APALACHICOLA WATERSHED COORDINATION BLUEPRINT (AWCB):

An Effort to Improve Restoration Partnerships and Coordination for a Healthier Watershed





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



urface Water Improvement and Management Plan, November 20

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

8 Private

Industries

28 Non-Profit

Organizations

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

8 Federal **5 State Agencies** Agencies

20 Universities

> 28 Local Governments

4) Disseminate Project

Results & Complete

Project Final Year 3

Milestones

8 Native

Nations

11 Partnerships/ **Work Groups**

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



owners





NEXT STEPS 5

Meeting 4: Restoration

Goals & Priorities:

December 2024 (virtual)

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

AWCB WATERSHED COORDINATION PLAN

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

Threats & Stressors

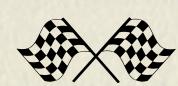
Work Group Meeting

1: February 2025

Meeting 5: Restoration

Data Gaps & Needs 1:

February 2025



Draft AWCB

StoryMap Launch

November 2024

₩ GOALS

1) Build Common Understanding of Restoration Goals, Priorities, Threats & Stressors

2) Develop Funding Opportunity Info & Support Proposal Development

AWCB Session 1 a

ANERR Annual

March 2025

Research Symposium

Interested Parties' Meeting 6: Funding Opportunities & Proposal Development 1: February 2025

Information Hub

Meeting 7: Restoration Data Gaps & Needs 2:

Interested Parties'

Meeting 8: Funding

Opportunities &

Proposal Developmen

2: June 2025

Threats & Stressors

3) Develop AWCB

Project StoryMap &

Work Group Meeting 2: August 2025

Searchable

Research

Repository:

September 2025

AWCB Session 2 at **ANNER Annual**

Research Symposiun March 2026

Final AWCB Strategic Plan: September 2026

ANERR Site Profile Update:

September 2026

Continue to identify priorities for restoration activities & support proposal development

Continue to collect information, data, research, etc. needed to fill gaps

Share AWCB updates via email, StoryMap, & interested parties meetings

Refine StoryMap and Watershed Coordination Plan based on feedback

Collect input on Restoration Workgroups as potential organizing structure for collaboration

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