

**APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE  
COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD**

**MEETING 6 PHASE V – NOVEMBER 29, 2023**

**MEETING OBJECTIVES**

**PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

**WORKSHOP FEEDBACK**

**PLAN REVISIONS AND DISTRIBUTION**

**JEFF A. BLAIR**



[FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

# CAB MEETING OBJECTIVES NOV. 29, 2023

- **APPROVAL OF PROCEDURAL ITEMS (AGENDA & REPORT)**
- **REVIEW OF UPDATED WORKPLAN & MEETING SCHEDULE**
- **SCIENCE & DATA COLLECTION, & RESTORATION UPDATES**
- **RESTORATION FUNDING WORKGROUP AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**
- **DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT APALACHICOLA BAY (CAB SUCCESSOR GROUP)**
- **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY #1**

# CAB MEETING OBJECTIVES NOV. 29, 2023

- EVALUATION OF FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3
- **ADOPTION OF THE CAB DRAFT FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PLAN**
- OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION AND DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY FOR CAB REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PLAN
- **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY #2**
- NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS

# REVIEW OF THE ABSI CAB PROCESS

- **FINAL CAB MEETING.** One meeting remaining, the ABSI CAB process will culminate with the final meeting on November 29, 2023 when the CAB will approve the organizational framework for *Partners for a Resilient Apalachicola Bay* (CAB Successor Group), and adoption of the *CAB Draft Final Report and Recommendations for the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan*.
- **SUMMARY OF CAB MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS**
  - CAB process ran from 2019 – 2013.
  - First CAB meeting was held on October 30, 2019.
  - 28 CAB meetings concluding with the November 29, 2023 meeting.
  - 4 Oystermen’s Workshops.
  - 4 Community Workshops.
  - COVID prevented additional Community Workshops planned for 2020 – Early 2022 (The CAB met virtually from May 2020 – January 2022).

# QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON MEETING OBJECTIVES

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

# APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

## MEETING 6 PHASE V – NOVEMBER 29, 2023

### PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

# PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

## [AGENDA ITEM #7]

- *Partners for a Resilient Apalachicola Bay\** (CAB Successor Group) will be ready to formally convene when the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) Community Advisory Board (CAB) completes their recommendations for the *Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan* in November of 2023.
- The *Partners for a Resilient Apalachicola Bay* (PRAB) will be comprised of representatives from key stakeholder groups committed to ensuring there is a reliable mechanism and process for the monitoring, funding, and implementation of the ABSI CAB's Recommendations for the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan.
- The PRAB will form as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.
- The PRAB will secure funding to hire a project coordinator to handle PRAB logistics and administration including, but not limited to, organizing meetings and maintaining a workplan approved by the PRAB and updated annually.
- The PRAB will adopt a job description outlining the coordinator's duties and responsibilities.

# PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- The PRAB will adopt Operational and Procedural Policies and Guidelines to ensure the group operates transparently and equitably, and makes consensus-based decisions and recommendations.
- The PRAB will adopt an Agreement in Principle providing the organizational structure including the mission, purpose, guiding principles, organization, and decision making and consensus building procedures for the PRAB.
- The PRAB will agree on and approve a Workplan and update it annually as needed.
- The PRAB will require at least a 75% favorable vote of all members present and voting for approving decisions and recommendations.
- A quorum at any PRAB meeting is defined as greater than 50% of the current roster of voting members present. A quorum shall be required for all PRAB decisions and recommendations.
- Stakeholder representatives will be voting members.
- Local government, state agency, and federal agency representatives will be non-voting advisory members.



# PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

## PRAB STAKEHOLDER GROUPS COMMITTED TO PARTICIPATION

- Franklin County Commission – Ottice Amison
- Apalachicola City Commission – Anita Grove
- Oystermen – Shannon Hartsfield
- Aquaculture – Gayle Johnson
- Charter Fishing – Grayson Shepard
- Scientists – Mike Allen (UF)
- Scientists – Sandra Brooke and Joel Trexler, FSUCML
- ANERR – Jenna Harper
- UF-IFAS/Florida Sea Grant/Franklin County Extension – Erik Lovestrand
- FDACS – Portia Sapp
- FWC – Devin Resko
- Apalachicola Riverkeeper – Georgia Ackerman
- The Pew Charitable Trusts – Chad Hanson
- The Nature Conservancy – Will provide a representative.

# PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

- **PROPOSED MOTION.** *MOTION* to approve the Organizational Framework for the *Partners for a Resilient Apalachicola Bay* (CAB Successor Group) including the PRAB's *Operational and Procedural Policies and Guidelines* and template for an *Agreement in Principle* for the partners.

# QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON PRAB ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

**APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE  
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**MEETING 6 PHASE V – NOVEMBER 29, 2023**

**COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FORUM #3  
FEEDBACK SUMMARY**

**JEFF A. BLAIR**



[FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)  
<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

# COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FORUM #3

## FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### [AGENDA ITEM #9]

- Use local watermen to assist with the restoration work.
- Poaching in the Bay is on-going. Won't this work against restoration and how will this problem be mitigated?
- Need strict enforcement of oyster fishery for the restoration to succeed.
- The Plan has a variety of suggested strategies and associated actions. How will these be implemented by the agencies conducting restoration and management? How will the choices of strategies/actions be made?
- What is the role of “the Partnership” in ensuring that the Plan is followed through and implemented?
- The Bay has undergone multiple rounds of restoration and these do not appear to have produced the desired results. Why? Why do you think that the proposed Plan will achieve a different outcome?

# COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FORUM #3

## FEEDBACK SUMMARY

- What the condition of the Bay is regarding oyster production and readiness for harvest.
- When FWC's NFWF funding restoration project would start.
- Feedback on FWC's NFWF funded restoration pilot project including locations, type and size of materials, and height of the restoration reefs.
- General feedback on FWC management approaches and alternatives.

# QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3 FEEDBACK

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

**APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE  
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**MEETING 6 PHASE V – NOVEMBER 29, 2023**

**REVISIONS TO PLAN PROPOSED BY  
ABSİ LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**JEFF A. BLAIR**



[FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)  
<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>



# PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

## [AGENDA ITEM #10]

### GOAL A

- **GOAL A:** The Apalachicola Bay System is a healthy and productive ecosystem that includes oyster reefs in locations and with oyster abundance as similar to historical conditions as possible and that supports a vibrant and sustainable oyster fishery and other economically viable activities.
- **A1)** To define measurable ecosystem health metrics (e.g. oyster population demographics, condition indices, reef associated community, water quality, nutrient levels, submerged aquatic vegetation, fish and wildlife populations) that can be used to quantify ecosystem services and determine the effects of change on ecosystem functions ~~determine the level and effects of change in ecosystem services~~ (e.g., oyster fishery harvest, habitat for other fishery species, filtration capacity) and societal benefit derived from ABS management and restoration efforts, with target and threshold levels identified.
- **A2)** To help establish a comprehensive monitoring plan to evaluate the health of the oysters and the ABS ecosystem and its measurable ecological functions and ecosystem services with clearly defined performance measures and strong coordination among the various entities conducting research, scientific monitoring, and restoration in the region.
- **1)** Establish Bay-wide metrics of ecosystem health (e.g., targets, thresholds) to monitor the ~~health and~~ status of the ABS, including oysters habitat, and establish targets and thresholds that can be used to sustainably restore and manage oysters habitat and the ABS ecosystem.

# PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

- *Action 3-D)* Study and incorporate into planning efforts the connectivity of shoreline (intertidal) oyster habitat with subtidal oyster reefs (e.g., larval transport modeling) when and where applicable.
- *Action 4-A)* Monitor intertidal and sub-tidal reef/habitat using protocols and frequencies consistent with existing monitoring. Adjust and add to monitoring program as needed to sufficiently ~~monitor and~~ assess oyster habitat and populations. After checking data accuracy, post updated monitoring data on a regular basis on an accessible public website.
- **6) Conserve and/or restore Bay watershed (landscape) habitat (i.e., Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) including seagrass, and wetland and riparian habitat) to work synergistically with oyster habitat restoration to enhance restoration of the ABS.**

## GOAL B

- *Action 1-A)* Evaluate the potential for limited-entry oyster fishery that would be managed adaptively based on an adopted sustainable harvest level ~~Evaluate the potential for establishing a limited-entry oyster fishery program and various management strategies~~ through a transparent representative stakeholder driven consensus-building process that includes vetting the plan with local oystermen and FWC law enforcement.
- *Action 1-D)* Consider a recreational wild oyster harvest limit (e.g., the hand-harvesting of only one 5-gallon bucket of oysters), and allow recreational hand-harvesting during the same season the fishery is open to commercial harvest.

# PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

- 4) Recommend Request FWC Law Enforcement review enforcement strategies and penalties to assure sufficient deterrence of harvest or sale of undersized oysters, violations that harm wild or leased oyster reefs and other natural resources, and other matters that hinder restoration efforts in the ABS.
- *Action 5-B)* Convene an Oyster Fishery Advisory Board within FWC to review and make recommendations on management and enforcement of the oyster fishery statewide in Apalachicola Bay.
- *Action 8-A)* Develop maps using FDACs data showing all proposed and existing aquaculture activities in the ABS, superimposed on existing maps of essential fish habitat, fishing activities, seagrass beds, and natural existing hard bottom (reefs/bars) to identify potential conflicts. Maps should be updated as frequently as is feasible to assure their usefulness.
- *Action 9-B)* Develop and use fishery models to estimate the amount and frequency of cultch and/or spat-on-shell required to maintain the minimum threshold for sustainable harvest (i.e., 400 bags/acre).
- *Action 9-C)* Conduct cost-benefit analysis of deploying cultch and/or spat-on-shell in support of wild oyster harvest in Apalachicola Bay. This includes cost of cultch and spat-on-shell production, cost of deployment, survival of hatchery spat, and value of harvest and associated industry to ensure the economic viability of replenishing activities.

# PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

## GOAL C

- **OUTCOME:** By 2030, the Apalachicola Bay System is a productive and sustainably managed ecosystem. A fully funded and well-executed science-based Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan that incorporates the monitoring necessary for evaluation and adaptation that is developed and is broadly supported by Apalachicola Bay System stakeholders with guidance from a permanent stakeholder advisory ~~board~~ group.
- *Action 1-D)* The PRAB will support State legislators and state agencies in the development of funding strategies, and incentives for involving local oystermen, seafood dealers, restaurants, aquaculture operations, and private citizens in oyster reef restoration efforts that will increase the viability of oyster resources.
- ~~*Action 2-E)* The successor group facilitates bidirectional information flow between agencies implementing the restoration and management plans and the public, other government entities and NGOs. The successor group should evaluate whether to initiate the development of an Apalachicola Bay Estuary Program (ABEP) to coordinate and lead in the implementation and monitoring of the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan. The successor group should explore whether it's a better model to be a part of the Environment Protection Agency's (EPA) National Estuary Program or to model the ABEP after the EPA program with funding provided from other entities as was done with the St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program.~~
- ~~*Action 2-B)* Evaluate and seek grant opportunities from recommendations included in the Plan.~~

# PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

- *Action 2-F)* Work across estuary programs to fund and leverage large scale monitoring for the ~~Panhandle Region—~~ Perdido to Suwanee region.
- *Action 2-G)* The PRAB should evaluate whether to initiate the development of an Apalachicola Bay Estuary Program (ABEP) to coordinate and lead in the implementation and monitoring of the Plan. The PRAB should explore whether it's a better model to be a part of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Estuary Program or to model an ABEP after the EPA program, and assess alternative funding models such as those used by the other Florida Panhandle estuary programs. ~~with funding provided from other entities as was done with the St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program~~

## GOAL D

- *Action 1-C)* Work with local groups, agencies, businesses and other stakeholders to identify sources of shell, or other restoration material.

## GOAL E

- *Action 2-A)* Recommend economic monitoring and enforcement programs ~~continue with appropriate~~ to assure quality of data necessary for metrics that measure economic output from and regional impact of harvest on oyster reefs.

~~*\*Ongoing fisheries-dependent and fisheries-independent monitoring by FWRI, coupled with ABSI complementary data based on request of oystermen. Both entities are sharing data with one another which is critical for ABSI model development.*~~

# PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

## ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- ~~• 1) Work with State legislators and state agencies to develop funding strategies, and incentives for involving local watermen, seafood dealers, restaurants, aquaculture operations, and private citizens in oyster reef restoration efforts that will increase the viability of oyster resources.~~
- ~~• *Action 1-A*) Identify source of shell, or other restoration material.~~

## PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

- **PROPOSED MOTION.** *MOTION* to adopt the Apalachicola Bay System Initiative (ABSI) Community Advisory Board's (CAB) *CAB's Draft Final Report and Recommendations for the Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan*, incorporating the CAB's approved revisions, and to charge the ABSI Leadership Team with drafting the Final CAB Report and Recommendations and to format and edit the document for presentation, clarity, and consistency, and when finalized to distribute the Final CAB Report and Recommendations to the appropriate entities.

# QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO PLAN

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

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# APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM INITIATIVE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

## MEETING 6 PHASE V – NOVEMBER 29, 2023

### ABSI REPORT DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FacilitatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

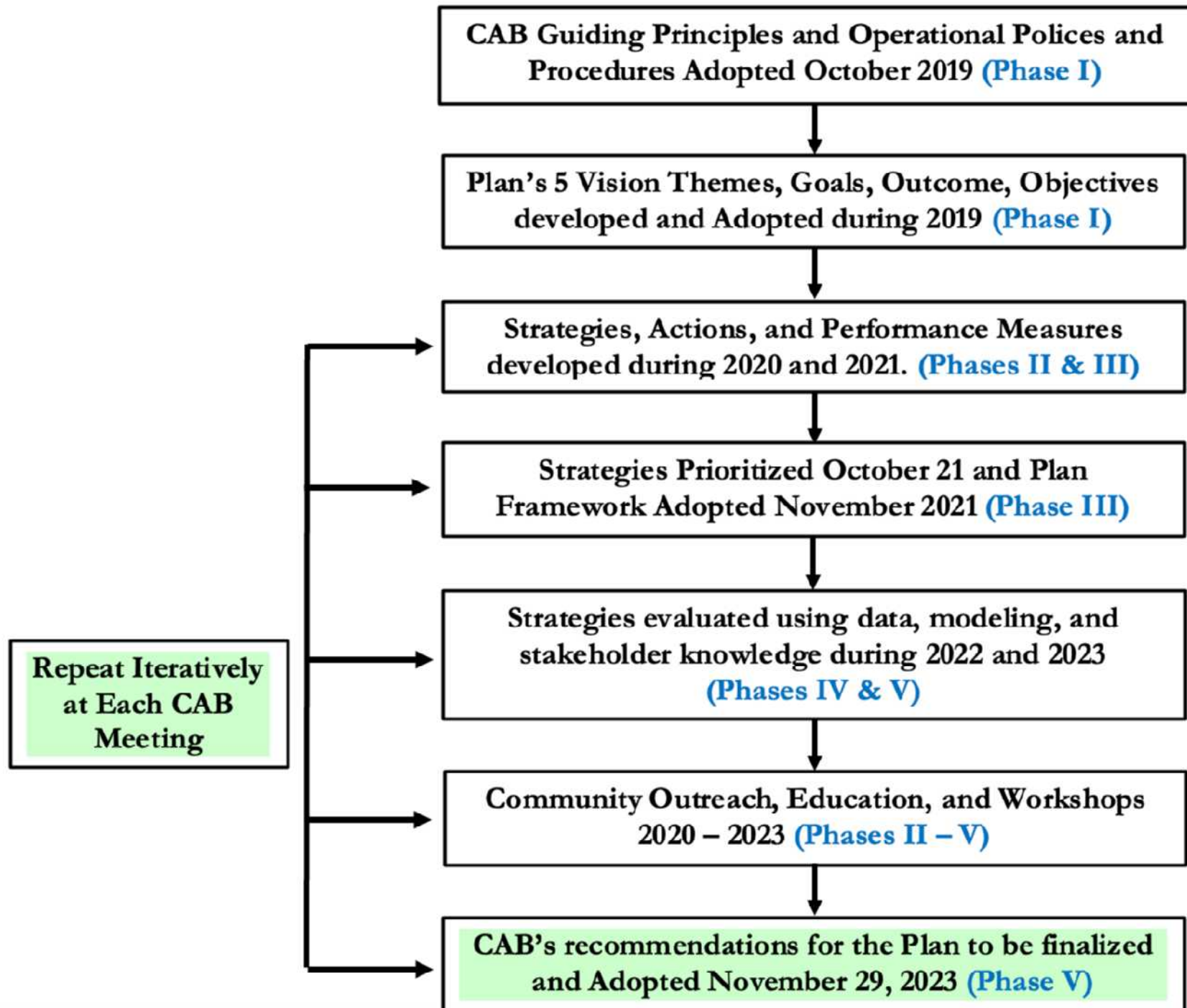
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# ABSI CAB REPORT DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

## [AGENDA ITEM #11]

ABSI CAB REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APALACHICOLA BAY SYSTEM ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN – DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION SCHEDULE	
September 27, 2023 <b>CAB Meeting #5</b>	CAB discussed and approved Draft CAB Report and Recommendations.
November 27, 2023	Leadership Team meeting with Kathleen Haughney from the FSU Office of Research Communications Department to discuss strategy and approach for communication and distribution of the CAB's Report and Recommendations.
November 29, 2023 <b>CAB Meeting #6</b>	CAB reviews and adopts Draft Final CAB Report and Recommendations.
December 4, 2023	ABSI Leadership Team will distribute Final CAB Report and Recommendations to CAB members for comments.
December 15, 2023	ABSI CAB members will have 2 weeks to provide comments to the Leadership Team (no substantive revisions will be considered).
December 18, 2023	ABSI Leadership Team will decide whether to make any additional revisions, finalize the CAB Report and Recommendations.
January 22, 2024	FSUCML will distribute Report to the CAB, and post to the project webpage.
January 22, 2024	FSUCML will distribute CAB Report and Recommendations (electronic and Glossy Summary Report) to agencies and entities as appropriate (i.e., FWC, FDACS, DEP, NFWFMD, local governments, legislators, Triumph Gulf Coast, etc.).
January 22, 2024	FSU Office of Research Communications Department will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a 6-8 page glossy Summary Report for printing and distribution,</li> <li>• Press release regarding completion of the project and availability of the CAB's recommendations (Report available online),</li> <li>• Produce video and radio content regarding project and CAB's recommendations, and</li> <li>• Take photos for use in the Report and for media dissemination.</li> </ul>

# ABSI CAB PLAN DEVELOPMENT CHRONOLOGY



# QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON REPORT DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

JEFF A. BLAIR



[FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com](mailto:FaciltatedSolutionsJB@gmail.com)

<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>

# ABSI PROJECT AREA MAP



# ABSI PROJECT AREA MAP

