APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE (ABSI)
ABSI COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB)
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 2 — WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2022

EASTPOINT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FIREHOUSE
24 6TH STREET, EASTPOINT, FLORIDA

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES
✓ To Provide Update and Receive Community Feedback on ABSI Restoration Experiments ✓ To Provide Update and Receive Community Feedback on FWC Restoration Project ✓ To Provide Overview and Receive Community Feedback on Potential Management Scenarios for Modeling

ABSI COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 2 — OCTOBER 19, 2022		
All Agenda Times—Including Public Comment and Adjournment—Are Approximate and Subject to Change		
1.)	**6:00 PM**	**WELCOME AND REVIEW OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES**
2.)		**REVIEW OF WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES AND INTRODUCTIONS**
3.)		**REVIEW OF UPDATED PROJECT MEETING SCHEDULE AND WORKPLAN**
4.)		**UPDATE AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON ABSI RESTORATION EXPERIMENT**
5.)		**UPDATE AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON FWC RESTORATION PROJECT**
6.)		**OVERVIEW AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ON POTENTIAL MANAGEMENT SCENARIOS FOR MODELING**
7.)	**7:55**	**NEXT STEPS** • Community Workshop and CAB Meeting
~8:00 PM		***ADJOURN***

PROJECT RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

PROJECT WEBPAGE: https://marinelab.fsu.edu/the-apalachicola-bay-system-initiative/

PROJECT EMAIL: fsucml-absi@fsu.edu

PROJECT FACILITATION: Jeff Blair of Facilitated Solutions, LLC.
Information at: http://facilitatedsolutions.org.

ABSI CAB ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL POLICES AND GUIDELINES
Located under the ABSI CAB Procedures and Reports Menu: https://marinelab.fsu.edu/absi/cab/

ABSI CAB RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT
Located under the ABSI CAB Framework Adopted 16 November 2022 Menu Tab:
https://marinelab.fsu.edu/absi/cab/

ATTACHMENT 1
WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

- ✓ Look to the Facilitator to be recognized.
- ✓ Please raise your hand and/or place your name card vertically 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."*
- ✓ Speak only when recognized by the Facilitator.
- ✓ Facilitator will call on participants in turn.
- ✓ Facilitator may 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.
- ✓ Offer one idea per person without explanation.
- ✓ No comments, criticism, or discussion of other's ideas.
- ✓ Listen respectively to other's ideas and opinions.
- ✓ The Workshop 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.
- ✓ To the extent possible, offer options to address other's concerns, as well as your own.
- ✓ Refrain from using electronic devices during the Workshop; Keep electronic devices turned off or silent.

WORKSHOP GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FOUR PERSONAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES: Be impeccable with your word, don't take things personally, don't make assumptions, and always do your best.

OVERARCHING GUIDING PRINCIPLE: Seek first to understand, and then seek to be understood.

WE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND HAVE GOOD CONVERSATION WHEN:

- ✓ All voices are invited, respected and heard.
- ✓ All experiences are treated as valid.
- ✓ We listen to each other actively, attentively, and respectfully.
- ✓ We observe time frames.
- ✓ We seek common ground and action.
- ✓ There is full and active attendance.
- ✓ We make the time and space to connect with each other.
- ✓ We participate actively and share opinions in the conversation—engage fully in this process.

ATTACHMENT 2
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

MEMBER	AFFILIATION
AGRICULTURE/ACF STAKEHOLDERS/RIPARIAN COUNTIES	
1. Chad Taylor^	Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition/ACF Stakeholders/Agriculture
BUSINESS/REAL ESTATE/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/TOURISM	
2. Chuck Marks	Business (Insurance Industry)
3. Mike O'Connell*	SGI Civic Club/SGI 2025 Vision
ENVIRONMENTAL/CITIZEN GROUPS	
4. Georgia Ackerman^*#	Apalachicola Riverkeeper
5. Chad Hanson^*#	The Pew Charitable Trusts
6. Katie Konchar#	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	
7. Anita Grove^*#	Apalachicola City Commissioner
RECREATIONAL FISHING	
8. Frank Gidus	CCA Florida
SEAFOOD INDUSTRY	
9. David Barber	Barber's Seafood
10. Shannon Hartsfield^	Seafood Management Assistance, Resource Recovery Team (SMARRT)-Oysterman
11. Gayle Johnson	Indian Lagoon Oyster Company (Aquaculture)
12. Roger Mathis^	Oysterman and Seafood Dealer (R.D.'s Seafood)
13. Steve Rash^	Water Street Seafood
14. TJ Ward	Buddy Ward & Sons Seafood
STATE GOVERNMENT	
15. Jenna Harper#	ANERR/DEP
16. Becca Hatchell	FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation
17. Alex Reed#	FDEP Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection
18. Devin Resko^#*	FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management (Replacing Jim Estes)
19. Portia Sapp#	FDACS Division of Aquaculture
20. Paul Thurman#	NWFWMD
UNIVERSITY/RESEARCHERS/SCIENTISTS	
21. Mike Allen	Scientist: Director of UF/IFAS Nature Coast Biological Station (NCBS)
22. Erik Lovestrand#	UF/IFAS/Florida Sea Grant/Franklin County Extension

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD SUBCOMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUP	
* Community Outreach Subcommittee	Lead: Chad Hanson
# Restoration Funding Working Group	Lead: Joel Trexler
^ Successor Group Subcommittee	Co-Leads: Anita Grove and Shannon Hartsfield

PROJECT TEAM AND CAB FACILITATOR	
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY	
Sandra Brooke*	Marine Biologist
Ross Ellington	Professor Emeritus of Biological Science
Madelein Mahood*	Outreach and Education
Gary Ostrander	Former Vice-President for Research
Joel Trexler^#	FSUCML Director
FACILITATED SOLUTIONS, LLC	
Jeff Blair	Community Advisory Board Facilitator

ATTACHMENT 3
ABSI CAB PROJECT MEETING SCHEDULE AND WORKPLAN

UPDATED AS OF THE 18 OCTOBER 2022 CAB MEETING

PHASE I (2019) — STANDING UP AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ABSI CAB — *Status Complete*

May 2019 – December 2019 (Assessment Process, Questionnaire, and 2 CAB Meetings)

PHASE II (2020) — SCOPING OF ISSUES, IDENTIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES & STRATEGIES — *Status Complete*

Jan. 2020 – Dec. 2020 (7 CAB Meeting & 1 Oystermen's Workshop)

PHASE III (2021) — BUILDING CONSENSUS ON CAB RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ABS ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN

Adoption of Final Draft Management and Restoration Plan Framework for Phase IV Evaluation — *Status Complete*

Jan. 2021 – Nov. 2021 (7 CAB Meeting & 2 Oystermen's Workshops)

PHASE IV (2022) — EVALUATION OF DRAFT ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN FRAMEWORK'S RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES, RESTORATION PROJECTS SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION, AND FUNDING PLANNING — *Status Initiated*

Dec. 2021 – Dec. 2022 (6 CAB Meetings, Public Workshops)

PHASE V (2023) — EVALUATION AND FINALIZATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCLUSION IN THE *ABS ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN*, RESTORATION PROJECTS SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION, AND FUNDING PLANNING — *Status Pending*

Jan. 2023 – Dec. 2023 (6 CAB Meetings, Public Workshops)

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB). The CAB initiated Phase IV in December of 2021 and is currently evaluating the best combination of strategies (scenarios) predicted to achieve restoration and management objectives for the Bay using decision support tools including predictive socio-economic and ecological models coupled with available and emerging data and research. The scenarios are being evaluated with the overarching goal of restoring oyster reef habitat to a level that can sustainably provide needed ecosystem services for the System, and concurrently provide for a sustainable and economically viable level of commercial oyster harvesting. During the course of the project the CAB will vet their recommendations with restoration and management agencies to gauge support and feasibility for implementation. The CAB will evaluate the priority and efficacy of scenarios and associated actions and identify specific recommended restoration projects and management approaches for inclusion in the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan (Plan). The CAB will vote to approve their package of consensus recommendations during their November 2023 meeting. ***Status Initiated***

1. **COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN 2022.** The CAB working through the Community Outreach Subcommittee initiated a community feedback initiative by providing information and seeking community input on the Plan Framework. The CAB will vet the results of their prioritized strategies with the larger ABS community through multiple forums including questionnaires administered through a variety of methods including Facebook, online via the ABSI website, and direct mailings. In addition, public workshops will be conducted in various locations to provide the Community with information on ABSI and solicit community feedback. ***Status Initiated***
2. **RESTORATION FUNDING WORKING GROUP (RFWG).** Initiated in late 2021 the Restoration Funding Working Group's role is to seek resources and political, governmental, and organizational support for the CAB's priority recommendations. ***Status Initiated***

3. **CAB SUCCESSOR GROUP.** The CAB Successor Group will be ready to convene when the CAB completes their work on the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan. The Successor Group's role will be to organize a group of key stakeholders committed to working collaboratively for the long-term, once the CAB process is complete and to ensure that the Plan is implemented, monitored, and adaptively managed over time and has the support of the Community. The CAB Successor Group process will formally initiate January 2024. ***Status Organizing. Formal Convening Pending CAB Approval of Recommendations for Plan in November 2023.***

Meeting I. Virtual	**Jan. 26, 2022** • Review of Predictive Models	Initiation of Phase IV of ABSI.
Meeting II. ANERR	**Mar. 30, 2022** • Fisheries (Socioecological) Model Guidance • Management Strategies discussion with FWC	ABSI Science and data collection update. Sub-committee reports. Public Engagement Initiative strategy and plan discussion and approval of approach. Guidance regarding restoration and management scenarios and performance measures for development of the Fisheries (Socioecological) Model. Comprehensive review and discussion on draft management strategies with FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management. Public comment.
Meeting III. ANERR	**May 25, 2022** • Presentations and discussions on restoration approaches • Discussion with FWC/DEP/ANERR on restoration strategies	ABSI science and data collection and decision support tools update. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Chesapeake Bay Oyster Management and Habitat Restoration Modeling presentation, and Alabama Management and Restoration Approach presentation. Comprehensive review and discussion on draft restoration approaches (strategies), and CAB discussion and feedback from FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation, FWC Division of Marine Fisheries, ANERR, and DEP Office of Resilience & Coastal Protection on proposed ABSI restoration scenarios (strategies). Public comment.
Meeting IV. ANERR	**July 27, 2022** • FWC NFWF restoration project • Oyster abundance index data • Fisheries model simulation results & scenarios refinements	Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Update on FWC (NFWF funded) restoration project. Discussion on approach for encouraging protection and enforcement of restoration and restoration experiment sites. Overarching Considerations for model simulation results briefing. Apalachicola Bay oyster abundance index data presentations. Review and discussion of Fisheries (Socioecological) Model simulation results for initial priority Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios (strategies/options). Agreement on next suite of scenarios for Fisheries Model simulations. Public comment.
Meeting V. ANERR	**October 18, 2022** • Fisheries Model Simulation Results & Scenarios Refinements	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.
Oystermen's Workshop 1	**October 18, 2022** ANERR	Oystermen's Feedback on ABSI Restoration Experiments, FWC Restoration Project, and Potential Management Scenarios for Modeling.
Community Workshop 2	**October 19, 2022** Eastpoint Firehouse	Community Feedback on ABSI Restoration Experiments, FWC Restoration Project, and Potential Management Scenarios for Modeling.
Meeting VI. ANERR	**Nov. 30, 2022** • Fisheries Model Simulation Results & Scenarios Refinements	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.

PHASE V CAB MEETINGS — 2023		
Meeting I. ANERR	**Feb. 1, 2023** • Fisheries Model Simulation Results & Scenarios Refinements	Initiation of Phase V of ABSI. ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.
Meeting II. ANERR	**March 29, 2023** • Fisheries Model Simulation Results & Scenarios Refinements	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.
Community Workshop	**TBD ~ April 2023**	Community Feedback on ABSI Restoration Experiments, FWC Restoration Project, and Potential Management Scenarios for Modeling.
Meeting III. ANERR	**May 31, 2023** • Fisheries Model Simulation Results & Scenarios Refinements	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.
Meeting IV. ANERR	**July 26, 2023** • Fisheries model simulation results & scenarios refinements	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.
Oystermen's Workshop	**TBD ~ Sept. 2023**	Oystermen's Feedback on the CAB's recommendations for the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan.
Meeting V. ANERR	**Sept. 27, 2023** • Fisheries Model Simulation Results & Scenarios Refinements	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Review and discussion of Fisheries Model simulation results for revised priority Habitat Restoration (Goal A) and Fisheries Management (Goal B) scenarios. Agreement on next suite of scenarios for model simulations. Public comment.
Community Workshop	**TBD ~ October 2023**	Community Feedback on the CAB's recommendations for the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan.
Meeting VI. ANERR	**Nov. 29, 2023** • **Adopt Final CAB Recommendations for ABS Plan**	ABSI science and data collection and restoration project updates. Sub-committee reports and public engagement initiative update. Finalize and adopt recommendations for strategies and actions (components) for inclusion in the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan (Plan) and submit to FSUCML. Public comment.

ATTACHMENT 4
CURRENT AND FUTURE SCENARIOS AND ASSUMPTIONS FOR MODELING

CURRENT MANAGEMENT SCENARIOS AND ASSUMPTIONS FOR MODELING

OVERVIEW. The Community Advisory Board (CAB) is evaluating a suite of potential scenarios (strategies) proposed to achieve restoration and management goals for the Apalachicola Bay System. The scenarios are being evaluated with the overarching goal of restoring oyster reef habitat to a level that can sustainably provide needed ecosystem services for the System, and concurrently provide for a sustainable and economically viable level of commercial oyster harvesting. The CAB will evaluate a broad suite of strategies predicted to achieve the dual goals of restoration and management of the oyster resource. Decision support tools including predictive socio-economic and ecological models coupled with available and emerging data and research will be used to identify viable management and restoration options. **Evaluating scenarios (strategies) does not imply support for any specific scenario.**

Final decisions on recommendations for inclusion in the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan (Plan) will be made once the CAB reaches consensus on the best combination of strategies predicted to achieve restoration and management objectives for the Bay. The CAB's recommendations will be submitted to the FSUCML ABSI Team who will subsequently develop and submit the final Plan to relevant management and restoration agencies. These entities will decide whether to approve and implement all or part of the Plan.

SCENARIOS. The Community Advisory Board unanimously agreed by consensus to approve initial scenarios (combinations of strategies) for evaluation by the Fisheries (Socioecological) Model:

- An Active harvest management scenario similar to the AL approach using monitoring and an oyster abundance minimum density threshold.
- Different management strategies under a range of different assumptions to see what works best.
- A put-and-take sustainable wild oyster harvest fishery.
- Restoration approaches using data from the restoration projects and the restoration experiments and pilot projects (specific locations, size, height/spatial configurations, type of cultch material, density of cultch, etc.).
- Limited entry commercial oyster fishery.
- A combination of limited entry and active management.

Each of these scenarios will initially be evaluated with a spatially implicit model (for simplicity, time, and practicality should only a limited area be opened). This will require making assumptions about the area of submerged land that is open for oyster harvest and specifically that is being considered when making density calculations (for Scenario B). These areal measurements have not been assessed.

Modeled Simulations Include:

- Closed seasons
- Bag limits
- Potential for bioeconomic entry (i.e., based on assumptions about profitability and variables costs, so not capped at number of trips/participants), as is most recent status quo.
- Fixed effort remains an options, as does, allowing for an effort cap with bioeconomic operations below that.

- Discard mortality applied to oysters captured but not harvested.
- Potential for density dependent catchability which there is some evidence may occur.

** The models still include shell budget information.*

When the Model Can Be Extended to a Spatially Explicit Platform, Evaluate:

- Opening and closing specific oyster bars and potentially even parts of specific oyster bars based on the metrics for sustainability of the resource (e.g., oyster density).
- Different scenarios with the Bay wide-open and various areas of the Bay closed.
- Develop and maintain one area of the Bay (e.g., Cat Point) for high intensity commercial oyster harvesting, and the rest of the Bay will be set aside as protected areas (MPA/Sanctuaries) to provide ecosystem services such as water filtration and marine species habitat, and also to provide brood stock/spat source for the system.
- Updated periodic oyster population evaluations are being conducted and used as the metric for how much and when harvesting is allowed.
- Total Allowable Catch (TAC) as a component of a limited entry and/or minimum density active managed scenarios.
- Seasonal closures.
- Consider the size, spatial configuration, amount and location for oyster reef habitat restoration initiatives.

Much of the above will require adding some larval transport and dispersal assumptions to spatially explicit modeling.

ATTACHMENT 5
COMMUNITY SCENARIOS FEEDBACK WORKSHEET

SCENARIOS FOR MODELING

SCENARIOS. The Community Advisory Board unanimously agreed by consensus to approve initial scenarios (combinations of strategies) for evaluation by the Fisheries (Socioecological) Model. The CAB is only evaluating whether specific scenarios are likely to be effective in achieving the goals of establishing a wild harvest oyster fishery along with sustainable oyster reef habitat sufficient to provide needed ecosystem and ecological services. The scenarios under evaluation are **NOT** recommendations at this point in the process.

A) An Active harvest management scenario similar to the AL approach using monitoring and an oyster abundance minimum density threshold.
Comments/Recommendations: •

B) Different management strategies under a range of different assumptions to see what works best.
Comments/Recommendations: •

C) A put-and-take sustainable wild oyster harvest fishery.
Comments/Recommendations: •

D) Restoration approaches using data from the restoration projects and the restoration experiments and pilot projects (specific locations, size, height/spatial configurations, type of cultch material, density of cultch, etc.).
Comments/Recommendations: •

E) Limited entry commercial oyster fishery.
Comments/Recommendations: •

F) A combination of limited entry and active management.
Comments/Recommendations: •

WHEN THE MODEL CAN BE EXTENDED TO A SPATIALLY EXPLICIT PLATFORM, EVALUATE:

A) Opening and closing specific oyster bars and potentially even parts of specific oyster bars based on the metrics for sustainability of the resource (e.g., oyster density).
Comments/Recommendations: •

B) Different scenarios with the Bay wide-open and various areas of the Bay closed.
Comments/Recommendations: •

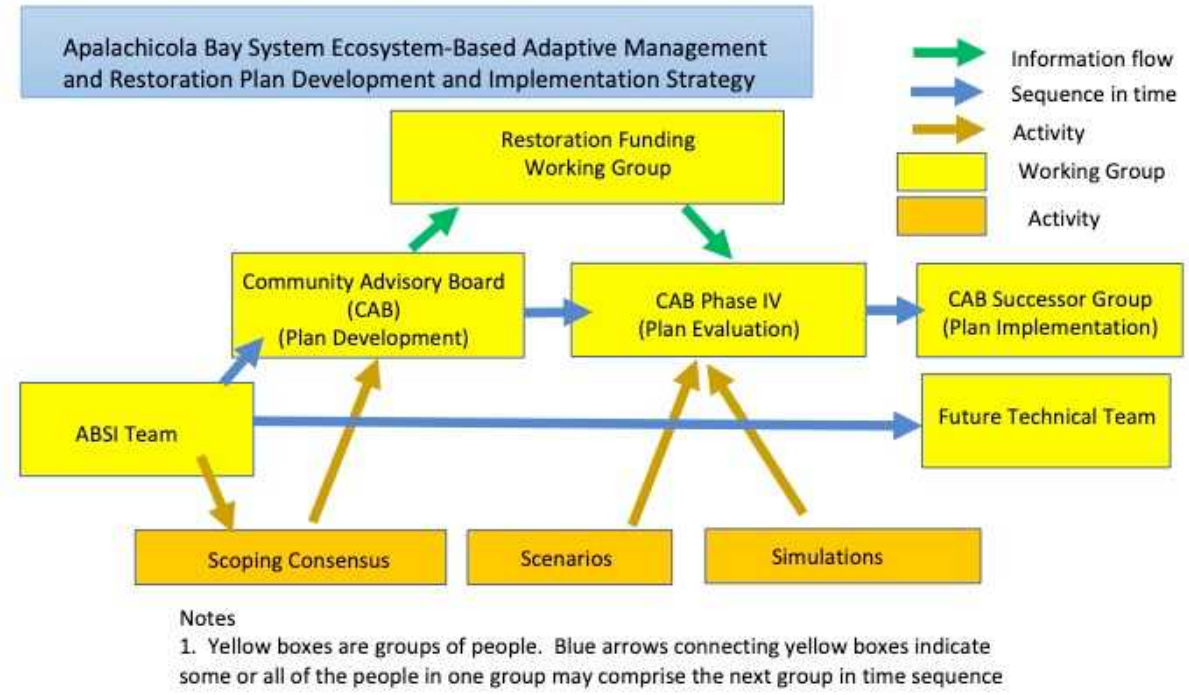
C) Develop and maintain one area of the Bay (e.g., Cat Point) for high intensity commercial oyster harvesting, and the rest of the Bay will be set aside as protected areas (MPA/Sanctuaries) to provide ecosystem services such as water filtration and marine species habitat, and also to provide brood stock/spat source for the system.
Comments/Recommendations: •

D) Updated periodic oyster population evaluations are being conducted and used as the metric for how much and when harvesting is allowed. **Total Allowable Catch (TAC) as a component of a limited entry and/or minimum density active managed scenarios.**
Comments/Recommendations: •

E) Other Options.
Suggested Options for Evaluation: •

ATTACHMENT 6
PROJECT FLOWCHART, MISSION AND GOAL STATEMENT, & PROJECT SUMMARY

ABSI CAB PROCESS FLOWCHART AND PROJECT AREA MAP



ABSI Project Area Map

ABSI MISSION STATEMENT, PROJECT SUMMARY, AND CAB GOAL STATEMENT

APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE MISSION STATEMENT. 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.

PROJECT SUMMARY. In response to the rapidly declining health of the Apalachicola Bay System (ABS) 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 is investigating what precipitated the dramatic decline of the Apalachicola Bay System and working with the ABSI Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Science Advisory Board determine a viable course of action for improving its condition.

APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD GOAL STATEMENT. The overarching goal of the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative Community Advisory Board 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, and to ensure there is a reliable mechanism and process for the monitoring, funding, and implementation of the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive 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 is 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 Adaptive 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.