



BFA

BREAM FISHERMEN ASSOCIATION

1203 N 16th Avenue
Pensacola, Florida 32503

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION CHARTERED IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA

April /May 2014 Newsletter

Happy Spring Time!

Please Mark your calendar for the next General Membership Meeting, Wed, 7 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 Christian Wagley, who works to improve the built environment for people and their communities through Sustainable Town Concepts. He has also worked on many environmental issues in the state and county governments, including the proposed Fish Hatchery and currently serves as the Environmental Voice for Escambia County, FL, on the Escambia County's RESTORE Act Advisory Committee.

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

- Fletcher Creek, Escambia County, a train derailment during the Jan 2014 ice storm was the source for the spill of 28,000 gallons of phosphoric acid. The FDEP and the County are monitoring the creek. Choices of restoration include creating a wetland. The BFA would rather see CSX, FDEP, and the County focus their efforts towards restoring the creek to its previous deep flowing conditions.
- As one of the oldest cities in the state, Pensacola is also cursed with having some of the oldest infrastructure including aged sewage lines. The recent rains (28 March, 14 April, and 18 April) have collectively dropped more than 12 inches in our area. These events trigger the runoff that impairs our area waters. The BFA is currently seeking sponsors to help us cover the additional costs of bacteriological monitoring. If you have any ideas, please contact me at 850.384.6696.



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- The proposed \$18M Fish Hatchery at Bruce Beach. Folks, this project has many issues surrounding it, some of which we may touch on during the BFA Mtg in May. One aspect of this issue stands out among the rest, and that is the level of Political Intimidation that this project has shaped. No sooner than when the Public Comment Period closed (19 Feb) did Escambia County Commissioner Grover Robinson and his close friend RESTORE & NRDA FL Trustee Mimi Drew declare in the (PNJ 20 Feb 2014) that if this Fish Hatchery is not built here, at the Bruce Beach Pensacola Waterfront, that none of the rest of the state of FL Projects (~\$88M) would be funded. **FALSE.** Think what \$18M would do for addressing some of our water quality impairments – which have obliterated our grass-beds for decades.
 - A little history for those of you with a failing memory or new to the area... Establishment of major industrial facilities (by 1962) on the upper Escambia Bay changed natural conditions from healthy to stressed. This was evidenced by declining fisheries, altered estuarine invertebrate communities, and the loss of sea-grass beds. Fish kills were measured in acres and square miles. Commercial shrimp landings dropped from 902,321 lbs in 1968 to 17,151 lbs in 1971. Untreated waste discharges, which released both nutrients and silt into area waters were the primary cause. Oxygen and sunlight were stripped from waters, which killed the sea-grasses, oysters, the shrimp, the crabs, the fish, and other marine organisms.
- **This is an Election Year** – Get ready for all kinds of promises. **Congress** is actually unified on one topic for the first time in ages - the big multimillion-dollar water projects. **Republicans & Democrats** are rallying around a bill they hope to pass early 2015 authorizing \$12.5B over the next decade for flood diversions, port dredging, and addressing the needs of the future. **Governor Rick Scott** is pledging \$130M for Everglades Restoration, after spending the last three years relaxing and deregulating environmental protection throughout the state. **Gulf Coastal Scientists** are noting the rapid shoreline degradation and habitat loss due to coastal development, climate change and sea level rise. Living Shorelines create a healthy buffer between upland and coastal waters, but receiving the proper permits may take up to 18 months. It takes less than 12 days to be granted a permit from the state for a bulk head or a seawall. Some local County Commissioners representing low lying areas (<5' above sea level) have no



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problem issuing variances to their coastal constituent taxpayers to build closer than the 50' recommended Mean High Water Line (MHWL) from the shore. I'm sure the insurance companies love that – unless that County will accept all responsibility and reimburse the homeowner for their losses. *Who can the environment hold accountable when all the soils run off the land and smother the habitat?* Our own **Pensacola Strong Mayor Hayward** will be reminding us of all the good things he has brought forward – including new stormwater ponds through the city to address water quality issues. Many of these new ponds are designed for new development, let's see if our Mayor can become really creative and address the older issues (such as grandfathered in parking lots, perhaps the City could start employing vegetated swales to catch and treat water before it enters the larger aquatic system).

Kudos to Alabama Governor Bentley

“Water is one of Alabama’s vital natural resources, and it must be managed and protected,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “A statewide water management plan is important because water is needed for economic development, public health, drought mitigation, recreation, and environmental uses. I appreciate the members of the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group working together to study the water resources in our state.”

Governor Bentley formed the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group (AWAWG) in 2012 to recommend a statewide water management action plan. The group was comprised of experts from five state agencies: The Alabama Office of Water Resources (a division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs), the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, the Geological Survey of Alabama, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries.

In response to the Governor’s 2012 directive, the AWAWG took the following actions:

- Analyzed Alabama’s current water management strategies and issues
- Compiled available water resources data and identified additional data necessary to provide a more complete understanding of the State’s water resources



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- Reviewed past studies, such as the 1990 report, *Water for a Quality of Life*, and evaluated the implementation status of the report's recommendations
- Solicited and evaluated stakeholder comments on a range of water issues that could be included in a water management plan.
- Recommended a process and action plan for moving toward an enhanced statewide water management plan

Part I of the report presents the AWAAG's response to Governor Bentley's directive and proposes the Alabama Water MAP Process as Alabama's mechanism for developing and implementing an initial comprehensive statewide water management plan. Assessments are underway and will continue in order to base future water policies on thorough scientific data. Part II of the report presents discussion and policy options for 12 water issue areas identified by the AWAAG.

Ever wonder what kinds of casualties were documented as a result of the 2010 Gulf Oil Spill?

The Ocean Conservancy has developed a list of the impacted resources, including human resource impacts. You might be interested in the following information:

- The federal fishery closure included up to 88,522 square miles, or about 37 percent, of federal waters in the northern and eastern Gulf.
- State fishing grounds in LA, MS, AL and FL were closed for different durations, affecting commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishermen.
- May - August of 2010, the number of for-hire fishing trips in MS, AL, LA and west FL decreased 98, 80, 60 and 33 percent, respectively, compared to the 10 year average in each of those states.
- May - August 2010, the number of angler trips in personal or rented boats declined between 13 to 23 percent from the 10-year average in AL, LA and MS. In west FL the effort was redirected.
- Over ten million recreational user days were lost.

Visit our new website, www.BreamFishermen.org to see the entire document.



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With a Heavy Heart...

This year we have lost several more members...Lucy Shell, Bill Norman, William O. Garner, aka WO, and John Bowman. John Bowman was one of the founders of the BFA and must have been a fine man – based on all the folks at his funeral. One of his daughters was just so emotional – which I totally understand (I, too, am very soft hearted when it comes to our elders), and I asked her if she could use a hug. I told her how sorry I was for her loss and she asked me who I was. I told her I was the President of the BFA, to which she brightened and recanted that some of her favorite memories were when she and her Daddy would spend the entire day collecting water quality samples...she said she just knew on those days that she'd have him all to herself. Here's to those special memories!

On Another Note....

Proud GrandPa, John Chason, took his beautiful grand daughter, Emily Bosso, to Steve's Catfish Farm where she caught a 33" long albino catfish weighing 20 lbs.





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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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