



BFA

BREAM FISHERMEN ASSOCIATION

1203 N 16th Avenue
Pensacola, Florida 32503

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION CHARTERED IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

April 2015 Newsletter

Happy Spring & Earth Day Everyone!

Please mark your calendar for the next General Membership Meeting, **Wed, 6 May**.

This will be an Eatin' Meeting with a Guest Speaker! Doors open at 5:30 PM.

Dinner will be served at 6:00 PM.

Dinner will consist of a fish fry, baked beans, coleslaw and hushpuppies.

Cost \$8.00/person.

1615 East LaRua Street, Pensacola.

Presentation – Please join us in welcoming Eric Eikenberg, CEO of the Everglades Foundation. The Everglades Foundation is dedicated to protecting and restoring America's Everglades. The health of the Everglades, the *River of Grass*, is dependent on restoring the natural hydrology to this important system from Lake Okeechobee – which has become highly polluted from the agriculture & farming practices over the last century. The Lake's overflow has been diverted to the St. Lucie River along the east coast and the Caloosahatchee River on the west coast. Both river systems are suffering from high nutrients, low oxygen, and other water quality impairments. There are solutions, but there is also a short timeline associated with the answers. Come and learn about the issues, the science of what caused the problems, the lessons learned and what the steps are to remedy, restore, and protect this important ecosystem for its future and future generations.

Issues We are Keeping an Eye on: by Barbara Albrecht, BFA President

- Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB). Earlier this month 3 April, *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide organism, was found in background concentrations in one sample collected alongshore of Escambia County. Individuals with a propensity to breathing difficulties such as, asthma, COPD, etc., should pay special attention to avoid coastal areas if detections increase. For more information, please visit the following website - <http://myfwc.com/research/redtide/statewide/>.
- The FDEP issued a Notice of Intent (NOI) to provide another 5 year permit ECUA to discharge their treated effluent into Santa Rosa Sound, near Quietwater Beach. The aged Sewage Treatment Plant is located in a vulnerable location on the barrier island, which could potentially be a black eye for our tourism industry if anyone ever gets sick. This is exactly why the City of Gulf Breeze moved their plant and effluent away from Soundside Park. The newly elected Holley Navarre Water System President Daryll



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Lynchard (brother of Santa Rosa County Commissioner Lane Lynchard) is being recognized as **progressive**; his big goal is to buy Navarre Beach Sewer Plant and move the plant off the island. "During peak summer tourism months, hundreds of thousands of gallons of effluent is discharged daily into Santa Rosa Sound from the Navarre Beach Utilities treatment plant. Lynchard has a plan to stop it, . . .and began discussions at the March 17th meeting approving a feasibility study to explore purchasing the Navarre Beach water and sewer utility, . . ."

For the past five decades* the BFA has been concerned about water quality and returning our ecosystem to the once healthy and productive waters we all loved, be it to swim in, fish in or be near. Charles Lowery led the organization from the mid 1960s until they were formally organized into a non-profit in Jan 1970. Keep in mind, BFA was organized the same year that we celebrated our first Earth Day (22 April 1970) and America had just awakened to the seriousness of its environmental pollution problem. Creation of USEPA, Nov 1970, was part of the response to growing public concern and a grass roots movement to "do something" about the deteriorating conditions of water, air, and land. In 1972, the USEPA updated the Clean Water Act which made it unlawful to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters, unless a permit was obtained.

So how is it possible that in this day and age (43 years later), the state is still allowing the discharge of partially treated sewage into the Santa Rosa Sound? It boils down to politics and money. In an article published in the on-line NJ.com, 31 March 2015, on the topic of people recreating in water near outfalls, *The increased risk of ingesting water contaminated with one type of clinically significant antibiotic-resistant bacteria while swimming, surfing or even kayaking was not large, according to the study. But what is new, according to the researchers, is that their findings suggest a new pathway for exposure to the potentially dangerous bacteria. "People are exposed to antibiotic resistant bacteria in many ways, through person-to-person contact, via food and as a result of international travel," said microbiologist William Gaze, who led the study. "Our research establishes recreational use of coastal waters as an additional route of exposure."* (To read the entire article, go to http://www.nj.com/healthfit/index.ssf/2015/03/forget_the_sharks_another_danger_may_lurk_in_coast.html)

The League of Women Voters, the Clean Water Network, Earth Ethics, and the Panhandle Watershed Alliance hosted two public meetings (27 Jan 2015 at the Pensacola Public Library and 12 Feb 2015 at the SRIA Conference Room on P'cola Beach) to provide the interested public information on the issue, the science, and the options available to protect our area waters. The FDEP, ECUA, and the press were invited to attend these public meetings but chose not to attend. If this is an issue that concerns you, please visit the following link and sign a petition that requests the removal of treated sewage effluent from our area waters (which also happens to be adjacent to Quietwater Beach). https://www.change.org/p/emerald-coast-utility-authority-ecua-board-members-protect-pensacola-beach-swimmers-stop-dumping-sewage-effluent-near-quietwater-beach?just_created=true

- Spring is here and if you are anything like me you can't wait to get out in the yard and work in your flower beds or plant your garden. While you are digging away, keep a few things in mind...your soils are alive with microbes (beneficial microbes) which are how plants get their sustenance from the soils - the microbes break down organic material for plants to uptake, and the plants produce flowers for our pollinators. Every day, business' that promote green grass spray chemicals that disrupt the natural system. The agriculture industry is also responsible for herbicide and pesticide application. Now research has begun connecting the dots to some alarming data.



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In the on-line publication Lake Tahoe News (www.laketahoenews.net), an article published 4 April 2015, describes the following: *Monsanto Co.'s Roundup has been having a bad couple of weeks. Last week, the World Health Organization declared that its active ingredient, glyphosate, and two other pesticides probably cause cancer in humans. Another study out this week suggests glyphosate use also may contribute to antibiotic resistance, a mounting problem that's begun to be compared to climate change.*

Glyphosate is one of the most widely used pesticides in the world. Using our California pesticide database, we wanted to see where it is used, on which crops and just how much gets applied. In California, glyphosate use for commercial agriculture has increased by nearly two-thirds over the past decade. About 20 percent of it went to almonds alone. It is most heavily applied in the Central Valley counties of Fresno and Kern.

This is pretty alarming since the decimation of bees and their pollination contribution to our food supply has been dwindling for years. Every day, in every community, chemicals are being applied to our environment without any understanding as to what other impacts their application may have on other organisms (flora or fauna), including humans. So, while you are toiling in your yard, do so without chemicals and think about the pollinators. To read the entire article reference above, please visit <http://www.laketahoenews.net/2015/04/pesticide-linked-to-cancer-has-boomed-in-calif/>

Water is the most important resource in the world, just ask Californians. 73% of the state's agricultural revenues are derived from crops...expect to watch and perhaps we will learn how to better protect our resources in FL.

The BFA Needs Your Help!

The BFA has been actively monitoring water quality by sampling area rivers and creeks for over 50 years. Our Water Quality Monitoring Team commits to being trained by the State of Florida Dept of Environmental Protection (FDEP) (a one day class with 50% in the classroom and 50% in the field) to learn the following: how sampling equipment is used; how samples are collected and handled under varying conditions; how data is collected and recorded; how samples are transported; and how to fill out the Chain of Custody forms.

The type of sampling the BFA has been doing as a partner with the state is long term status and trend monitoring. This requires visiting the same location multiples times over many years. These amazing teams of Water Quality Monitors have been diligently collecting samples quarterly for 13 years. Now two of those team lead members are stepping down and we are planning to establish the next round of dedicated volunteers.

If you have the time, interest, and can commit to sampling four times a year and being trained, please contact me at 850.384.6696 or send me an email (Barbara@PanhandleWatershed.org). Students can receive community service hours from the BFA for these efforts.

In tandem with this monitoring opportunity, is the unseen importance of observations which provide a unique opportunity for our organization. Our message is changing – through our monitoring program we have witnessed and



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documented the changes to our area; rural areas are becoming suburban; suburban areas are becoming urban; and urban areas are flooding and causing great financial impacts & burdens (to the taxpayer) due to the way we are developing the landscape.

The BFA has an exclusive opportunity to be a part of the solution on behalf of local communities. Two recent examples are Carpenter Creek (between Davis Hwy & Airport Blvd) and Ten Mile Creek (between Stefani Rd & where it joins with Eleven Mile Creek at 297A). Both of these creeks have been monitored by the BFA for decades and were negatively impacted by the June 2012 and again the April 2014 Floods. Why? It's difficult to pin point one item, instead there are multiple issues that contributed to the impairment and degradation of these creek systems. The sources include increased development, including wider roads, more driveways (impermeable surfaces), removal of our riparian buffers, sedimentation, and stormwater runoff. Mix in 28" of rain in 24 hours and you have a mess...literally.

BFA Members who specialize in soils, wetland delineations, restoration, hydrology, and native species met in early March 2015 to walk the creeks and identify treatment approaches and alternatives to reestablish the stream channel with riparian zone functions. This type of approach incorporates natural techniques which are proven effective in building public acceptance and support in other communities. The alternative is to armor and harden the channel (add more rocks) which we know impairs water quality, degrades habitat, reduces recreational uses, diminishes flood mitigation, and threatens private property.

The BFA has a track record in the community. The BFA is here to help citizenry, the city, and county as a participant and stewards of our area waters to develop, implement, and monitor practical fixes that promote long term sustainable solutions that include data, so that decisions can be based on **our** ecosystem, thereby restoring the ecosystem process and function. We know that hardening of the arteries is bad for our bodies; hardening of our creeks is bad for water quality and our watersheds. BFA Membership that are interested in learning more and/or participating in these types of efforts are invited to contact me at the phone & email provided above.

BFA Outreach & Education

Early in my tenure as president, I conducted a survey of the Membership in which I asked, what were the most important issues for our organization to focus on. The feedback was unanimous; continue to monitor the areas waters for water quality and to help our bays become more productive. The second half of the feedback left me pondering for a while. Research indicated a decline in oysters which is directly related to water quality and our area had always been known for oysters – so I developed the oyster spat trap out of items I found in our garage. The Oyster Spat Trap can be hung off a dock or suspended in the water column – and monitored every 2 weeks.

Many of you may recall Rick O'Conner, Escambia County SeaGrant Agent, speaking to our membership last year. Prior to his becoming a SeaGrant Agent, he was a Washington High School Biology Teacher – who helped to develop the Marine Science Academy. The program was so wildly successful that it is now being used as a model in several local high schools. With help from UWF, instructors and students have developed a water quality lab in which they collect samples and analyze them themselves. During these field efforts, some students pull a seine net and identify species of fish they collect. I've had the opportunity to meet with the students on several occasions and introduce them to world of benthic



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organisms and their communities (which support our fishery) and the amazing Yabby Pump, which allows you to suction up sediments and determine what lives under the substrate.



Washington High School student **Evan Beckford** is seen above playing with the Yabby Pump in Bayou Texar, one of the students sampling locations. Evan gets a special shout out for making the BFA **SEVEN** more Oyster Spat Traps for area volunteers to use to determine the productivity and growth in their area waters. Evan's work is beautiful, and I'll bet that he is developing the design and plan for his next monitoring equipment, namely the Yabby Pump.



Meet Team Pigglet! This happy bunch of cousins has deployed an Oyster Spat Trap in Bayou Chico, and has agreed to collect rain fall data, as well as monitoring the 'spawns' in their bayou. Barnacles and oysters share similar environments, and spawn at similar times so counting, measuring, and replacing plates is important and will be conducted every two weeks. **Team Lead is Ann Marie**, a 7th Grader at Jim C. Bailey Middle School, who has aspirations of being a Marine Biologist. Anne Marie, the tallest of the five cousins, is holding up Evan's Masterpiece, the Oyster Spat Trap. A very proud Grand-ma can be seen in the background.



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The Bream Fishermen Association is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of the conservation responsibilities as well as the recreational enjoyment of fishermen, hunters, campers and related outdoorsmen.

It is the objective of the BFA to support, develop, and implement programs that will:

- 1) Improve the quality of our environment;
- 2) Protect and maintain our present wilderness type lakes, rivers, swamps, marshes, bays, forests, and beaches in their natural undeveloped state; and
- 3) Advance the causes of plant, marine, and wildlife preservation.

Membership is open to all individuals who support these objectives. Please join the BFA by sending us your contact information (name, mailing address, phone, and email) be sure to notify us if you prefer to receive notices and announcements by mail or email, and \$10 annual dues to our mailing address: 1203 North 16th Ave, Pensacola, FL 32503

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