



APALACHICOLA WATERSHED COORDINATION BLUEPRINT (AWCB): An Effort to Improve Restoration Partnerships and Coordination for a Healthier Watershed

OBJECTIVE

To assist with improving collaboration & coordination among the many entities working to manage the natural systems within the Apalachicola River and Bay System.

The Apalachicola Watershed Coordination Blueprint (AWCB) Project was initiated to compile information and engage interested parties in the watershed.

APPROACH

- Collect & summarize restoration planning documents
- Identify key threats & priority efforts
- Connect data sources & research initiatives
- Identify restoration funding sources
- Involve public engagement & feedback
- Improve restoration collaboration efforts



Source: Northwest Florida Water Management District Apalachicola River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan, November 2017

STUDY AREA



The Apalachicola River and Bay System in Florida's Panhandle is rich in biodiversity and diverse ecosystems and home to one of the most productive estuaries in the northern hemisphere. The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANERR) encompasses 234,715 acres of public lands and waters in the region and works with many partners to manage natural systems in the basin and preserve the important biological functions of the watershed.

INTERESTED PARTIES

Defined as landowners, resource managers, local, state and federal entities, industry groups, nonprofits, and universities that conduct planning activities, monitoring, research, and resource management in the Apalachicola River Watershed.

Over 200 Interested Parties were identified across 8 categories



MANAGEMENT & RESTORATION PLAN ANALYSIS RESULTS

Reviewed 79 documents (management & comprehensive plans, local mitigation strategies, etc.) produced by landowners, resource managers, local, state and federal entities, industry groups, nonprofits, & universities that conduct planning activities, monitoring, research, and resource management in the watershed.

Most Common Threats, Stressors & Concerns

- Climate-Related: Sea Level Rise, Flooding, Natural Disasters**
- Water Quality**
- Threatened or Endangered Species**
- Habitat Loss**
- Coastal or Urban Development**

Most Common Goals & Strategies

- Restore, Conserve & Manage Habitat**
- Strengthen Community Resilience**
- Improve Water Quality**

Gaps & Needs

Threats/ Stressors

- Salinity
- Point source pollution
- Non-point source pollution
- Loss of cultural & historic resources

Education/ Training

- Invasive species management
- Low Impact Development education & promotion
- Green infrastructure awareness
- Information on project funding and prioritization
- Decision support tools

Partnership-Building

- Facilitate partnerships for NGOs and agencies for infrastructure projects
- Coordination for local planning & response efforts
- Topic-specific work groups
- Involvement of traditional owners

AWCB WATERSHED COORDINATION PLAN

AWCB Project Plan, Years Two and Three: November 2024 Through September 2026

GOALS

- 1) Build Common Understanding of Restoration Goals, Priorities, Threats & Stressors
- 2) Develop Funding Opportunity Info & Support Proposal Development
- 3) Develop AWCB Project StoryMap & Information Hub
- 4) Disseminate Project Results & Complete Project Final Year 3 Milestones



NEXT STEPS



If you would like more information and/or be added to our contacts list, please contact Laila Racevskis, Project Manager at LRacevskis@balmoralgroup.us