APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL POLICES AND GUIDELINES

CONSENSUS CENTER

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Contents

APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE MISSION & PROJECT OVERVIEW

THE MISSION

The Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) seeks to gain insight into the root causes of decline of the Bay's ecosystem and the deterioration of oyster reefs. Ultimately, the ABSI will develop a management and restoration plan for the oyster reefs and the health of the Bay.

THE PROJECT SUMMARY

In response to the rapidly declining health of the Apalachicola Bay System and the collapse of the oyster fishery and reefs therein, Florida State University sought and was awarded a grant from Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. to undertake a series of scientific approaches intended to aid in the development of an ecosystem-based oyster management and restoration plan for the Apalachicola Bay System. The plan will be informed by science while involving representative stakeholders and the public in its creation, development and implementation by state and federal management agencies. Developing such a plan will help the state agencies responsible for marine resources improve the overall health and the rich biological diversity of the bay, including that of other ecologically and economically important species. Because oyster populations are declining in estuaries across the Florida panhandle, ABSI project leads will work with scientific, non-profit and governmental entities working on similar issues throughout this region to develop a consistent oyster management framework.

The vitality of Apalachicola Bay is key to the socio-economic prosperity of Franklin County and the surrounding area. Specifically, as the bay's health has declined, so has the area's once-booming oyster industry, resulting in widespread job loss and increased economic insecurity for many Franklin County residents whose livelihoods are tied to the Bay.

Florida State University through its Coastal and Marine Laboratory will investigate what precipitated the dramatic decline of the Apalachicola Bay System, and working with the ABSI Community Advisory Board and Science Advisory Board determine a viable course of action for improving its condition.

The Apalachicola river and bay system is one of the more ecologically diverse and significant natural areas in the southeastern United States. It has for centuries served as the central economic pillar of Franklin County, FL. It is now a system imperiled. The Florida State University is dedicated to reversing this trend through the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI), funded by Triumph Gulf Coast Inc. and Florida State University, and led by the ABSI Leadership Team (Dr. Sandra Brooke, Dr. Felicia Coleman, and Dr. Gary Ostrander, hereafter referred to as "the Team"), which has ultimate authority for the success of ABSI.

The objectives of ABSI will be accomplished by understanding the trajectory of change in physical structure and water flow over time, monitoring oyster recruitment and survival, and conducting laboratory and field experiments that inform predictive models of oyster productivity and ecosystem health. The ultimate outcome will be a plan – a treatment plan of action, if you will – for the

management and recovery of the oyster reefs and the health of the Bay. The Team will be able to develop such a plan in concert with the agencies responsible for the management and conservation of the region, the stakeholders whose lives are tied inextricably to these waters, and the natural and social scientists whose research will help inform the resulting policy decisions.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD SCOPE AND PURPOSE

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING THE ABSI COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

A key component of ABSI is the involvement of stakeholders in a meaningful consensus-building process for development and implementation of an ecosystem-based oyster management and restoration plan. These stakeholders are represented by the ABSI Community Advisory Board (CAB).

The composition of the CAB is critical to its success and to the effectiveness of the Team as it works to carry out ABSI initiatives. Membership in the CAB is informed by an independent assessment conducted by the FCRC Consensus Center team through meetings, interviews, and review of documentation with local government, natural resource management and economic development agencies, and stakeholders representing a variety of perspectives, including local businesses and conservation organizations, and those involved in or supporting fishing and aquaculture activities. The independent assessment clarified and documented key issues identified by stakeholders that ABSI might address and, based on interviews and analysis, recommend a balanced and representative Community Advisory Board with input from the Team and Triumph Gulf Coast.

THE ROLE OF THE ABSI COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

The ABSI Community Advisory Board (CAB) assembled by the Team, with guidance from the FCRC Consensus Center, is tasked with providing input to the Team and its partners. The CAB serves to augment the knowledge and skills of the Team with their unique perspectives and skill sets to more effectively move ABSI forward. Its charge is to make recommendations and provide key information to the Team while playing a critical role in public relations for ABSI. Terms of Service on the CAB are for two years with the possibility of being asked to serve an additional term.

The overarching goal of the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) Community Advisory Board (CAB) is to develop a package of consensus recommendations informed by the best available science, data, and stakeholders' experiences for the management and restoration of the Apalachicola Bay System (ABS), and to ensure there is a reliable mechanism and process for the monitoring, funding, and implementation of the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Management and Restoration Plan.

A critical component of the management plan is oyster reef restoration with full consideration of factors affecting the biology, ecology and sustainable management of the resource. Restoration related actions, as indicated above, should be informed by the best available science and shared stakeholder values, that in turn, result in an economically viable, healthy, and sustainable Apalachicola Bay System.

The process will be designed so that members can explore and evaluate oyster fishery practices and management options, and restoration policies in the Apalachicola Bay System. The Community Advisory Board's consensus recommendations, in the form of an Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Management and Restoration Plan, will be directed to the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative project team, natural resource managers and environmental regulators, and other agencies/entities as appropriate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (ADOPTED OCTOBER 30, 2019)

1.) Community Advisory Board members will strive to work together collaboratively, and seek to understand and respect differing perspectives.

2.) The Community Advisory Board will strive to achieve consensus on the evaluation and development of recommendations submitted to the FSU project team and appropriate management and regulatory agencies.

3.) The Community Advisory Board will operate under policies and procedures that are clear, concise, and consistently and equitably applied.

4.) Community Advisory Board members will serve as accessible liaisons between the stakeholder groups they have been appointed to represent and the ABSI Community Advisory Board, and should strive to both inform and seek input on issues the Community Advisory Board is addressing from those they represent.

ASSUMPTIONS AND PRINCIPLES, AND PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES
(ADOPTED OCTOBER 31, 2019)

WE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND HAVE GOOD CONVERSATION WHEN:
- ✓ All voices are invited, respected and heard.
- ✓ All experiences are treated as valid.
- ✓ Notes are captured in writing, on flip charts or on computers.
- ✓ We listen to each other.
- ✓ We observe time frames.
- ✓ We seek common ground and action.
- ✓ Differences and problems are honored—not "worked".
- ✓ There is full and active attendance.
- ✓ We make the time and space to connect with each other.

THE FACILITATORS WILL SEEK TO:
- ✓ Structure and facilitate a process that will enable us to discover and build on our best moments and practices as stakeholders in the ABS.
- ✓ Keep us informed of established parameters for time and tasks.
- ✓ Support and facilitate Community Advisory Board discussions.
- ✓ Create the environment that helps people to be at their best.
- ✓ Keep purpose front and center.
- ✓ Suggest and encourage new ways of thinking and doing.
- ✓ Keep us focused and on track.
- ✓ Start and stop on time.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS WILL:
- ✓ Participate actively and share opinions in the conversation—engage fully in this process.
- ✓ Tell stories, provide information—make meaning.
- ✓ Experiment & take risks to share, while engaging in conversation with others.
- ✓ Actively contribute to the creation of a shared vision, and management and restoration strategies for a healthy and sustainable Oyster Fishery and ABS Ecosystem.
- ✓ Listen actively, attentively, respectfully.
- ✓ Demonstrate caring . . . about the ABS and our dialogue.
- ✓ Take responsibility . . . for the conversation and the ideas developed here.
- ✓ Be here for the entire CAB process, be on time, and be *here* while you're here.
- ✓ Refrain from using electronic devices during the Community Advisory Board meetings—keep all electronic devices turned off or in a silent mode; your participation is valued.
- ✓ Be willing to reach consensus.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS' ROLE

✓ The Community Advisory Board process is an opportunity to explore possibilities. Offering or exploring an idea does not necessarily imply support for it.
✓ Listen to understand. Seek a shared understanding even if you don't agree.
✓ Be focused and concise—balance participation & minimize repetition. Share the airtime.
✓ Look to the Facilitator to be recognized. Please raise your name tent or hand to speak.
✓ Speak one person at a time. Please don't interrupt each other.
✓ Focus on issues, not personalities. *"Using insult instead of argument is the sign of a small mind."*
✓ Avoid stereotyping or personal attacks. *"Mud thrown is ground lost"*.
✓ To the extent possible, offer options to address other's concerns, as well as your own.
✓ Participate fully in discussions, and complete meeting assignments as requested.

ABSI PROJECT RESEARCH TEAM'S ROLE

✓ Provide science-based research and information as requested by Community Advisory Board members and facilitators.
✓ Consult with stakeholders and provide guidance in using tools and objective science to analyze proposed options.
✓ Use best available tools and science to analyze options in response to stakeholder input.
✓ Organize meeting logistics and provide relevant documents for use during meetings.
✓ Attend all CAB meetings.
✓ The ABSIs Project Team will deliver a project report that will include the results and products of the Community Advisory Board to managers, regulators, and other agencies as appropriate for consideration in its planning for management and restoration of the oyster fishery and ABS ecosystem.

FACILITATOR'S ROLE

✓ Design, facilitate and report on a collaborative Community Advisory Board process.
✓ Assist the Community Advisory Board members to build understanding and consensus on action recommendations.
✓ Provide process design and procedural guidance to members.
✓ Assist members to stay focused and on task.
✓ Assure that participants follow *Community Advisory Board Participation Guidelines*.
✓ Accurately and fairly capture summary of key discussion points during the Community Advisory Board meetings.

GUIDELINES FOR BRAINSTORMING
- ✓ Offer one idea per person without explanation.
- ✓ No comments, criticism, or discussion of other's ideas.
- ✓ Listen respectively to other's ideas and opinions.
- ✓ Seek understanding and not agreement during this phase of identifying issues or options.

THE NAME STACKING PROCESS
- ✓ Determines the speaking order.
- ✓ Participant raises hand to speak during CAB meetings. Facilitator will call on participants in turn.
- ✓ Facilitator may interrupt the stack (change the speaking order) in order to promote discussion on a specific issue or, to balance participation and allow those who have not spoken on an issue an opportunity to do so before others on the list who have already spoken on the issue.

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COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD CONSENSUS-BUILDING PROCEDURES (ADOPTED OCTOBER 30, 2019)

The Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) Community Advisory Board (CAB) will seek consensus on its recommendations for options to be evaluated using the best available science and decision-support tools for management and restoration of the ABS. General consensus is a participatory process whereby, on matters of substance, the members strive for agreements which all of the members can accept, support, live with or agree not to oppose. In instances where, after vigorously exploring possible ways to enhance the members' support for the final package of recommendations, and the Community Advisory Board finds that 100% acceptance or support is not achievable, final consensus recommendations will require at least 75% favorable vote of all members present and voting. This super majority decision rule underscores the importance of actively developing consensus throughout the process on substantive issues with the participation of all members and which all can live with. In instances where the Community Advisory Board finds that even 75% acceptance or support is not achievable, publication of recommendations will include documentation of the differences and the options that were considered for which there is more than 50% support from the Community Advisory Board. The report that will be a product of the Community Advisory Board process will clearly describe the level of agreement between Community Advisory Board members on each specific recommendation as well as on the suite of recommendations as a whole.

The Community Advisory Board will develop its recommendations using consensus-building techniques with the assistance of the facilitators. Techniques such as brainstorming, ranking and prioritizing approaches will be utilized. The Community Advisory Board's consensus process will be conducted as a facilitated consensus-building process. Community Advisory Board members, project staff, and facilitators will be the only participants seated at the table. Only Community Advisory Board members may participate in discussions and vote on proposals and recommendations. The facilitators, or a Community Advisory Board member through the facilitators, may request specific clarification from a member of the public in order to assist the Community Advisory Board in understanding an issue. Observers/members of the public are welcome to speak during the public comment period provided at each meeting, and all comments

submitted on the public comment forms provided will be included in the facilitators' summary reports.

Facilitators will work with the ABSI project team and Community Advisory Board members to design agendas that will be both efficient and effective. The ABSI project team will help the Community Advisory Board with information and meeting logistics.

The CAB may convene subcommittees which have assigned tasks in specific areas. For example, an outreach and community engagement sub-committee could be responsible for making recommendations about public awareness strategies and resources.

To enhance the possibility of constructive discussions as members educate themselves on the issues and engage in consensus-building, members agree to refrain from public statements that may prejudge the outcome of the Community Advisory Board's consensus process. In discussing the Community Advisory Board process in any form of media, members agree to be careful to present only their own views and not the views or statements of other participants. In addition, in order to provide balance to the Community Advisory Board process, members agree to represent and consult with their stakeholder interest groups. The CAB as a group develops consensus recommendations on issues, and does not advocate for them outside of the CAB process. Members are free to advocate for their own stakeholder interests, but again should be careful to present only their own views.

ACCEPTABILITY RATING SCALE FOR OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the fourth meeting Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) Community Advisory Board (CAB) members were asked to propose an initial suite of strategies for achieving the objectives of Goal B. During the May 22, 2020 and subsequent meeting CAB members will be asked to propose strategies for the remaining Goals. During subsequent meetings CAB members will be asked to review existing proposed strategies, to propose any additional strategies for CAB consideration, and to rate the strategies for acceptability. Following discussion and refinement of existing strategies, members may be asked to revisit proposed strategies if requested by a CAB member or project scientist. Members should be prepared to offer specific refinements to address their reservations.

Once rated for acceptability, strategies with a 75% or greater number of 4s and 3s in proportion to 2s and 1s ($\geq$ a 3.0 average rating) will be considered preliminary consensus recommendations for inclusion in the final package of recommendations for the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Management and Restoration Plan.

At any point during the process, any strategy may be re-evaluated and rated at the request of any CAB member or project scientist. The status of a rated strategy will not be final until the final CAB meeting, when a vote will be taken on the entire package of consensus ranked recommendations for inclusion in the Plan. The following scale will be utilized for the rating exercises:

Acceptability Rating Scale	4 = Acceptable, I agree	3 = Acceptable, I agree with **minor reservations**	2 = Not Acceptable, I don't agree unless **major reservations** addressed	1 = Not Acceptable

CAB members should be prepared to state their minor and major reservations when asked, and to offer proposed refinements to the strategy to address their concerns. If a CAB member is not able to offer refinements to make the strategy acceptable (4) or acceptable with minor reservations (3) they should rate the strategy with a 1 (not acceptable).

CAB MEMBER ALTERNATE MEMBER POLICY

- CAB members shall notify the FSU ABSI Project Team (Project Team) by e-mail when they will not be able to attend a meeting.
- If appropriate, the CAB member can provide the name and contact information for a designated alternate who will serve in their place when they cannot attend.
- Alternates shall be of the same stakeholder/constituent groups as the appointed members and knowledgeable on the issues.
- CAB members shall provide alternates with a copy of the upcoming meeting's agenda and strategies evaluation worksheet and consult with alternates on the substantive discussion issues currently before the CAB. Alternates should debrief with the member following the meeting.
- Alternates will sit at the table and participate in all substantive discussions.
- Alternates should represent member's views on substantive discussion issues, to the extent possible.
- Alternates shall not be allowed to vote on substantive discussion issues. That right is reserved for CAB members.
- Alternates shall agree to follow all CAB procedures as stipulated in the Committee's *Organizational and Operational Procedures, Policies and Guidelines* posted to the ABSI CAB webpage.
- Alternates shall not participate in the discussion of procedural matters or long-term planning matters such as Workplan development.
- Alternates are not defacto CAB members, and shall not replace an appointed CAB member without being interviewed and approved by the Project Team and FSU.

CAB MEMBER MEETING ATTENDANCE POLICY

Any member of the ABSI CAB who fails to attend two consecutive regularly scheduled meetings will be contacted by the Project Team to determine why the member was not able to attend and if the member still wishes to serve on the CAB. If the member cannot demonstrate his or her absence was for good cause, or no longer wishes to serve on the CAB the Project Team will evaluate whether to retain, remove, or remove and replace the member based on the circumstances.

ABSENTEE CAB MEMBER COMMENT POLICY

Any member of the CAB who wishes to have their comments read into the record at a meeting they will not be able to attend may send their written comments by e-mail or regular mail to the Project Team. The member should identify the specific item that the comment pertains to. The Facilitator will read the absentee member's comments into the record during the discussion portion of the specific item the member is commenting on, and the member's comments will be included in the Facilitators' meeting summary report. A CAB member may only make one comment per specific item, and each comment will be limited to a maximum of five-hundred (500) words. A CAB member may comment on as many items as desired for a given meeting's agenda.

VIRTUAL MEETING VIA WEBINAR-TELECONFERENCE PARTICIPATION PROCESS

GENERAL
➢ Please be aware that background noise from meeting participants is picked-up and amplified on the webinar system, especially when using a speaker-phone or your computer without a headset.
➢ CAB members, and any other meeting participants should offer their names each time they speak to ensure all participants know who is speaking.
➢ Members should offer their names when making and seconding motions.
➢ CAB members should announce if they have to sign-off before the virtual meeting is complete.
➢ Acceptability rating exercise results will be tallied by recording members' votes by name in turn.

ATTENDANCE
➢ Facilitator will conduct roll call of Community Advisory Board (CAB) members and Project Team.
➢ Once attendance is complete, the agenda will be reviewed and approved by the CAB.

PARTICIPANT ETIQUETTE
➢ Please keep your phones on mute if calling in, and mute the microphone icon in the Virtual Meeting Control Panel if you are connected by webinar. The default mode for your microphone is mute and is reflected by a red microphone icon next to your name, to unmute click the red microphone icon and it will turn green when you are unmuted.
➢ It works best if everyone mutes themselves except when speaking.
➢ Please don't put your phones on hold.
➢ Please wait until invited by the facilitator to speak to avoid confusion.
➢ Names will be stacked by the facilitator to ensure order.
➢ Participants will have ample time to speak on substantive agenda items.

DISCUSSION PROCESS
➢ Facilitator will introduce discussion item or presenter.
➢ Presenter will provide overview of issue and recommendation(s) for CAB action.
➢ Hold questions until presentation is complete.
➢ Once presentation is complete, Facilitator will ask if CAB members have clarifying questions on the issue, create a speaker's list, and call on members in-turn for clarification.
➢ Facilitator will ask if any CAB member wishes to discuss the issue or propose alternative options, create a speaker's list, and call on members in-turn for discussion.
➢ Once clarification and discussion is complete, Facilitator will conduct a rating exercise or test for consensus on the issue as appropriate.

PUBLIC COMMENT
➢ Facilitator will ask if anyone from the public wishes to comment during the Public Comment agenda item, create a speaker's list, and call on members of the public in-turn for comments.
➢ Comments will be limited to three minutes per person.
➢ Members of the public having questions or wanting to provide additional feedback are encouraged to send their questions and comments to: fsucml-absi@fsu.edu.

TEST THE ACCURACY OF YOUR PERCEPTIONS

➢ Be aware of your perceptions in a virtual meeting, test them by clarifying intent with the speaker, and recognize that technology can alter our ability to accurately interpret subtle verbal and non-verbal cues as to intent and meaning. There is dissonance between our minds and bodies causing people to have conflicting feelings resulting from processing communication through technology.
➢ Being on a video call requires more focus than a face-to-face meeting.
➢ Video conversations require us to work harder to process nonverbal cues like facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, and body language; paying more attention to these consumes a lot of energy and can be stressful.
➢ Research conducted by academics in 2014 shows that delays on phone or webinars shaped our views of people negatively—even delays of 1.2 seconds made people perceive the responder as less friendly or focused.

PREPARATIONS FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

GUIDELINES: COME PREPARED. Review the agenda, presentations and background documents ahead of time. Schedule at least 15 minutes to prepare for the meeting/webinar – if you don't need it you can have the time back. Do the pre-work. Make notes and be ready with questions.

TEST THE TECHNOLOGY AHEAD OF TIME. Log in the day before to ensure full access to whatever online technology is being used. Check your headset and/or telephone system.

PARTICIPATION—VIDEO AND AUDIO: If you participate using your computer for audio (using a headset to listen and/or speak) do not use the teleconference call in number (it creates interference). You can listen and/or speak using your headset through the VOIP function of your computer. If you use your computer only for the video/visual function (to view presentations) you will need to call in on the teleconference line to listen and/or speak. Participants who wish to view the presentations will need to use their computers to log-in using the meeting URL provided on the meeting agenda whether they participate with VOIP or the teleconference participation option for audio and video functions.

TURN UP EARLY. Put the web address and teleconference details in your calendar and bookmark the web URL. Set the reminder 15 minutes ahead of the call.

REMOVE DISTRACTIONS. Schedule a quiet place to participate from. Clear your desk and computer desktop. Turn off email & instant messaging. Put your cell phone aside. Put a note on your office door. Create an environment that allows you to fully participate without distractions.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN PARTICIPATION. Don't plan to do any "catch up" activities during the call. If you catch yourself multi-tasking, close your eyes and listen. Avoid side conversations whether in the room with colleagues or in an online chat space. Keep your phone on "Mute" unless speaking. Never place your phone on "Hold". Be aware that when your phone is on speaker mode it transmits background noise and can interfere with the meeting.

BE AWARE OF AIR TIME. Fully participate while allowing others to do the same. Speak your name before making a comment.

FOLLOW CAB'S MEETING PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES. Do not speak without acknowledgement from the facilitator. Speaking out of turn is very disruptive to a virtual meeting.

SUPPORT THE FACILITATOR. Acknowledge questions and pay attention. Use the raise hand function to speak and wait for the facilitator to invite questions and/or comments. The facilitator will create a speakers list at all appropriate times during the meeting. Keep your phone on "Mute" (not "Hold") whenever possible.