homes on Dog River got word of it, and so did the folks with homes on Fowl River. The “powers that be” announced they were going to take over the western shore of Mobile Bay for industrial development, primarily for chemical companies. The companies wanted the east side of the bay to be primarily residential, and this side of the bay to be industrial.

We didn’t like the idea of development over here, but we weren’t too worried about it at first. It wasn’t until they announced plans to construct a sewage outfall pipe in Mobile Bay that made people stand up and do something about it. The pipe was supposed to be 40 feet wide, 80 feet long, and would be built two miles from the mouth of Fowl River. Neighbors called each other up to spread the news, and soon enough we started meeting and formed the Fowl River Protective Association. Eventually, we joined forces with the folks from Dog River and became West Bay Watch. We all met and decided we wanted to fight against this outfall pipe. It wasn’t a popular decision at the time, but we knew it was what we had to do. We fought the Press-Register, the Chamber of Commerce, you name it. We fought everybody.

We hired a lawyer, took them to the Alabama Supreme Court, and we won the case. None of us were really environmentalists. We were just normal people who cared about the bay, our seafood, our property value, and our quality of life. After a while, I think the chemical companies decided this area was a tough one to fight. People here love their homes and they love Mobile Bay. That’s how it all got started. I’m a founding member of Mobile Baykeeper, and proud of it.

Sincerely,

Jack V. Greer
Founding Member of Mobile Baykeeper

“None of us were really environmentalists. We were just normal people who cared about the bay, our seafood, our property value, and our quality of life.”

** The founding members listed above represent only a small fraction of the many early supporters who helped Mobile Baykeeper become what it is today.*



IN THE BEGINNING

A history of 20 years, from West Bay Watch to Mobile Baykeeper

Mobile Baykeeper formed in 1997 as West Bay Watch when a group of concerned citizens joined forces to fight the construction of a chemical facility along the western shore of Mobile Bay at the Theodore Industrial Park. As the group investigated the environmental implication of these plants, they discovered that for decades Mobile County's economic leaders had focused their efforts on industrial recruiting. As a result, the pollution amounts led the Environmental Defense Fund to rank Mobile County second in the nation for the presence of chemicals known to be cancer hazards in the Toxics Release Inventory.

The volunteers expanded their mission and changed the organization's name to Mobile Bay Watch, Inc. in 1998 to show they were addressing air and water quality issues on both sides of Mobile Bay. The volunteers hired a full-time director to serve the growing organization, and applied for and received its 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

In September 1999, Mobile Bay Watch, Inc. became affiliated with Waterkeeper Alliance, the international governing body for Waterkeeper organizations. In December 2005, the board of directors changed the organization's name to Mobile Baykeeper to better reflect our focus on protecting and preserving the Mobile Bay Watershed as a whole.

Throughout these changes, our mission has remained the same - to provide citizens a means to protect the beauty, health, and heritage of the Mobile Bay Watershed and our coastal communities. We have spent the past twenty

years developing coalitions to accomplish our goals of clean water, clean air, and healthy communities. Diverse partnerships have been behind every campaign in which we have been involved throughout our history. We defeated an on-shore and multiple offshore open loop Liquefied Natural Gas proposals in partnership with commercial and recreational fishermen, hunters, and the State of Alabama. We partnered with Mobile Area Water and Sewer System (MAWSS) and Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) to influence a major development project that changed how Alabama builds roads. We worked with local business, civic, and industry leaders to help pass

the most protective waterfront storage tank ordinance in the nation. We continue to join forces with business and community leaders to ensure the largest environmental disaster in our nation's history, the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Disaster, is answered with a lasting investment in the long-term health of our environment, economy, and community.

Today, we have a full-time staff of eight supported by more than 4,500 members.

We are the environmental watchdog, informed voice of reason, and collaborator for solutions working to ensure responsible growth, drive smart investments in infrastructure, and educate and engage the community.

We have a capable, stable staff, involved board, and broad community support that allows us to operate efficiently and provide us with sustainable funding sources. We intend to build an organization to be endowed for the future and continue working for clean water, clean air, and healthy communities.

“ Throughout these changes, our mission has remained the same.”

1997

200

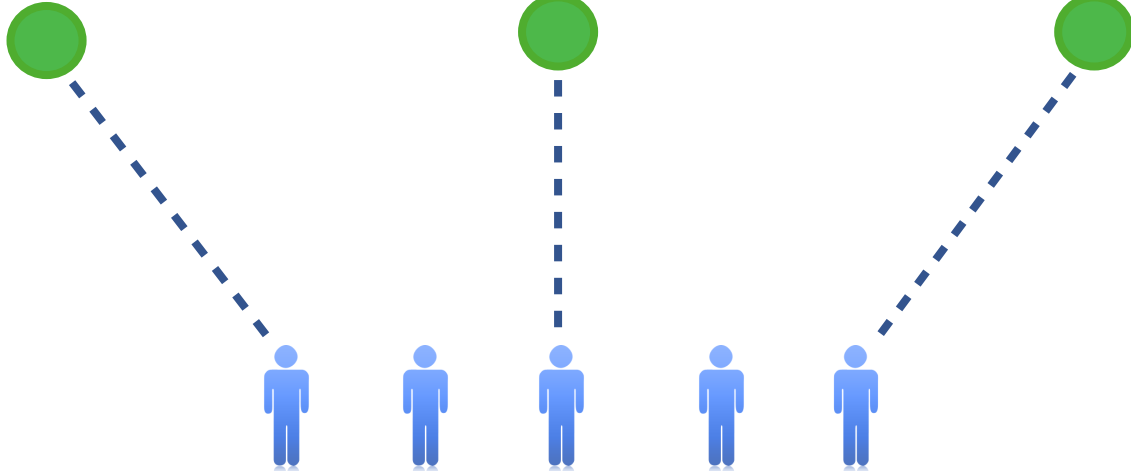
members

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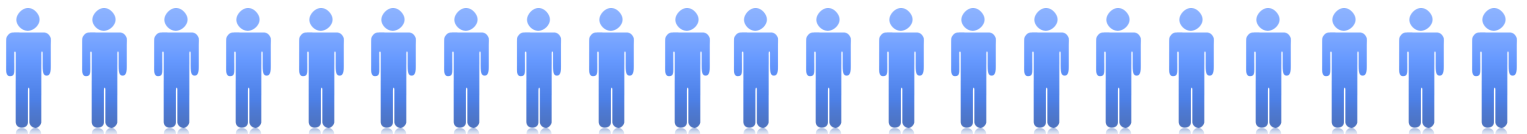
staff

5

board members



*We were founded by our members 20 years ago,
and today we are stronger than ever
because of them.*



4,500

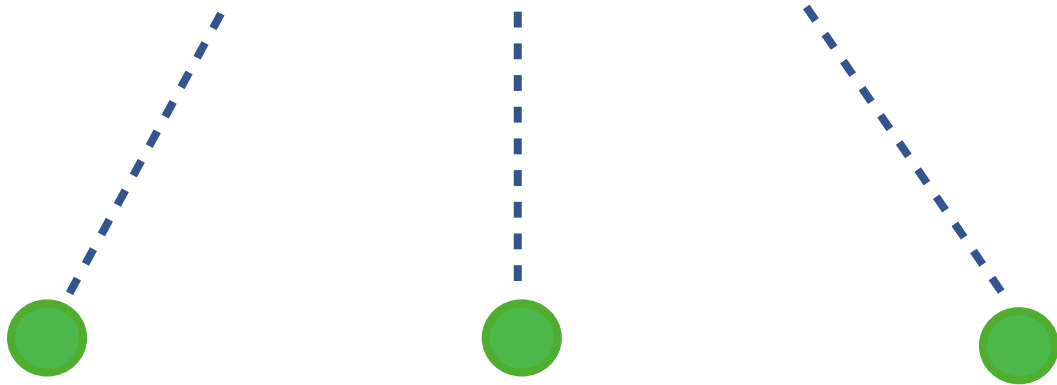
members

8

staff

19

board members



2017



THE WAY IT WAS

Founding members Logan Gewin and Jean Downing reunite with Executive Director Casi (kc) Callaway to recount the early days of West Bay Watch.

Why You Got Involved

Logan Gewin: I wanted to be able to breathe and know that it was safe. I would drive down the western shore and see those smoke stacks in the air. You just didn't know how many companies they were going to try and bring in here. At one point, we just decided it was time to draw a line and tell them we don't want all these plants coming here. To me, that's what got me interested was the air quality.

Jean Downing: The more we looked, the more we didn't want to define our growth by industry. That's it in a nutshell. As we talked to more and more folks, the more we agreed that the things we loved about the bay wouldn't be able to co-exist with these chemical companies coming to the area.

Logan Gewin: It was a few decision makers that were trying to decide the future of this entire area. They were never elected to decide how we were going to grow, but they decided it themselves, until a group of us decided we wanted to do something about it.

Jean Downing: When you look back at some of the key players from the early days of this organization, most of us were people who spent their childhoods growing up on the bay. We wanted to be able to pass these memories onto our children and grandchildren, and knew we wouldn't be able to if we kept growing like this.

What Set Us Apart

Casi (kc) Callaway: In my opinion, the thing that sets us apart is that we weren't founded by people who cared about the birds and the bunnies. We were founded by people who cared about their health, who cared about their kids being able to play in the bay, and who cared about their property value.

Jean Downing: Everyone just had a true passion and love for the bay. They were realtors, fishermen, businessmen. There was so much support from so many areas. There were a lot of people who made things happen behind the scenes that helped Baykeeper become what it is today.

Logan Gewin: Getting Jack Greer involved truly solidified us a legitimate group. He was so reputable and well thought of. If Jack Greer of Greer's Markets was supporting this environmental group, that opened the door to a lot of other businesses minded people to join us.

Early Challenges

Jean Downing: Credibility. At the time we were thought of these crazy, radical people. Even my father was one of the people who said we didn't know what we were talking about. So many of my friends thought we were crazy too. There was never a budget, never a plan at first. We were truly the roots of the grassroots.

Logan Gewin: It was a clash of the old way of thinking versus the new way of thinking. Progressive thinking against the 'Old Mobile' way of thinking. That was certainly a challenge we had to overcome.

Jean Downing: There were several under the table offers made by these companies to get us to be quiet and hope we would "go away". That was the reality back then, and that confirmed that it was all about the money. We knew what was the right thing to do.

Hiring the First Staff Member

Jean Downing: I remember when I came to the point and thought - I can't do this anymore. There were too many things that came up that were slipping through the cracks. That's when we knew it was time to hire somebody to take this on.

Logan Gewin: We were making a lot of waves, but we grew so fast and realized we weren't able to cover everything like we wanted to. We would have all burnt out if it wasn't for you (Casi).

Casi (kc) Callaway: Y'all never checked out when I got hired, though, and that was important. Anything I needed, both of you were always there for me. That momentum you started early on has carried this organization for 20 years.

Jean Downing: How did we even find you? I have no idea. It's hard to think about how we did things before the days of the Internet.

Logan Gewin: Once we hired you, it changed from a grassroots operation out of our dining rooms to a professional organization. That was the difference.

Biggest Accomplishments

Logan Gewin: Changing the public perception and realization that we need to take care of our natural resources. We were 20 years behind the rest of the country and it wasn't really in anyone's mindsets back then. They just didn't understand what we had, from a quality of life perspective. What you (Casi) and Baykeeper has done has now brought this to the forefront.

Jean Downing: I'm proud that now we actually have a sincere appreciation for our water and this beautiful gift we have. Whether or not we are all 'environmentalists', I think one thing we can all agree on is that we need to take care of these resources so we can pass it on to our children and our grandchildren.

Casi (kc) Callaway: When I started environmental work back in college, it was for the kid I didn't have

that I hoped to someday have. If y'all hadn't started this, I wouldn't be able to do the work I was called to do in a place that I love so much and feel so passionately about. Then I was able to have a child, raise that child, and watch him play on the beach, play in the bay, and experience the Delta just the way I did. We keep what our past generations give us for those future generations, and that's huge.

Jean Downing: Today, when there are environmental questions people have, they know where to go, and that's Mobile Baykeeper. I think that is so important for people to have a resource to call upon when issues arise in our area.

Changing Attitudes and Perceptions

Logan Gewin: Today, it's a check and balance system now between the environment and industry. Because Baykeeper is here, these large recruited heavy industries can't just run wild like they used to.

Jean Downing: I think the idea of environmental issues has turned into realizing it touches other issues as well. It's much bigger than just putting a can in a recycling bin. It affects our health, our quality of life, and our economy.

Casi (kc) Callaway: It really comes down to the triple bottom line - environment, economy, and community. If you aren't investing in any of those, then the other two will fail. If you only invest in one and not the other two, they will also fail. We still have a long way to go, but I think we've changed a lot as a community. Now we have a mayor who is enforcing litter laws throughout the city. That certainly wasn't the case 20 years ago.

“When you look back at some of the key players from the early days of this organization, most of us were people who spent their childhoods growing up on the bay. Everyone just had a true passion and love for this area. We wanted to be able to pass these memories onto our children and grandchildren, and knew we wouldn't be able to if we kept growing like this. We didn't want the future of the bay to be defined by industry.”

20

years of twenty milestones

1997

Founded as West Bay Watch when a group of concerned citizens joined together to fight the construction of a chemical plant along Mobile Bay's western shore.

2001

Won court case against MAWSS that prevented 2.5 million gallons of sewer overflows from destroying Mobile Bay.

2005

Worked with a coalition of stakeholders to successfully oppose liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities from establishing themselves in our community.

1999

New steel mill announced for area that led to conducting first air quality study.

2003

Completed first Mercury Exposure Study.

1998

Hired first staff member and officially changed name of organization to Mobile Bay Watch to address issues on both sides of Mobile Bay.

2002

Received \$250,000 grant to develop the Scenic Causeway Coalition, a creation of the state scenic byway program for the Mobile Bay Causeway.

2006

Mobile Bay Watch officially changed its name to Mobile Baykeeper.

2000

Affiliated with Waterkeeper Alliance, the international governing body for Waterkeepers worldwide.

2004

Held First Grandman Triathlon, the organization's largest fundraising event.

from 1997 to 2017

2007

Won lawsuit against ALDOT that raised standards for roadway construction in Alabama, saving the drinking water supply through proper containment of hazardous materials.

2015

Developed the "Sewage Spill Explorer" web tool to allow citizens to track sewer spills in Coastal Alabama in a visually appealing, user-friendly manner.

2011

Partnered with organizations and hundreds of volunteers to build a 1/10-mile oyster reef on Mobile Bay through the 100-1000 Restore Coastal Alabama Partnership.

2009

Formed the Fowl River Chapter of Mobile Baykeeper.

2013

Launched the "Create a Clean Water Future Campaign" to combat litter in waterways.

2008

Successfully petitioned to move a sewage treatment facility away from Magnolia River, establishing zoning regulations to protect water quality.

2016

Worked with local business and civic leaders to pass the most protective waterfront oil storage tank ordinance in the nation.

2012

Launched the Swim Guide App, developed by Lake Ontario Waterkeeper, to inform citizens of Coastal Alabama which beaches and swimming holes are safe for swimming.

2010

BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Disaster.

2014

Lost significant battle in an attempt to block an oil pipeline from being placed over drinking water supply.

WHO WE ARE....



*“I think more than anything else Mobile Baykeeper is a **watchdog** for our environment in watching over the quality of Mobile Bay and the threats it faces.”*

- Bob Higgins, Higgins & Associates

*“I know Mobile Baykeeper is there to make sure the laws are complied with and our watershed is **protected**.”*

- Alison Herlihy, Alison Baxter Herlihy, P.C.



*“Mobile Baykeeper is here to make sure we know and love the environment so much that we **protect** it from the dangers we face.”*

- Jeremiah Newell, Mobile Area Education Foundation

*“Mobile Baykeeper is a **watchdog** for the environment, the water quality, and all of the many things that a healthy community needs to survive.”*

- Katherine Pitman, Mobile United



TO THE COMMUNITY



*“Mobile Baykeeper **collaborates** with civic and business leaders to work on important issues that impact our community.”*

- Michael Pierce, MLK Redevelopment Commission

*“Mobile Baykeeper is a very strong **advocate** for the Mobile Bay Watershed by bringing people together to collaborate on the best way to protect the environment.”*

- Ashley Jones, North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce



*“Mobile Baykeeper is an amazing local organization who I see as the **protector** of our natural resources.”*

- Clint Martin, myTeam Triumph: Southern Alabama

*“Mobile Baykeeper’s ability to **collaborate** over the years has not only helped make business and industry stronger, but it has also made our community stronger.”*

- Scott Posey, AM/NS Calvert



STRENGTH IN NUMBERS



When I reflect on the incredible year we had in 2016, “strength in numbers” is the first theme that comes to mind - increased number of students educated on watersheds and water quality, increased level of media and community outreach efforts, increased number of citizen concerns addressed, increased membership. After a year of many transitions in 2015, it was amazing to see what a difference it makes when you have a stable, capable staff diligently working together to advance our mission.

The hiring of a full-time Education & Outreach Coordinator proved to be absolutely essential for the successful launch of the Strategic Watershed Awareness and Monitoring Program (SWAMP), an education action program that teaches the importance of connections within watersheds while also providing tools to monitor the health of waterways and solve pollution problems. This was made possible from your sustaining support at Bay Awakening in 2015. The new position spearheaded the education

component of SWAMP, helping educate more than 2,000 students across 11 different schools in Mobile and Baldwin County. To date, we have received more than \$100,000 of grant funding to support this program, and we are excited to see this number continue to grow in the future.

Other victories from the year include: 1) Collaborating for solutions with business and civic leaders to adopt the most protective waterfront oil storage tank ordinance in the nation, 2) Developing the “Sewage Spill Explorer” web tool to better educate and engage citizens to track sewer spills in their neighborhood, and 3) Working with our staff, board, and an outside consultant to develop a strategic plan to guide us to success over the next three years.

We can't do it alone, however. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2017, we hope to re-engage many of the founding members and early supporters who helped us become who we are today. We also need to continue reaching new audiences to increase membership and raise awareness of our work, and your support on this is crucial. We look forward to your continued involvement in the future. Thank you for your sustaining support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Keith'.

Wayne Keith
Board President



The 2016 Board of Directors concluded a successful strategic planning session at board member Ray Mayhall's home last July.



Waterkeeper® Alliance is a global movement uniting more than 250 Waterkeeper organizations around the world. Waterkeepers protect more than two million square miles of rivers, streams and coastlines in the Americas, Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa. Our mission is swimmable, fishable, drinkable waters worldwide.

OUR TEAM

STAFF



L to R: Hanlon Walsh, Amber Gaillard, Jamie Bullock, Laura Jackson, Casi (kc) Callaway, Nickelle Stoll, Jenn Grainger, Justine Herlihy, Cade Kistler.

Casi (kc) Callaway
*Executive Director &
Baykeeper*

Cade Kistler
Program Director

Justine Herlihy
Development Director

Nickelle Stoll
Operations Manager

Hanlon Walsh
*Communications
Coordinator*

Jamie Bullock
*Education & Outreach
Coordinator*

Laura Jackson
*Program & Grants
Coordinator*

Jenn Grainger
*Administrative &
Membership Coordinator*

Amber Gaillard
Executive Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



L to R: Benson O'Connor, Sam St. John, Cullen Jacobs, Jep Hill, Wayne Keith, Sumpter McGowin, Cullan Duke, Debbie Quinn, Steve McClure, Paul Myrick, Mel Washington, Lee Webb. **Not pictured:** Lee Adams, Kelly Jones, Rebecca Williams, Ray Mayhall, Bryan Pape, Kelly McGriff.

Wayne Keith
President

Melvin Washington
Vice-President

Rebecca Williams
Secretary

Cullan Duke
Treasurer

Lee Adams

Jep Hill

R. Cullen Jacobs

Kelly Jones

C. Ray Mayhall, Jr.

J. Steven McClure, P.E.

Sumpter McGowin

Kelly McGriff

Paul Myrick

J. Benson O'Connor, III

Bryan Pape

Debbie Quinn

Sam St. John

Lee Webb

YOUNG ADVISORY COUNCIL LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE



L to R: John Cutts, Ashley Robinson, Jep Hill, Laura Curtis, Peter McGowin, Jasmine Washington, Charles Tisher, Brent Keith. **Not pictured:** Jessica Callahan, Lyndsey Dixon, Reggie Hill, Elizabeth Maynard, Breck Pappas, Benton Thompson.

Jep Hill
President

Brent Keith
Vice-President

Laura Curtis
Secretary

Jessica Callahan

John Cutts

Lyndsey Dixon

Reggie Hill

Elizabeth Maynard

Peter McGowin

Breck Pappas

Ashley Robinson

Benton Thompson

Charles Tisher

Jasmine Washington



ADDRESSING ISSUES WITH INFRASTRUCTURE

Collaborating to Solve Infrastructural Issues in Coastal Alabama

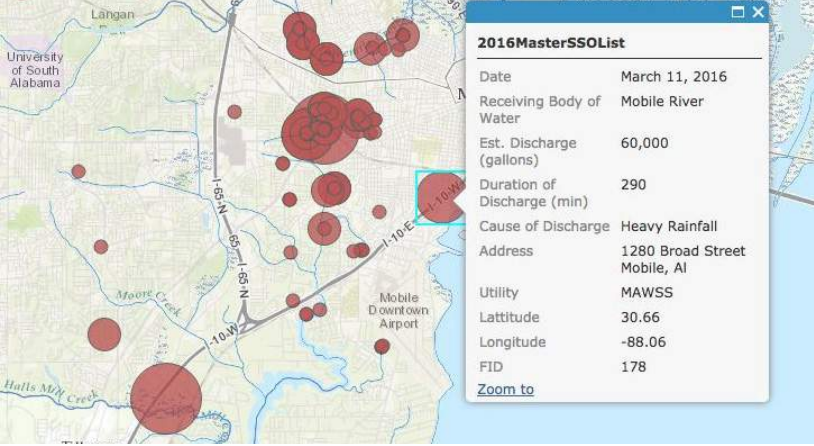
The Oxford dictionary defines infrastructure as the basic organizational and physical structures needed for the operation of a society. Water infrastructure, the often out-of-sight network of pipes and ditches that brings water to our home, carries wastewater away, prevents flooding, and is therefore absolutely crucial to the health of our waterways and communities.

That is why one of the most important components of our work is ensuring that these systems are improved and maintained. To do this, we research, review, and sample to ensure the organizations responsible for operating these systems protect our environment and communities and are held accountable when they do not.

For the last twenty years, we have engaged in a multitude of issues to ensure that our environment is protected from infrastructure related issues including sewage spills and stormwater runoff. After researching issues with sewer spills in Mobile and finding that more than 20 million gallons had been discharged in a single spill, along with hundreds of other incidents that allowed untreated

sewage to enter our creeks, rivers, and Bay, we filed suit against the Mobile Area Water and Sewer System (MAWSS) in 1999. The suit had a significant impact in improving MAWSS' system and decreasing sewer spills. Outcomes from the suit included requirements for intensive planning and monitoring by MAWSS as well as Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) that necessitated millions of dollars of repairs, restoration, and remediation. Following this suit, we have been able to build a collaborative partnership with MAWSS and are continuing work to eliminate sewer spills in Mobile. Finding issues of similar severity in Prichard and Bayou La Batre, we filed suit there resulting in improvements to their wastewater treatment systems.

Polluted stormwater is one of the most severe problems plaguing our coastal waterways. Mobile Baykeeper has engaged in a multitude of efforts to combat this problem over the last twenty years. A few examples include filing suit against the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) when their egregiously bad stormwater practices began to fill Big Creek Lake (Mobile's drinking



water source) with sediment during the construction of the Highway 98 extension, inspecting construction sites throughout the region, submitting countless comments to regulatory agencies aimed at improving municipal stormwater plans, and advocating along with partner groups (such as the Alabama Stormwater Partnership) for better stormwater laws, regulations, and enforcement across the state.

Today we continue working to improve water infrastructure along the coast. Current efforts include the creation of the “Sewage Spill Explorer” web tool that allows citizens to see the location, extent, and severity of sewage overflow. Through our partnership with MAWSS, we have agreed on a new Continuing Agreement that holds them accountable for sewer overflows and requires they spend approximately \$20 million on projects aimed at eliminating sewer overflow. We have initiated a comprehensive program of inspecting construction sites to collaborate with developers to prevent polluted stormwater runoff and hold them accountable when they are unresponsive to concerns.

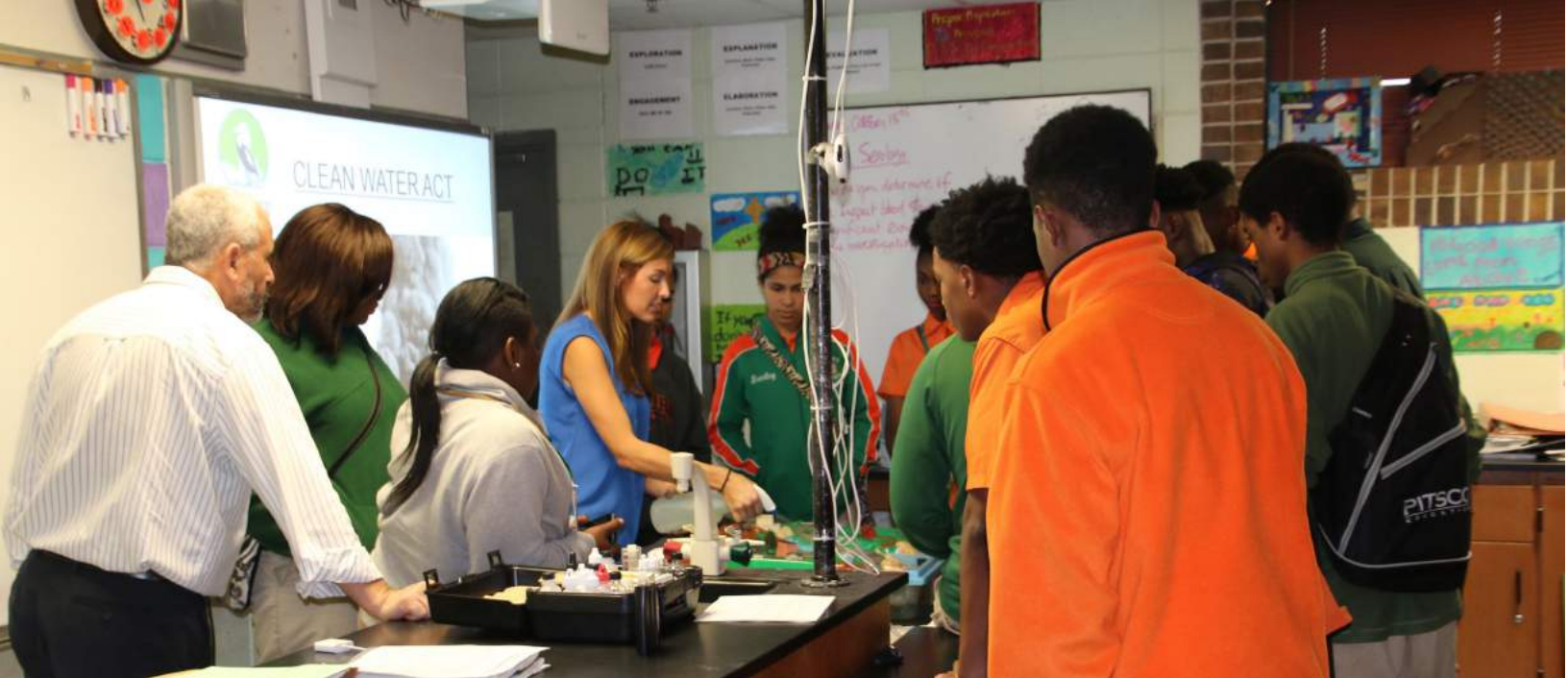
However, our work is not complete. As we look forward to the future, we have significant plans to continue protecting our environment and our health from infrastructure deficiencies. We are initiating an intensive program to sample sewage spills and determine the extent of threats to public health from sewage overflows. We have recently acquired equipment to perform more thorough monitoring of construction discharges and plan to increase sampling and inspection of stormwater pollution throughout Coastal Alabama. We are also using new technology to perform in-depth reviews of permits, new projects, and compliance for wastewater facilities and stormwater discharges.

Your membership and continued support ensure that we can continue to engage in this critical work of protecting and improving our water infrastructure so that all citizens of Coastal Alabama can be guaranteed clean water, clean air, and healthy communities.

For more information about our work on infrastructure, please visit www.mobilebaykeeper.org.

What is a SSO?

A sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) is an event where untreated sewage is discharged from the sewage collection system. These discharges endanger human health, damage homes, and businesses. Sewage spills also negatively impact our waterways and our ability to enjoy them.



BUILDING A BRIDGE FOR THE FUTURE

The Strategic Watershed Awareness and Monitoring Program (SWAMP)

In the Beginning

The main reason behind our success over the past 20 years is the support we receive from our members. They give us their time, their talents, their treasure, and also their ideas. When board member Sam. St John came to us with an idea in 2014, it quickly caught our attention.

He proposed developing a program to address the significant litter issue facing Dog River. “Everyone was focusing on cleaning up Dog River - the Mayor bought a boat for the City and the litter trap was gaining a lot of publicity,” said St. John. “My mission was to figure out how to keep litter from coming into Dog River in the first place.”

After looking at all of the different ways to deal with the issue, he decided to get the community involved. “We identified each of the tributaries draining into Dog River so we could recruit nearby schools, neighborhoods, and community groups to monitor the litter, report it, and eventually clean up their respective tributaries.”

When St. John approached Executive Director Casi (kc) Callaway with his proposal, she knew it was a void that needed to be filled. “We knew we needed to implement more citizen-based educational programs, and the way things were going with litter at the time, it seemed like the perfect fit,” said Callaway. Soon after, they both met with representatives from the City of Mobile and Dog River Clearwater Revival to develop an appropriate course of action, which laid the initial framework for the development of the Strategic Watershed Awareness and Monitoring Program (SWAMP).

An Idea Becomes a Reality

Although the plan was set in motion, Callaway knew the path from conceptualization to implementation would be

a challenge, but a challenge she was all too familiar with in her 19-year tenure as Executive Director & Baykeeper. “For a program of this size, identifying funding sources, staffing needs, and generating community buy-in was essential,” said Callaway.

Funding was the first order of business, and after a few unsuccessful grant applications to kickstart the program, Baykeeper found its first program funder with AM/NS Calvert, a steel finishing facility located in Calvert, AL, and subsidiary of ArcelorMittal USA. After meeting with Baykeeper to discuss potential programs that needed to be funded, representatives from the steel company selected SWAMP, but under one small condition. “They were very excited about the program, but wanted it to have an impact on the company’s local community,” said Callaway. “So we agreed that instead of initially focusing on Dog River, we would pilot the program in the Citronelle area to focus on the Little Cedar Creek Watershed.”

Once enough funding was secured to launch the program, the next step was to find the right staff person to lead it. This is where Mobile Baykeeper called upon its members, and they answered without hesitation. “We knew we needed an additional staff member to take charge of a program of this size, so we decided this would be our major ask at Bay Awakening in 2015,” said Callaway. “We were overwhelmed by the amount of support we received.”

Soon after, Callaway hired Jamie Bullock as the new Education & Outreach Coordinator, who was then tasked with working with Baykeeper program staff to develop the initial educational component of the program and pitch it to the faculty at Citronelle High School. Making it on the busy calendar of the Mobile County Public School System’s administration is no easy task, however, and this is where the support came in



from one of SWAMP's major partners - Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF), a local nonprofit organization who works to build community responsibility for improving public education outcomes in Mobile County.

"MAEF has played a huge role in the development of SWAMP, but most importantly in leveraging their relationships to help us land the initial interview to pitch the program," said Jamie Bullock. "We pitched the program successfully and got approved to launch SWAMP at Citronelle High School. This is where the initial idea became a reality."

Next Steps

Once the groundwork was laid for the educational component of this three-part program, next came the development of part two and part three - monitoring and solutions, where the value of partnerships once again proved essential. Phase two involves training students to become certified water quality monitors. To accomplish this, program staff worked with Alabama Water Watch (AWW), a longstanding citizen volunteer water quality monitoring program covering all of the major river basins in Alabama.

In collaboration with AWW, Program Director Cade

Kistler monitored local waterways regularly, completed two internships, and completed a certification course that allowed him to train and certify volunteers to test the water quality of local waterways on a monthly basis.

In order to house all the water quality data that volunteers would be collecting, Kistler and the program staff researched potential web-based tools. "We wanted to find one that housed geo-located water quality monitoring data that could be made available to the public, decision makers, scientists, and other stakeholders to show the nature of problems facing the watershed in an effort to develop effective solutions," said Kistler.

"After looking into different options, we discovered the Water Rangers tool and felt it was the right fit immediately. It provides a beautiful platform for posting and exploring water quality data. Valuable partnerships with AM/NS Calvert and the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) also helped fund additional features such as pollution reporting, gamification, and filtering," said Kistler.

After data is collected, Phase 3 focuses on implementing volunteer-led solutions to the data that was identified. "While

A 3-Phased Approach

1. Education

We work with the Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF) to develop a curriculum designed for high school students and give presentations at local schools to educate students on watersheds, water quality, and how they impact the two.

2. Monitoring

We work with Alabama Water Watch (AWW) to train students to become certified water quality monitors and test various locations within their respective watershed on a consistent basis. This helps students become active stewards of their watershed.

3. Solutions

Through a web tool developed in conjunction with Water Rangers, we provide students with solutions to report their findings from the field into an electronic web portal where we can quickly address issues with litter and water quality as they are submitted.



the first two phases of SWAMP are designed to connect citizens to their local watershed, Phase 3 is all about providing them with solutions,” said Program Coordinator Laura Jackson. “We work with the volunteers to give them tools they need to identify problems and implement solution-based projects to address litter and other issues discovered in the field.”

Program Impact

Once the structure of the program was developed, the next step was to begin implementation at Citronelle. After numerous days spent educating students in the classroom and training them in the field, it proved to be a very successful pilot program. At the end of 2016, 143 students were educated and 35 were trained to become water quality monitors.

After such a great initial success at Citronelle, the momentum of SWAMP has continued to move forward. Through generous grants from the Community Foundation of South Alabama (CFSA) and the Hargrove Foundation, more funding was secured to launch the program at LeFlore High School to

focus exclusively on the Three Mile Creek Watershed, one of the city’s most historic waterways heavily impacted by a variety of environmental issues. Thus far, 95 students have been educated and 26 have been trained to become monitors.

“SWAMP has helped me learn new ways I can protect my watershed,” said one LeFlore Student. “I want to learn how to keep the fish, the water, and our ecosystem safe from environmental problems.” Additionally, as the program continues to grow, there will be a larger emphasis placed on training adults through community clubs, businesses, neighborhood associations, and more. “The more people we have connected to our watersheds, the less problems we’ll see affecting our local waterways,” said Casi (kc) Callaway. “We value the input from our members, and that’s how this program all got started. Now, more than ever, it’s important to become a member so we can continue building SWAMP for the future.”

For more information about SWAMP, please visit www.mobilebaykeeper.org/swamp.

SWAMP by the Numbers

2,008
students educated



10
schools visited



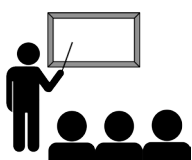
45
monitors trained



\$100,900
grant funding to date



26
presentations given



11
community groups visited



16
water samples taken



3
watersheds covered



THE VALUE OF PARTNERSHIP

Testimonials from SWAMP Supporters and Partners

AM/NS CALVERT

“AM/NS Calvert is on the Tombigbee River and adjacent to hundreds of acres of Tensaw delta wetlands and uplands that are so important to the healthy ecology of our region’s waterways and bays. Because of this, we feel a strong sense of obligation to not only ensure that our own operation is committed to the delta’s sustainability, but encourage this philosophy of stewardship through Mobile County. Baykeeper’s SWAMP initiative provided us with the perfect opportunity to do this.”

- Scott Posey, AM/NS Calvert

“Awareness of our region’s rich system of waterways is a key component to enhancing the health of our diverse community. Through Mobile Baykeeper’s SWAMP environmental monitoring program, dozens more citizens now have the knowledge necessary to understand how to combat problems found in their local watersheds and, more importantly, why it is incumbent on them to take charge and make a difference for the generations to come. Clean, healthy waterways are the cornerstone to a strong, thriving community, and The Community Foundation of South Alabama is proud to support this important effort.”

- Rebecca Byrne, Community Foundation of South Alabama



As the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program facilitates watershed planning in communities across the coast, one of the key ingredients to successfully protecting water quality in these creeks, streams, rivers, and bays is making sure communities understand how their actions impact water quality and teaching them how to track and mitigate those impacts. This is what the SWAMP program is all about and why it is so important to local watershed management. The SWAMP program is a key resource for building community capacity through water quality monitoring to identify local sources of pollution. With a focus on creating citizen scientists at an early age, Mobile Baykeeper is investing in the creation of a Clean Water Future for Coastal Alabama.

- Roberta Swann, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

Special Thanks to our other SWAMP Partners





FUNDRAISING WITH A PURPOSE

An overview of fundraising events and the method behind each of them.

The typical event-goer in Mobile or Baldwin County might perceive Mobile Baykeeper as a non-profit organization who simply hosts a lot of fun events. And they wouldn't be wrong, necessarily. We like to keep the "fun" in fundraising and stay busy doing it.

There's the Grandman Triathlon in the spring, Bay Bites in the summer, and Bay Awakening and Bay Bash in the fall. We also have smaller "Bay Splash" events throughout the year, such as the Big Float with SweetWater Brewing and the "Be Good for Something" Shrimp Eating Contest with Wintzell's Oyster House, where local businesses partner with us to host an event and donate the proceeds to our mission. Sure, these events are a great time, but they also require an intensive amount of planning and preparation. So what's the point?

"The purpose of our events is to raise awareness of our mission and connect the community to our natural resources," said Development Director Justine Herlihy, who leads and executes each event. "Most of them take place on or near the water by design. It's important to continue reaching new audiences and expose them to the work we do, and these events prove successful in achieving that year after year."

Grandman Triathlon

With more than 700 racers and 150 volunteers, The Grandman Triathlon is by far the largest event hosted by Mobile Baykeeper and attracts both veteran triathletes from around Southeast and local first-time racers alike. In its 13th year, this sprint triathlon has become a premier destination of triathletes for many

reasons, in part due to its scenic location at the Fairhope Pier on Mobile Bay.

"Not many triathletes get to jump off a pier to start a race," said Casi (kc) Callaway, Executive Director of Mobile Baykeeper and Grandman Triathlon Race Director. "When racers are swimming in the bay, we want to get the message across that we work on issues like sewer spills and stormwater runoff that affect the water quality of Mobile Bay. The swim portion of the race wouldn't be possible without clean water."

Bay Bites

Mobile Baykeeper's newest event, Bay Bites Food Truck Festival, takes place each July and offers food trucks, craft beer, live music, and lawn games on the riverfront of downtown Mobile at Cooper Riverside Park. Hosted by Baykeeper's Young Advisory Council, Bay Bites is primarily geared toward the young professional audience. "We saw there was a void to fill and created

Bay Bites three years ago to appeal to young professionals. It's important to engage a younger audience to continue instilling a passion for our waterways for generations to come," said Herlihy.

Similar to the Grandman, the event's waterfront location was chosen for a reason. "So many people don't even know there is a river downtown, so one of the main reasons we host the event where we do is to expose more citizens to our waterfront," said Herlihy.

While this event is mostly fun and games, there's also an educational component that was added in 2016 by Education

& Outreach Coordinator Jamie Bullock to further emphasize the bigger picture. “Between hanging signs highlighting our work, encouraging guests to bring reusable cups, or simply reminding them that it takes clean water to make delicious beer, our goal is to host a fun, yet educational event and ultimately convey to participants why we do what we do,” said Bullock.

Bay Awakening

Bay Awakening, is an annual fundraising breakfast featuring a keynote speaker and short film highlighting some of our major environmental campaigns. At the end of the film, there is a call to action and guests are invited to make sustaining contributions to benefit our mission.

“More than any event, Bay Awakening showcases the core issues we work on - like BP Oil Disaster Restoration, sewer spills, stormwater, you name it,” said Callaway. “It is the best way to find out specifically who we are, what we do, and how you can get involved.”

Bay Bash

Last, but certainly not least, is Bay Bash. An annual celebration of Mobile Bay and our coastal communities, Bay Bash features

delicious seafood, cocktails, live music, and a silent auction overlooking the Mobile-Tensaw Delta at 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center. Each year, a special guest is honored who has played a significant role in advancing our mission.

“Bay Bash is where it all began 20 years ago,” said Callaway. “It is our way of giving back to members who have been instrumental in helping us get where we are today. Last year, we were honored to present the award to Jack Greer, one of the founding members of Mobile Baykeeper.”

While each fundraising event is intended to raise awareness of our work for clean water, clean air, and healthy communities by connecting the community to our natural resources,

These events succeed in raising awareness of our work and connecting people to our water resources, but more importantly they serve as means to an end. “We host these events to raise money – period,” said Callaway. “Proceeds allow us to patrol our waterways, to visit schools and community groups to educate citizens on watersheds and water quality, to investigate stormwater runoff from construction sites, just to name a few. This helps us advance our mission, and that’s the bottom line.”

For more information about our fundraising events, please visit mobilebaykeeper.org/events.



GRANDMAN TRIATHLON



“

These proceeds allow us to go out in the boat and patrol our waterways, to visit schools and educate students on watersheds and water quality, to investigate sewer spills or stormwater runoff from construction sites. This is how we we do what we do.”



BAY BITES



BAY BASH





BAY AWAKENING



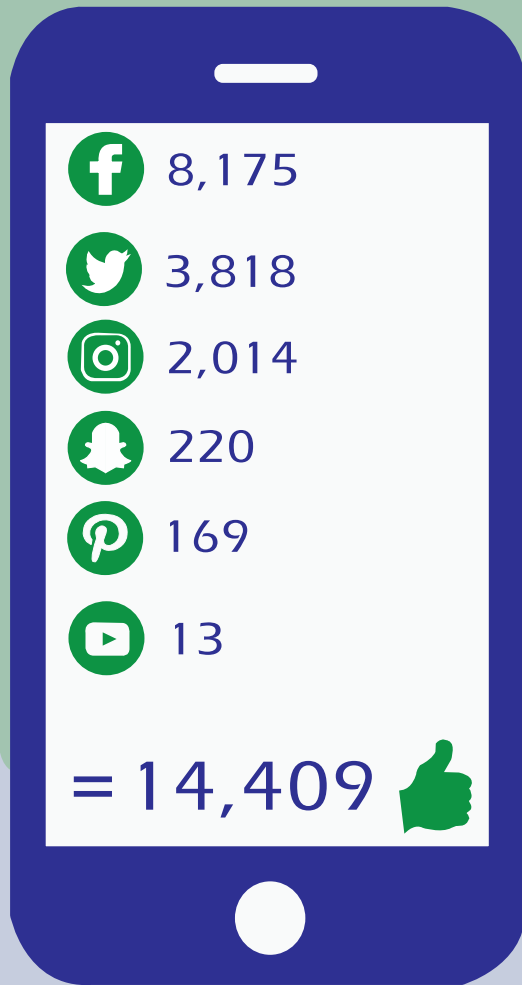
BAY SPLASH



37,451 DIRECT REACH IN 2016



SOCIAL MEDIA



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Tabling

13,210



Speaking

5,602



Fundrasing

3,405



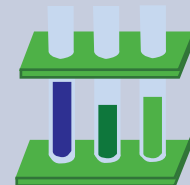
Cleanups

570



Workshops

255



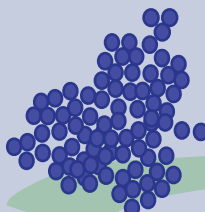
96,125
Volunteer
hours



769
Volunteers



167
Apple
Snails



1,728
Apple Snail
Masses



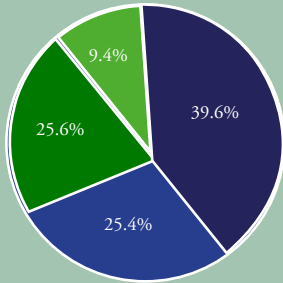
516
Trash Bags



19
Clean ups

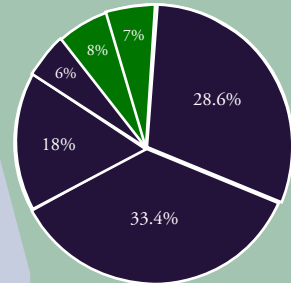
FINANCIALS

Income: \$698,842



- **Grants: \$252,900 (39.6%)**
- **Events: \$189,034 (25.6%)**
- **Environmental Fines/Other: \$187,501 (25.4%)**
- **Membership: \$69,407 (9.4%)**

Expenses: \$625,635



Programs (85%)

- **Local Issues: \$208,273 (33.4%)**
- **Education & Outreach: \$178,816 (28.6%)**
- **Oil Response & Restoration: \$112,139 (18%)**
- **Statewide Issues: \$37,421 (6%)**

Admin (15%)

- **Fundraising: \$47,775 (8%)**
- **Management & General: \$41,211 (7%)**

2016 SPONSORS

17 Turtles Outfitters
Alabama Coastal Radiology
Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo
Alabama Outdoors
Alabama Public Radio
Altaworx
Atlanta Bread Company
Austal
Bay Gourmet Catering
BLUEGILL Restaurant
Blue Rents
Boudreaux's Cajun Grill
Budget Truck Rental
Cadence 120 Bicycle Works, Inc.
Callaghan's Irish Social Club
Coastal Bank and Trust
Coastal Chiropractic
Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Inc.
Cottages of Fairhope
Crow Shields Bailey PC
Crystal Ice
Daphne Utilities
Dauphin Island Marina
Dr. James B. Donaghey, DMD

Evonik Industires
Fairhope Boat Company
Fairhope Fitness
Fairhope Physical Therapy
Felder Services
Fleet Feet Sports Mobile
Fleming Rehab
Fresh Seafood Distributors
Gotta Go Portables
Grand Hotel Marriott
Greer's Cash Saver
Gulf Coast Ducks
Gulf Distributing, LLC
Gwin's Commercial Printing
Hackbarth Delivery Services
Half Shell Oyster House
Hampton Inn Fairhope
Hancock Bank
Hargrove Engineers + Constructors
Infinity Bicycles
Infirmary Health
Integrity Roofing & Contracting
J. Vestal Photo

Keith Air Conditioning, Inc.
Kentwood Springs
Klumb Lumber Company
Lyon Fry Cadden Insurance
The Maids
Medical Center Podiatry, P.C.
Mobile Oyster Company
Mobtown Merch
Naman's Catering
Nephrology Associates of Mobile
The Noble South
Norton Lilly International
Oakworth Capital Bank
The Orthopaedic Group, P.C.
Pilot Catastrophe Services
Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Pro Cycle & Tri
Publix
Red or White Wine & Gourmet Center
Red Beard Outfitters
Regions Bank
Reyner Construction
Roberts Brothers, Inc.
Rogers & Willard, Inc.

Russell Thompson Butler & Houston, LLP
Run-N-Tri
Running Wild
Saunders Yachtworks
SERVPRO Southwest Alabama
Southern Light
StorageMax Midtown
SweetWater Brewing Company
tasc Performance
Thames Batre Insurance
Thompson Engineering
Toyota
Truland Homes
Volkert, Inc.
Waterkeeper Alliance Splash Series
Whole Foods Market
WildNative Delta Safaris
Wilkins Miller
Williams Financial Group
Kimberly Zukley

2016 GRANTORS

Abahac, Inc.
Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust
AM/NS Calvert
Caring Foundation
C. D. Helen and Jeff Glaze Foundation

Community Foundation of South Alabama
Crampton Trust
Curtis & Edith Munson Foundation
Daniel Foundation of Alabama

Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Hargrove Foundation
Lillian C. McGowin Foundation
Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
M.W. Smith Jr. Foundation

Norquist Charitable Foundation
Schmidt & Barton Family Fund
Walmart Foundation
Walton Family Foundation
Wells Fargo Foundation

VISIONARY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Mr & Mrs. Sumner and Lee Adams
Mr. Terry Aucoin
Mr. Greg Breedlove
Mr. Tom Burkett
Christ Church Cathedral
Dr. Jim Connors
Mr. and Dr. William & Kathy Cunningham
Mr. W. Allen Cox
Mr. William Cutts
Dr. & Mrs. Bernard & Carolyn Eichold
Great Bear Wax Co.
Hiller Companies

Alison Baxter Herlihy, P.C.
Mr. J. Tunstall Inge
Mr. Dennis Langan
Mrs. Katherine Lathan
Lyon Fry Cadden
Mr. Christopher Mayhall
Mr. Ray Mayhall
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Mr. Charles Moorehead
Mr & Mrs. Paul & Karen Myrick
Mr. Andy Newton
Mr. Stan Nolan
Mrs. Sharon Olen

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Mr. John Schley Rutherford
Mrs. Jeane Sanderford
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Seawell
Shumer Consulting LLC
Mr. & Mrs. James Shumock
Mr. & Mrs. Riley Boykin Smith
Mr. Steve Springer
Mr. Cooper Thurber
Mrs. Martha Tissington
Councilwoman Debbie Quinn

Mr. Glen and Mrs. Libba Vanderbeek
Mr. Todd Vereen
Ms. Elizabeth E. Walmsley
Ms. Kathy Welch-Cobb
Mr. Melvin Washington
Mr. Marc Whitehead
Mr. John White-Spinner
"In Memory of Peggy White-Spinner"
Mr. Billy and Mrs. Rebecca Williams

* Visionary society members not listed prefer to remain anonymous

FOUNDING MEMBER PARTY

20 years later, founding members reunite at the place where Mobile Baykeeper's story began - the western shore of Mobile Bay



Founding Members Skeeter Morris, Jack Greer, and Logan Gewin.



Executive Director & Baykeeper Casi (kc) Callaway with Jack Greer.



Staff members Jamie Bullock and Nickelle Stoll enjoy a moment with Jack Greer and his wife Janice.



Baykeeper board members and spouses mingle with founding members.



Jack Greer entertains the group with a story of the early days of West Bay Watch.



Development Director Justine Herliby with founding member Bob Evans and his wife Jan.



Staff, board members, founding members, and family mingle together.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In 1997, I was still in Washington, D.C. working for Clean Water Action and learning all I could about how laws work on the federal level. Back home, my father would periodically send me job notices to get me back home. Little did we know at the time that there was a great crowd getting organized and figuring out how to stand up for their home, families, communities, and their livelihoods.

West Bay Watch was forming in response to a chemical plant being constructed on the western shore, but they were growing quickly because they saw the bigger battle – what was the future of Coastal Alabama going to be? For decades, the decision makers in our community had blinders on and focused only on one type of growth – heavy industry. They didn't incorporate long-term planning about the impacts to our health, the remainder of our economy, and vitally important - our quality of life.

West Bay Watch, then Mobile Bay Watch, and into present day Mobile Baykeeper started to change that focus and began talking about the interconnectedness between a healthy environment and a vibrant economy. Working with industry, we learned that one chemical plant could require 4 million gallons of clean water daily and polluted water won't work for their processing. We tackled sewage treatment facilities in every community because the rich and poor both pay the bill and that bill should cover processing the sewage and keeping it out of our favorite swimming holes. We worked with community partners and agencies to fight through the 2010 BP Oil Disaster and continue to battle to ensure restoration funding is spent on projects that will have a lasting impact on our environment, economy, and community.

Our job remains today. Working locally here in Sweet Home Alabama, we are still explaining that we're not a bunch of tree-huggers (though we do love trees!). We are neighbors, parents, sons, daughters, and property owners who all love Mobile Bay and our rivers, stream, creeks, beaches and everything in between. As development is on the rise, we have to remind contractors that red clay must be kept on site and not allowed to enter our waterways, sewer belongs in pipes until treated thoroughly, and new growth and development doesn't require destruction of our precious natural resources. Additionally, we can do better by choosing restoration projects that will create generational changes and make us resilient to the next disaster.

Through the end of 2016, we worked with an incredible guide and our good friend Ted Jackson to develop a strategy map to find who we are and how we work as an organization. With guidance from the community, we determined more clearly that we are: the environmental watchdog, the informed voice of reason, and the collaborator for solutions. Specifically, we work on the following: 1) Planning at the local and statewide level to ensure responsible growth; 2) Field work that focuses on driving smart investments in infrastructure like stormwater, sewer and new developments; and 3) We educate and engage the community to connect people to our natural resources and get them involved in activities like restoration projects and community cleanups.

Our work is driven by an incredible and brilliant team of eight full-time staff members, a diverse and involved board of directors, hundreds of volunteers, and most importantly broad community support for clean water, clean air, and healthy communities. Through diverse funding streams and a tight fiscal policy, we are ensuring financial stability to ensure we will continue to work in the future. We know we have work to do and we are grateful for our members, donors, sponsors and friends who ensure we can focus on the beauty, health, and heritage of the Mobile Bay Watershed and our coastal communities.

Sincerely,

Casi (kc) Callaway
Executive Director & Baykeeper



The Baykeeper team had a blast riding in the Baykeeper boat during the 2017 Order of La Shes Mardi Gras Parade.

MOBILE BAYKEEPER[®] Strategic Plan

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide citizens a means to protect the beauty, health, and heritage of the Mobile Bay Watershed and our coastal communities.

Who We Are

Environmental watchdog



Informed voice of reason



Collaborator for solutions



Enabling Our Success

Capable, stable staff



Involved board



Broad community support



Our Key Focus Areas

Ensure Responsible Growth

Engaging early in regional and economic plans

Monitor key issues

Developing internal response plans



Drive Smart Infrastructure Investments



Stormwater

Wastewater

Industrial Pollution

Educate and Engage Citizens



Raising Awareness

Education Programs

Our Financial Foundation

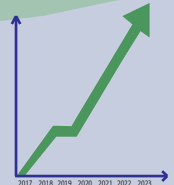
Operate efficiently



Sustainable funding sources



Endow for the future





AN UNKNOWN FUTURE

Coal Ash in the Mobile-Tensaw Delta

Residents of Coastal Alabama will tell you there's no place quite like the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. Often referred to as "America's Amazon" and believed to be one of the most biodiverse ecosystems in the world, the Delta feeds life into our rivers, creeks, bays, and bayous that provide us with a multitude of recreational opportunities like swimming, fishing, boating, and hunting. These waters also serve as the backbone of our economy - industries such as seafood, tourism, real estate, and even manufacturing depend on healthy waters to thrive and be successful.

It's easy to take this waterfront proximity for granted until something happens that threatens our ability to enjoy these resources. From sewer spills and stormwater runoff to litter and oil disasters (remember BP?), these waterways face all sorts of "everyday" environmental issues that many of us are familiar with. There's one issue, however, that could severely impact the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. The problem is - you might not have even heard of it before.

Often referred to as a "silent danger", coal ash is the toxic byproduct from burning coal. It contains heavy metals such as arsenic, mercury, and lead which can be hazardous to human health, wildlife, and surrounding waterways. Just 25 miles north of Mobile in Bucks, AL, more than 16 million tons of coal ash sits in an unlined 600-acre coal ash pond directly adjacent to the Mobile River at the James M. Barry Electric Generating Plant, owned and operated by Alabama Power.

In November 2016, Alabama Power announced plans to "cap

in place" the coal ash pond at Plant Barry, leaving the ash to sit in an unlined pit adjacent to the Mobile River and likely pollute the nearby groundwater for decades to come. We were extremely disappointed by this decision, and strongly believe the only safe option to protect the health of our environment, economy, and community is to move the ash away from the river and transport it to a lined, upland landfill.

In other regions of the country, we have witnessed catastrophic dam failures of coal ash plants that have devastated nearby waterways and communities, such as the 2008 TVA spill in Kingston, TN, which released more than 6 million tons of coal ash into nearby rivers, and the 2014 Duke Energy spill near Eden, NC, which released nearly 39,000 tons of ash into the Dan River. The coal ash pond at Plant Barry is one of the largest in the nation, and if a spill was to occur, this pond contains enough coal ash to cover the entire main area of downtown Mobile 25 feet deep in ash.

Though this issue is still ongoing and the future is unknown, we are certain of one thing - the impacts of a potential disaster from a coal ash pond of this magnitude would prove to be absolutely devastating to Coastal Alabama. In a community that relies on clean water for a healthy environment, a thriving economy, and a strong community, we must do what we can to protect our Delta and the surrounding waterways by voicing our concern that this is an unacceptable decision. We will continue to work with Alabama Power and other influential stakeholders to ensure these resources are protected, but we can't do it alone. We need your support and involvement so we can continue to enjoy clean water, clean air, and healthy communities for generations to come.

“
The only safe option to protect the health of our environment, economy, and community is to move the coal ash away from the Mobile River.”



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is coal ash?

Coal ash is the toxic byproduct from burning coal. It contains toxic chemicals such as arsenic, mercury, and lead which can be hazardous to human health, wildlife, and surrounding waterways.

What does Alabama Power's decision mean?

Alabama Power decided to “cap in place” 16 million tons of coal ash at Plant Barry. Therefore, the coal ash will be left to sit in an unlined pit and pollute the groundwater and nearby waterways for decades to come. We believe the only responsible decision is to instead move the ash AWAY from the Mobile River to a lined, upland landfill.

Why does this matter?

The coal ash pond is bordered by the Mobile River on three sides and located in the middle of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta. If a coal ash spill or dam failure were to occur, the impact would have a catastrophic effect on one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the world.

What happens next?

We will continue working with Alabama Power and other stakeholders to ensure we protect the health of our environment, economy, and community.

To get involved and learn more about coal ash on the Mobile River, please visit mobilebaykeeper.org/coal-ash or call 251-433-4229.



RESTORING COASTAL ALABAMA

An overview and update of ongoing restoration projects in Coastal Alabama from the 2010 BP Oil Disaster

photo by Sam St. John

A few years after the BP Oil Disaster of 2010, we turned our focus on restoration and we haven't looked away. Despite a very slow start in Alabama, we have made some great headway and laid the best groundwork possible in 2016 for money to start moving through the different funding sources.

To say that environmental restoration funding is complicated is a complete understatement. There's the RESTORE Act at the state and the federal levels, the criminal penalties paid out through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA). All four have different decision makers, different rules associated, and different allowable amounts of funding available for different types of projects. And that doesn't at all speak to what Montgomery did with the economic settlement dollars. Projects like land acquisition in Mobile and Baldwin Counties, marsh restoration, oyster reef restoration, watershed management planning, and so much more is already happening, along with economic projects like building a lodge at the Gulf State Park.

There is much work to do to ensure the best projects move forward, and Baykeeper has been working diligently to see two major structures in place as the next round of decisions are made on which projects to prioritize and fund: 1) Ensure Alabama creates a plan for restoration and 2) Create

a decision-making process that eliminates guesswork and favoritism. A comprehensive coastal restoration plan, similar to what exists in Louisiana and Mississippi, could serve as a much-needed guide to ensure the most important projects are funded in a priority driven order. We must identify what we need in Coastal Alabama to be resilient to withstand the next disaster (natural or man-made), and which projects are higher priorities than others. The watershed planning helps tremendously, but we need to tie everything into one big, overarching plan.

The other major piece requires public engagement, which means demanding a process for selecting projects that involves public scrutiny and a criteria selection. This type of "score sheet" would enable those projects that can make the greatest impact, be the most long-lasting, and truly ensure we incorporate the triple bottom line – environmental protection and restoration, economic impact, and community health and resiliency.

“

We must identify what need in Coastal Alabama to be resilient to withstand the next disaster (natural or man-made), and which projects are higher priorities than others.”

3 PROJECTS TO WATCH



1. Bon Secour

This project will protect and restore approximately 935 acres of diverse coastal habitat in the City of Gulf Shores. This area is a critical habitat for a number of threatened and endangered species including the eastern indigo snake, various wading birds, and the Alabama red-bellied turtle. (Source: NFWF)

Estimated Cost: \$12,511,400



2. Mon Louis Island

This project primarily focuses on the development of a comprehensive watershed management plan for the Fowl River Watershed. It will restore 14 total acres of wetland - eight acres of tidal marsh land at the tip of Mon Louis Island, and six additional acres of habitat to restore what was lost in the BP Oil Disaster. (Source: NFWF)

Estimated Cost: \$3,244,150



3. Swift Tract

Swift Tract is 615 acres located in the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. This is a living shoreline project to build 1.6 miles of breakwaters covered with oyster shell to reduce shoreline erosion, protect saltwater habitat, and restore ecosystem diversity and productivity in Mobile Bay. (Source: NRDA)

Estimated Cost: \$5,000,080

Restoration Funding Acronyms 101

RESTORE: Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act. In July 2012, the RESTORE Act established the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council to dedicate 80 percent of all administrative and civil penalties related to the 2010 BP Oil Disaster and outlined a method these funds can be used to restore and protect the environment and economy of the Gulf region.

NFWF: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Founded in 1984, NFWF has become one of the world's largest conservation grant-makers. From 2010 to 2012, NFWF invested \$22.9 million in conservation actions in the Gulf of Mexico to minimize the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill on key fish and wildlife species.

NRDA: Natural Resource Damage Assessment. The process used by scientists to evaluate and restore wildlife, habitats, and human resources impacted by the BP Oil Disaster. They work together to identify the extent of natural resource damage and specify the type and amount of restoration required.

Restoration by the Numbers

\$ 1.36

billion dollars estimated for restoration projects in Alabama

15

years of restoration payments made by BP to address natural resource injuries, beginning in April 2017

\$ 20.8

billion dollars to be paid by BP to all five Gulf States to restore damages from the disaster

A photograph of a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and red. The ocean waves are breaking on the shore, and the sand is dark. In the foreground, a large number of birds, likely shorebirds, are scattered across the beach and near the water's edge. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

**Become a member today for clean water, clean air, and
healthy communities.**

mobilebaykeeper.org/contribute

“We are not building this country of ours for a day. It is to last through the ages.”

- Theodore Roosevelt



Mobile Baykeeper is a community environmental advocacy organization providing citizens a means to protect the beauty, health, and heritage of the Mobile Bay Watershed and our coastal communities. We are the watchdog, informed voice of reason, and collaborator for solutions, building partnerships to ensure everyone has clean water, clean air, and healthy communities.



CLEAN WATER. CLEAN AIR. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

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Fax: 251.
E: info@mobilebaykeeper.org
www.mobilebaykeeper.org

