



Programs Progress Report—2009

Alabama Coastal Foundation

May 2009

Alabama Coastal Foundation

Our mission:

To **improve** and **protect** the quality of Alabama's coastal resources by identifying and **solving problems** through education, cooperation and participation.

We accomplish our mission by:

- Bringing together stakeholders with differing interests to facilitate mutually beneficial solutions;
- Providing fair and factual information to encourage responsible citizen action;
- Offering opportunities for individuals to play a vital part in preserving our environment and our coastal way of life.

How We Work:

We use an education-based approach to conservation: to find the solution, you must understand the problem;

- We pursue practical solutions to conservation challenges in a non-adversarial manner;
- We are dedicated to partnering with businesses, local government and other non-profits to maximize resources & results.

Why We Are Successful:

Our members and their dedication to conservation enables ACF to find solutions to the tough environmental issues facing our community.

We Focus Our Efforts on Education and Restoration Projects

Our goal is to improve and protect Alabama's coastal resources by encouraging citizens to educate themselves about the issues that affect our area, and to work together to preserve our natural resources through participation in preservation and educational projects.

Coastal Kids Quiz

Competition for 5th graders in Mobile & Baldwin Counties to test their knowledge of conservation
Students & teachers compete to win thousands in scholarships
Over \$40k in scholarships over life of program

Bay Buddy Program

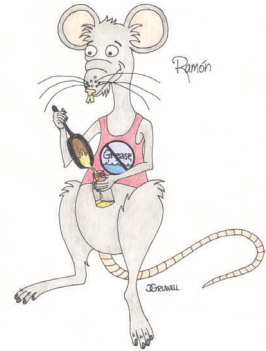
Teaches children ages K-3 in Mobile and Baldwin Counties about basic conservation principles
Bay Buddy program is volunteer-led
Includes information about watershed preservation, aquifer protection, and proper disposal of grease

Other Community Programs

Big Creek Lake Resource Alliance
Wolf Bay Watershed Management Plan
Coast Watch
Household Hazardous Waste Day
Coastal Impact Assistance Program
D-Olive Bay Watershed Management Plan
Community Island Initiative

Gulf Coast Bay Buddy Program

The Gulf Coast Bay Buddy Program involves training volunteers to lead a 35-minute presentation at local schools teaching basic conservation principles such as energy conservation, keeping grease out of the drain, and recycling. Each student receives an activity book that reinforces lessons introduced and encouraging them to share their knowledge with others.



Schools visited during the 2008-2009 school year:

Bay Minette Elementary
Brazier Elementary (Mobile)
Chickasaw Elementary
Daphne East Elementary
Gulf Shores Elementary
Elsanor Elementary (Robertsdale)
Foley Elementary
George Hall Elementary (Mobile)
Hutchens Elementary (Mobile)
J. Larry Newton School (Fairhope)
Nan Gray Davis (Mobile)
Silverhill Elementary
Swift Consolidated Elementary (Bon Secour)



Total Students 2008-2009 School Year: 1,849

Next Steps:

Build participation in underserved communities
Build responsible volunteer base
Secure grant to expand program to Gulf-wide via internet
Update characters and messages to better reach students

Coastal Kids Quiz

The Coastal Kids Quiz is an annual competition for teams of fifth graders in Mobile and Baldwin Counties. Schools are contacted in August and are accepted into the competition on a first come, first serve basis until all sixteen available slots are filled. Teams receive study materials in early November to prepare for the competition, which occurs in late April each year. Students compete in a round robin style tournament, with the top scoring teams competing in a Championship Round to determine first and second place. Awards are as follows:

First place - \$600 scholarship bond to each student, \$500 to teacher sponsor for conservation activities in classroom

Second place - \$300 scholarship bond to each student, \$500 to teacher sponsor for conservation activities in classroom

Third place - \$200 scholarship bond to each student, \$500 to teacher sponsor for conservation activities in classroom



2009 participating teams:

1st place: Bayside Academy (Daphne)

2nd place: Bayshore Christian School (Fairhope)

3rd place: Christ the King School (Daphne)

Council Traditional School (Mobile)
Elsanor Elementary (Robertsdale)
Foley Intermediate
Gulf Shores Elementary
Hutchens Elementary (Mobile)
J. Larry Newton School (Fairhope)

Knollwood Christian School (Mobile)
Little Flower Catholic School (Mobile)
O'Rourke Elementary (Mobile)
St. Mary's Catholic School (Mobile)
St. Patrick's School (Robertsdale)
Silverhill Elementary

Next Steps:

Secure annual "Title Sponsor"

Explore ways to improve the competition

Water Festivals

Water festivals are annual educational events that provide fourth graders with hands-on activities that teach watershed function and basics of wastewater treatment. High school students and community volunteers assist with activities and other tasks that make the event a success.



Baldwin County Water Festival

Over 1,100 fourth graders from throughout Baldwin County participated in the 2009 water festival, held February 9 and 10 at Daphne United Methodist Church. Volunteers from Fairhope High School and Spanish Fort High School helped with activities. The following schools participated:

Bayside Elementary
Bay Minette Intermediate
Christ the King School
Delta Elementary
Fairhope Intermediate
Foley Intermediate
J. Larry Newton School

Loxley Elementary
Magnolia Elementary
Rosinton Elementary
Silverhill Elementary
Spanish Fort Elementary
Stapleton Elementary
Summerdale Elementary

Budget: \$9,000

Cost per student: \$8.19

Washington County Groundwater Festival

Over 300 fourth grade students from Washington County Schools participated in the 2009 Groundwater Festival, held May 8 at Ciba Specialty Chemicals in McIntosh. High School students helped with activities. The following schools participated:

Fruitdale Elementary
Fruitdale High School
McIntosh High School
McIntosh Elementary
Leroy Elementary
Leroy High School

Millry Elementary
Millry High School
Solid Rock Elementary
Chatom Elementary
Chatom High School

Next Steps:

Cultivate administrative role in BC WF
Strengthen Mobile County's Water Fest initiatives

Workshops

Wetlands Compliance Workshop - May 21, 2009 International Trade Club

Wetlands compliance workshops are provided by the Alabama Coastal Foundation in cooperation with Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve - Coastal Training Program with the goal of educating participants on topics that will aid them in complying with wetlands protection rules as well providing information on the latest techniques and practices in this area. Attendees receive continuing education credits and are generally a mix of lawyers, engineers, developers, and real estate professionals. Speakers for these workshops include Neil Johnston, Hand Arendall, LLC; Scott Brown, ADEM; and Glen Cunningham, Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District.

Community Leader Wastewater Training - February 5, 2009 Loxley Civic Center

This workshop brought together over 25 wastewater professionals to learn about the latest in wastewater management as well as discuss issues and strategies for facing a growing demand on wastewater services in Baldwin County.

The goal of this workshop was to facilitate dialogue between wastewater entities in the county with the hopes of collaborating on finding solutions for common problems. Municipal officials received 2.5 credit hours. Speakers were Sam Covert, Mobile Regional Wastewater Authority; NAME, ADEM; and Teddy King, Alabama Department of Public Health.



Next Steps:

Evaluate gaps in training in the areas to design future meaningful workshops for area professionals and

Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development Elected Officials Reception- April 22, 2009 Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

Local elected officials attended a brief workshop introducing them to Low Impact Design Principles at the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce. The workshop was led by Jay Michaels of Emmons and Olivier.

Low Impact Development Workshop - April 23, 2009 Five Rivers Delta Resource Center

Over fifty-five engineers, landscape architects, government officials, and other community members attended this workshop which introduced low impact development principles and explained details of design and implementation as well as providing case studies. Low impact development aims to mimic natural hydrology to alleviate issues with stormwater runoff. Presenters were Jay Riggs of the Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation District and Jay Michaels of Emmons & Olivier.



Next Steps:

Secure funding to begin steps to:

- Create demonstration site
- Evaluate inconsistencies with existing local ordinances

Big Creek Lake

As part of the grant received from Royal Bank of Canada, ACF organized two workshops in the Semmes community to educate residents about ways to protect water quality in their watershed.

Community Education Workshops Semmes Community Center

Green Lawn Care
March 3, 2009

Community members received advice on lawn and gardening from Tom Doherty of the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service. Barbara Shaw of MAWSS spoke about the Big Creek Lake Watershed Management plan and fielded questions from attendees. Participants received information about composting, soil testing, and grease recycling.

Septic System Care and Maintenance
March 31, 2009

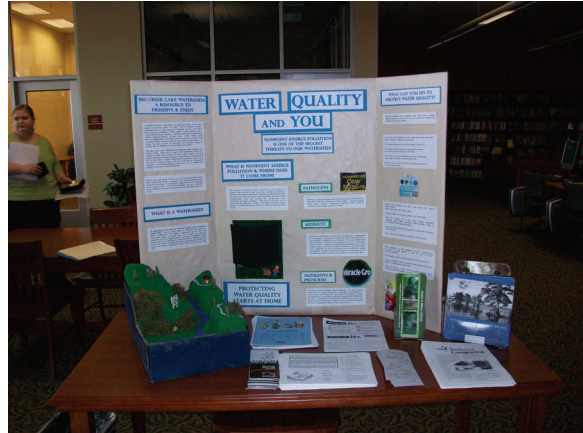
Attendees learned the basics of septic tank function and maintenance from Randy Shaneyfelt of ADEM while Barbara Shaw of MAWSS spoke about the Big Creek Lake Watershed Management Plan. Ted Micher of the Mobile County Health Department also spoke about the importance of diligent septic system maintenance.



Big Creek Lake

Water Quality Display at the Semmes Library

ACF created a water quality display that incorporates information about non-point source pollution prevention and watershed protection. The display includes informational materials about septic system care and maintenance, composting, green lawn and garden care and nonpoint source pollution. The display will be at the library through May and has received a very positive response from the community in Semmes.



Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention Booklet

Created in conjunction with MAWSS, this citizens' guide to protecting water quality provides readers simple steps such as not fertilizing when the forecast calls for rain, the use of beneficial insects to control pests and the control of urban runoff. The book has been distributed at the library display as well as other venues.

BIG CREEK LAKE, also known as Converse Reservoir, is the main source of drinking water for almost 70% of Mobile County's population and a portion of Baldwin County. Built in 1952 to supply residents with water for generations to come, the lake provides an abundant and enviable supply of quality water. In fact, the 3,600-acre reservoir holds 17-billion gallons of water and is continually fed by rainfall, area streams and groundwater, making it extremely important to prevent pollution of land surrounding Big Creek Lake, known as its watershed. How each of us uses the land and streams in Big Creek Lake's watershed impacts the quality of our drinking water.



Next Steps:

Continue to seek funding to implement the action items contained in the watershed management plan.

Continue strong relationship with MAWSS and watershed residents.

Tree Plantings

Muddy Creek Wetlands Mitigation Bank - January 17, 2009 Theodore, AL

About ten volunteers helped plant 85 native species at the Muddy Creek Mitigation Bank in Theodore on a cold January morning. The bank is owned by the Alabama Port Authority, who hopes that the public will become more aware of the park atmosphere of the area.



Village Point Park Preserve - February 7, 2009 Daphne, AL

Over 50 volunteers attended the tree planting at Village Point Park in Daphne, planting over 200 native species as well as removing invasive species under guidance of Gena Todia and Jason Saucier of

Next Steps:

Evaluate success of past habitat projects and identify gaps in restoration or enhancement activities in South Alabama and how ACF can fill that gap.

Fish River Shoreline Assessment

**Bohemian Park - May 2, 2009
Fairhope, AL**

Over 30 volunteers helped ACF collect valuable data by kayaking and canoeing the Fish River from Hwy 104 to Hwy 32 in Baldwin County. Volunteers were assigned specific grids marked by GPS coordinates and provided a checklist to document conditions in their grid as observed from their boat. Volunteers also added points of interest, such as areas of erosion, sediment fences in disrepair, and outfall pipes. This information will be compiled and provided to community leaders to aid them in responsible decision-making that will improve and protect the integrity of Fish River. This project also serves as a pilot for conducting similar assessments on waterbodies throughout South Alabama. Funding for this project was provided by the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program.

Next Steps:

Create project report and distribute
Secure funding for assessment of other waterways in Mobile and Baldwin Counties
Identify areas with restoration potential and work with area agencies to prioritize and fund restoration initiatives

Osprey Nesting Platforms

Twenty osprey nesting platforms were constructed this spring by Eagle Scout candidate Devon Matthews. Construction was completed in early April and are currently being stored at Rogers and Willard in Mobile. Baldwin County Sewer service has committed to helping install the platforms once poles are transported by the City of Fairhope to the American Legion Post. This effort is currently being coordinated.

Next Steps:

Work with Baldwin County Sewer Service to get platforms placed in Baldwin County in early June
Acquire materials for construction of Wood Duck boxes
Compile information for landowners regarding maintenance of both nesting platforms and wood duck boxes
Advertise availability