

Apalachee Regional Planning Council

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday – May 19, 2016

10:30 a.m. ET / 9:30 a.m. CT



292nd Public Meeting

ARPC OFFICE – Conservation Centre Conference Room
2507 Callaway Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida
www.thearpc.com

The Apalachee Regional Planning Council serves its citizens and local governments by providing technical assistance and a forum for communication and collaboration, to preserve and enhance the economic, natural, and social environments of the Apalachee Region.

**APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

RANDY MERRITT, CHAIRMAN (WAKULLA)
STEVE CUTSHAW, VICE-CHAIRMAN (LIBERTY)
JANE SAULS, SECRETARY/TREASURER (LEON)

FRCA POLICY BOARD MEMBERS: JANE SAULS, WOODY STEWART AND LISA MILLER

Calhoun County

Darrell McDougald
Wes Johnston
Don Stephens

County Commissioner
Mayor, Town of Altha
Governor's Appointee

Franklin County

William Massey
Brenda Ash
Vacant

County Commissioner
Commissioner, City of Apalachicola
Governor's Appointee

Gadsden County

Brenda Holt
Karen Bass
Henry Grant

County Commissioner
Councilwoman, Town of Havana
Governor's Appointee

Gulf County

Ward McDaniel
Tony Justice
Michael Hammond

County Commissioner
Commissioner, City of Wewahitchka
Governor's Appointee

Jackson County

Eric Hill
Gene Wright
Vacant

County Commissioner
Mayor, Town of Malone
Governor's Appointee

Jefferson County

Stephen Walker
John Jones
Vacant

County Commissioner
Commissioner, City of Monticello
Governor's Appointee

Leon County

Jane G. Sauls
Nancy Miller
Lisa Miller

County Commissioner
Commissioner, City of Tallahassee
Governor's Appointee

Liberty County

Dexter Barber
Woody Stewart
Steve Cutshaw

County Commissioner
Councilman, City of Bristol
Governor's Appointee

Wakulla County

Randy Merritt
Gail Gilman
Ed Brimner

County Commissioner
Commissioner, City of St. Marks
Governor's Appointee

Ex-Officio Members

Charles Harp
Christina Coger
Virgie Bowen
Diane Scholz

FL Dept. of Environmental Protection
NW FL Water Management District
FL Dept. of Transportation
Enterprise Florida

**APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
BOARD MEETING**

ARPC OFFICE – Conservation Centre Conference Room
2507 Callaway Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, Florida

THURSDAY – MAY 19, 2016
10:30 AM Eastern Time / 9:30 AM Central Time

AGENDA

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**APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
Conservation Centre Conference Room
2507 Callaway Road - Tallahassee, Florida**

MINUTES – March 31, 2016

Item 1: Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Chairman Merritt called the meeting to order at 10:30 am, led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves for the Roll Call.

ARPC Board Members in Attendance:

Calhoun County	Darrell McDougald	Calhoun County Commissioner
	Wes Johnston	Mayor, Town of Altha
	Don Stephens	Governor's Appointee
Gadsden County	Karen Bass	Havana Town Councilwoman
	Henry Grant	Governor's Appointee
Gulf County	Tony Justice	Wewahitchka City Commissioner
Jefferson County	John Jones	Monticello City Councilman
Leon County	Jane Sauls	Leon County Commissioner
	Nancy Miller	Tallahassee City Commissioner
Liberty County	Dexter Barber	Liberty County Commissioner
	Woody Stewart	Bristol City Councilman
	Steve Cutshaw	Governor's Appointee
Wakulla County	Randy Merritt	Wakulla County Commissioner
	Ed Brimmer	Governor's Appointee

Ex-Officio Members in Attendance

Christina Coger	Northwest FL Water Management District
Virgie Bowen	FL Dept. of Transportation
Charles Harp	FL Dept. of Environmental Protection
Diane Scholz	Enterprise Florida

ARPC Staff in Attendance

Chris Rietow	Executive Director
Ed Blanton	ARPC Attorney
Bruce Ballister	Senior Planner / Economic Development
Kwentin Eastberg	Regional Planner / Transportation
Gina Mendicino	LEPC Coordinator
Janice Watson	Finance Director/Loan Coordinator

Others in Attendance

Marianne Arbulu – FDEO	Ben Pingree – Tall/Leon Planning Dept.
Greg Burke – CRTPA	Andrew Rutledge - NFWFMD
Chris Doolin – Small County Coalition	Sara Saxner – Tall/Leon Office Eco. Vitality
Jeff Hendry – NFEDP & Inst. of Govt.	Kent Watson – Rep. Gwen Graham
Mary Louise Hester – Sen. Bill Nelson	Shawn Wood – Gadsden Co. Sherriff's Dept.

Chairman Merritt welcomed ARPC guests and asked that the records show a quorum of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council in attendance.

Item 2: Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by John Jones to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Henry Grant. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Item 3: Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Henry Grant to approve the Minutes of the January 28, 2016 ARPC Full Council Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Wes Johnston. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Item 4: Small County Coalition (SCC) Presentation

Chris Rietow introduced Chris Doolin, Executive Director of the Small County Coalition (SCC). Mr. Doolin thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and for the continued support of the SCC by the rural counties of the ARPC. He reviewed in detail several examples of the programs that are currently available for fiscally constrained counties. Mr. Doolin stressed how important it is for the small counties to remain in constant contact with the Legislative Delegation and reviewed the rules and processes for negotiating with the Legislature. He shared detailed information with the Board on how the Medicaid cost sharing basis has changed and how it affected each county. Mr. Doolin continued the discussion by reporting on the general outcomes of the 2016 Legislative Session elaborating on the changes in the economic development processes of the State. The Board discussed at length the negative impacts for the Apalachee Region as a result of the elimination of the State Enterprise Zones and the major reductions in staff and services at Enterprise Florida. Mr. Doolin encouraged the Board to be very attentive to the activities and programs of the local economic development organizations, noting the continued success of the Super Council in Calhoun County, an organization initiated by the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce, which included the County Commission, the School Board, and both City Councils. He stressed that the key to moving forward on economic development with limited resources was open collaboration between local government leaders and the local, regional and state economic development organizations. Mr. Doolin stated that following the fall 2016 elections, the SCC would be scheduling a meeting to discuss rural issues and the importance of rural counties partnering together. Chairman Merritt encouraged Mr. Doolin and the SCC to work closely with the ARPC on support of rural issues as the ARPC counties represent 20% of the SCC membership. Chris Rietow stated that the FL Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Policy Board discussed at the last semi-annual meeting, becoming more involved in setting a Legislative Agenda for the RPCs of Florida. Chairman Merritt thanked Mr. Doolin for his presentation and recommended having more frequent SCC presentations at the Council meetings. Mr. Doolin offered to provide pre- and post-legislative updates to the ARPC Board.

Item 5: 5th Annual Rural County Summit

Chris Rietow introduced Major Shawn Wood of the Gadsden County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Wood thanked the Board for its support of the Rural County Summit for the past five years and noted that without the initial assistance and direction from Chris Rietow and Denise Imbler of ARPC staff, the Summit would have never grown to be the successful event it has become. Mr. Wood discussed with the Board the 2016 Summit topic: "Building Mutual Understanding and Fostering Trust between Law Enforcement and the Community They Serve" and presenters for the Summit, which included key individuals from recent events in Sanford, FL; Ferguson, MO; Baltimore, MD; Charleston, SC; Los Angeles, CA; and Boston, MA. He shared with the Board the subject matter of a recent article in the New York Times which outlined the continued success of programs initiated by the Gadsden County Sheriff's Office that had decreased the number of residents sent to prison each year by 208%. Mr. Rietow stated that he would email the Board a link to the referenced NY Times article. Mr. Rietow encouraged the Board to share the information about the Summit with local government staff that could benefit from attending the Summit. Mr. Wood assured that Board that anyone wanting to attend would not be turned away, reminded them that there was no cost to attend and encouraged them to contact him or Mr. Rietow directly if they had any further questions. Chairman Merritt thanked Major Wood for his presentation and for the continued initiative taken by Gadsden County in hosting the Rural Summit.

Item 6: Executive Director's Report

A. Financial Report: Mr. Rietow reviewed with the Board the Budget Reports and the Reconciled Check Registers as of January 31, 2016 and February 29, 2016, included in the Board package beginning on page 18. He also reviewed with the Board the ARPC's current list of accounts payable and the current check register through March 24, 2016.

A motion was made by Tony Justice to approve the financial reports for January 2016 and February 2016 as presented. The motion was seconded by Nancy Miller. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Staff Reports: Chris Rietow highlighted the following ARPC Program Reports prepared by ARPC staff and included in the Board Package beginning on page 25. He asked the Board for any questions in reference to the Staff Program Reports listed below and asked ARPC staff to briefly update the Board on any additions to their reports included in the Board Package.

1. Economic Development Planning – Bruce Ballister
2. Emergency Planning – Denise Imbler & Chris Rietow
3. Revolving Loan Fund – Janice Watson
4. Transportation Planning – Kwentin Eastberg
5. Environmental Planning – Joe Crozier
6. Misc. Correspondence & Items of Interest

B-1 Economic Development: Bruce Ballister noted the request from the FL Dept. of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) for Technical Assistance Grant Applications included in the Board Package on page 27 and the availability of ARPC staff to assist in applying for the grants and administering the grants if funded.

B-2 Emergency Planning: Mr. Rietow introduced Gina Mendicino, the ARPC's new Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Coordinator. He explained that she was a former part-time employee of the Leon County Emergency Management Department and had been highly recommended by Leon County Director of Emergency Management, Kevin Peters, who currently serves as the Apalachee LEPC Chairman. Mr. Rietow stated that he had served as the Apalachee LEPC Coordinator for over 13 years and it would take several months for the full responsibility of the position to transfer to Ms. Mendicino. The Board welcomed Ms. Mendicino to the ARPC staff.

Mr. Rietow reported that ARPC staff had been contacted by the FL Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) requesting that the ARPC conduct a full-scale exercise as a kick-off for the annual Statewide Hurricane Exercise. He stated that the initial planning had begun and the exercise had been scheduled for May 16th. Mr. Rietow noted that Denise Imbler and Joe Crozier were not at the Board meeting due to their participation in a state-wide training workshop on existing sea level rise/climate planning tools for the purpose of training RPCs to hold similar workshops throughout the state.

B-3 Revolving Loan Fund: Janice Watson briefly reviewed the Revolving Loan Fund report beginning on page 31 of the Board Package and noted that the ARPC Executive Committee had approved two new loans at its meeting on March 22nd. Ms. Watson noted that the loan to Tony Muina of TIFCO Enterprises had been closed on March 30th and the loan to Emily Jones of Pretty Girlz would be scheduled for some time in late April.

B-4 Transportation: Kwentin Eastberg reported briefly on his participation in the promotional tour of the Amtrak Gulf Coast Passenger Train from Chipley to Tallahassee. Mr. Eastberg shared a short video presentation he compiled showcasing highlights of the event. Nancy Miller stated that she had also participated in the event and encouraged the Board to send letters of support to the federal and state legislative delegation on the importance of the restoration of this passenger route which spanned from New Orleans to Orlando. Ms. Miller explained that this route had been discontinued after much of the track was destroyed during Hurricane Katrina. She stressed the importance of contacting the respective Legislative Delegations and the noted the potential positive influence, support from all of the communities in the Region would have on the project. Chris Rietow reviewed with the Board a draft ARPC resolution in support of the project that had been included in the Board package on page 45.

A motion was made by Henry Grant to approve ARPC Resolution 16-03 in support of the restoration of passenger rail service between New Orleans, LA and Orlando, FL. The motion was seconded by Wes Johnston. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

A copy of the Resolution is included to these Minutes as "Attachment A".

Chairman Merritt noted that the ARPC had been approved as a non-voting member of the Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency Board (CRTPA) and noted that Mr. Rietow would be attending the CRTPA Meetings on behalf of the ARPC. Nancy Miller requested that Mr. Rietow or a member of the ARPC staff share the video prepared by Mr. Eastberg with the CRTPA at the next CRTPA Meeting.

B-5 Environmental: Mr. Rietow reported that he and Joe Crozier, had been working extensively with Paul Thorpe of the Northwest FL Water Management District (NFWFMD) on developing a scope of work for an Apalachicola River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan and the potential of the ARPC staff participating in its preparation and development. He explained that the ARPC's current involvement and expanded partnership with the Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition would enhance the ability of ARPC staff to coordinate and prepare the SWIM Plan.

Mr. Rietow also reported that the development of a Chattahoochee to Bristol (C2B) trail was one of the major recommendations that came out of the recently completed Gadsden County-FDEO Competitive Florida project. He explained that the beautiful bluffs in the western parts of Gadsden and Liberty Counties along the Apalachicola River were underutilized and not currently part of the Florida National Scenic Trail or any other coordinated connecting trail system. Mr. Rietow explained that this 25-mile path had the potential to be an impressive ecotourism asset for the Region as it was a very diverse environmental area and unlike any other portion of the existing Florida National Scenic Trail. He reported that ARPC staff had been contacted by FDEO about applying for a regional technical assistance grant to develop a feasibility study for the project, noting that the potential highlight of the proposed trail would be a commercially operated zip-line across the river on the old Hwy 90 Bridge at Chattahoochee. The Board was very encouraged by the possibilities the C2B Trail could bring to the Region. Nancy Miller noted that the attendance at the Tallahassee Museum had increased by 200% after the incorporation of a zip line at that facility. Mr. Rietow stated that the ARPC had received several letters of support for its FDEO Technical Assistance grant application to prepare a feasibility study on the proposed C2B Trail.

A motion was made by John Jones to authorize a letter from the ARPC to be signed by the Chairman in support of the ARPC's FDEO Technical Assistance Grant Application for the preparation of a feasibility study for the proposed Chattahoochee to Bristol Trail. The motion was seconded by Tony Justice. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rietow reported that staff had recently been contacted by The Nature Conservancy about the possibility of housing an EPA estuary program at the ARPC. He noted that the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council successfully housed an EPA estuary program several years ago. He agreed to keep the Board informed as the potential project developed.

B-6 Correspondence: Mr. Rietow reviewed items of correspondence included in the Board package beginning on page 49. Kent Watson encouraged everyone to register and attend the

USDA Strike Force workshop on April 4th, sponsored by Rep. Gwen Graham to outline the application and implementation processes of USDA Rural Development Funding Opportunities.

C. Executive Committee Meeting Summary: Mr. Rietow and Chairman Merritt reviewed briefly with the Board the minutes of the ARPC Executive Committee Meeting held on March 22, 2016.

D. FL Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Report: Mr. Rietow encouraged the Board to read the January and February Newsletters from the Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) included in the Board Package beginning on page 59. He noted that Denise Imbler continued to provide the coordination for FRCA and Janice Watson provided the routine financial services.

E. Proposed 2016 ARPC Goals: Mr. Rietow discussed with the Board a list of proposed ARPC Goals for 2016 which had been included in the Board package on page 71. He reviewed the accomplishments of 2015 and noted the additions to the list for 2016. Chairman Merritt stated that the proposed 2016 ARPC Goals would be discussed in greater detail at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Item 7: Council Attorney's Report

Council Attorney Ed Blanton reported that there were no legal issues or litigation to report on at this time.

Item 8: Board Member Reports / Local & Regional Issues Discussion

Chairman Merritt reported that he would be attending a Greenways and Trails Council meeting later in the day and would be communicating the support of Wakulla County for the Capital City to the Sea Trail.

A motion was made by Nancy Miller to authorize Chairman Merritt to also communicate to the CRTPA the support of the ARPC for the Capital City to the Sea Trail. The motion was seconded by Henry Grant. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Item 9: Ex-Officio Member Reports / Public Comment

Chris Doolin encouraged the Board Members to begin working as soon as possible on their respective county 2017 legislative appropriation requests. Mr. Doolin explained that Senator Latvala would be the Chairman of the 2017 Appropriations Committee and noted that the Senator had proven himself as a champion supporter of local rural projects.

Chairman Merritt asked for any further public comments and there were none. He announced that the next ARPC Board meeting would be held on May 19, 2016 at 10:30 am ET, in the same location. Chairman Merritt thanked the Board for their attendance and directed staff to follow up with the Board members absent from today's meeting to encourage their attendance at the next meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

APPROVED BY THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, MEETING IN REGULAR SESSION
ON MAY 19, 2016.

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

Randy Merritt
Chairman

Chris Rietow
Executive Director

Attachment "A"

RESOLUTION 16 – 03

**A RESOLUTION OF THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (ARPC)
IN SUPPORT OF THE RESTORATION OF PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE
BETWEEN NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA AND ORLANDO, FLORIDA**

WHEREAS, before Hurricane Katrina, Amtrak's *Sunset Limited* passenger line served railroad travelers as the only transcontinental passenger rail service from Los Angeles passing through New Orleans and Mobile to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Katrina damaged a portion of the rail infrastructure along the Gulf Coast as well as caused the loss of other portions of the infrastructure, including the total loss of Mobile's passenger rail terminal facility; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak suspended all service on the eastern portion of the *Sunset Limited* line from New Orleans through Mobile, Pensacola, Crestview, Chipley, Tallahassee, and Jacksonville to Orlando; and

WHEREAS, CSX, and Norfolk Southern (the freight railroad companies that own the tracks on which passenger rail service on the Gulf Coast will operate) have both committed to cooperating with Amtrak in providing this vital service along the eastern Gulf Coast and to do so in a more efficient manner than prior to Hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, restoration of passenger rail service to the eastern Gulf Coast will facilitate job creation through development opportunities, enhance tourism, and reduce environmental and roadway impacts due to personal automobile use, thereby having a positive economic and environmental impact to the coastal states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida; and

WHEREAS, such resumption of passenger rail service will also benefit the entire nation by providing a link to the Gulf Coast from the Midwest and West Coast; and

WHEREAS, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 called for Amtrak to study the potential return of passenger rail service from New Orleans to Orlando;

WHEREAS, Section 11304 of Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (or "FAST Act") of 2015 mandates the Federal Railroad Administration to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger services in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida and to submit findings by September 2016; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Apalachee Regional Planning Council recommends and supports the restoration of dependable, daily passenger rail service along the suspended route between New Orleans, Louisiana and Orlando, Florida with a designated stop in Tallahassee, Florida.

Approved by unanimous vote of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council meeting in regular session on the 31st day of March, 2016

BY:



Randy Merritt, ARPC Chairman

ATTEST:



Chris Rietow, ARPC Executive Director

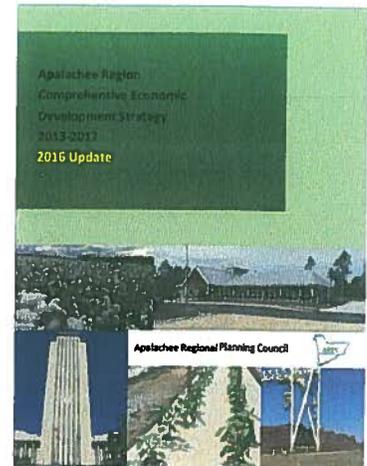
AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 1

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – Bruce Ballister

Port St. Joe – North Port St. Joe Water II: The North Port St. Joe Water 2, CDBG application was submitted on April 25th. ARPC staff has received notice from the FL Dept. of Economic Opportunity that the project's score is in the fundable range for the current cycle. Other local governments likely to fall within the fundable range in the Apalachee Region are the Town of Greenwood and Calhoun County. If some of the fundable range projects are dropped due to technical issues on the applications, there is a possibility that Gretna's application may be funded.

Wakulla Environmental Institute: The project is complete with all EDA funded portions accepted by the College. Due to complications with the college's electronic payments function with Wells Fargo Bank, the first request for reimbursement was submitted to EDA in late April. ARPC staff is waiting for notice from EDA as to whether there will be any issues arising from the documentation submitted. Upon notification that the request is acceptable, ARPC staff will begin to process the closeout and final payment. The campus itself, is up and running and should be a considerable future economic benefit to Wakulla County and the Region.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS): Staff has held a series of meetings with members of the ARPC CEDS Committee. The interim update will renew data on some of the data tables and incorporate Committee Members' comments on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Although it is not a required update, the 2016 revised report provides more immediate data on many of the reports tables. The draft report has been posted on the ARPC website for the past two months. There has been little or no comment and ARPC staff is requesting approval from the Board to transmit the updated CEDS to EDA.



Brownfields Assessment Grant: ARPC staff assisted its consultant, Cardno TBE, in preparing materials for the 2015 Brownfields Assessment grant. If successful, the grant will provide up to \$200,000 for assessment of petroleum sites and another \$200,000 for sites with toxic contamination. This year's application will focus on sites in Chattahoochee, Jefferson, Carrabelle, and Apalachicola. Other sites identified during the grant process can be added.
Benefit: Sites that have a suspected contamination based on prior uses or public perception will be given a free Phase 1 audit. This process can either clear a site as non-contaminated or focus any future work on a Phase II audit which will reduce risk for any future commercial sale of the property or acquisition by a local government for public use. Having a free Phase 1 audit performed begins the process of converting Brownfields properties into productive re-use.

ARPC staff expects to hear if the application was successful by late May 2016. If the application is unfunded, there will be no fees due to Cardno TBE.

4th Annual Brownfields Redevelopment Forum: Planning has begun for the 2016 Northwest Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Forum sponsored by the West Florida & Apalachee Regional Planning Councils. **Please save the date of June 16, 2016.** The event will be held at the Santa Rosa Convention Center in Milton, Florida. Presentations will be made on the process of designation of a Brownfields Area from rural and urban perspectives as well as Local Government roundtables.



Jefferson County CDBG: An outgrowth of the Brownfield effort is a proposed redevelopment of the Capital City Travel Center located in the southwest corner of the I-10/SR59 interchange. The truckstop/convenience store combo was one of the first constructed after completion of I-10 in the 1970s and is no longer competitive with newer installations. The proposal will redevelop the existing travel center, construct an 80-90 room Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott hotels, and provide outparcels for commercial retail and fast food sites. ARPC staff will be submitting a CDBG Economic Development application during the upcoming CDBG cycle. The project is stimulated by the joint initiative to bring a regional sports training/practice facility with complementary family outdoor sports and entertainment assets. The proposed “Project Game Changer” would bring a 104,000 square foot indoor practice facility for under roof soccer, softball, tennis, basketball, rock wall, and other possible uses. Adjacent to the facility would be tree-to-tree aerial trails, zip-lines and dirt bike off-road trails. At the request of the hotel/commercial developer, ARPC staff prepared a REMI run on the proposed soft impacts of the proposed economic impacts of the project.

Planning Services: Occasionally, ARPC local governments are required to submit updated Comprehensive Plans based on an Evaluation and Appraisal Report. Each local government must notify the FDEO at least every seven years if there is a need to update its local Comprehensive Plan to reflect changes in State requirements in Chapter 163, Part II, F.S., since the last update of the Comprehensive Plan. Plans can be updated on an optional basis at any time sooner than the schedule on the following page requires if there is a desire to remove stipulations no longer in the Statutes. (Many requirements were softened or removed in 2011). ARPC staff stands ready to assist the Region’s local governments in complying with the EAR-based review process as the need requires. ARPC staff has completed these amendments for several of the Region’s local governments over the past decade and are experienced in the process. Please contact Bruce Ballister for more information.

ACTION NEEDED

Motion to approve the submittal of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – 2016 Update to the Economic Development Administration.

EAR-BASED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DUE DATES

MUNICIPALITIES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	DUE DATE
APALACHICOLA	2/1/2012
BLOUNTSTOWN	3/1/2012
CARRABELLE	4/1/2012
MARIANNA	8/1/2012
SOPCHOPPY	12/1/2012
ALFORD	1/1/2013
BASCOM	2/1/2013
CAMPBELLTON	5/1/2013
COTTONDALE	6/1/2013
GRAND RIDGE	7/1/2013
GREENWOOD	8/1/2013
JACOB CITY	8/1/2013
MALONE	8/1/2013
SNEADS	8/1/2013
MONTICELLO	9/1/2013
BRISTOL	11/1/2013
GREENSBORO	1/1/2014
GRETNA	1/1/2014
HAVANA	1/1/2014
MIDWAY	1/1/2014
ALTHA	5/1/2014
QUINCY	1/1/2015
GRACEVILLE	3/1/2015
CHATTAHOOCHEE	12/1/2015
PORT ST JOE	3/1/2017
ST MARKS	1/1/2018
WEWAHITCHKA	10/1/2018

COUNTIES

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	DUE DATE
GADSDEN CO	5/1/2012
CALHOUN CO	6/1/2012
LIBERTY CO	8/1/2013
LEON / TLH	1/1/2016
FRANKLIN CO	5/1/2016
JEFFERSON CO	11/1/2016
WAKULLA CO	5/1/2017
JACKSON CO	11/1/2017
GULF CO	12/1/2018

AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 2

EMERGENCY PLANNING PROGRAM

Denise Imbler
Gina Mendicino

Emergency Planning Program

The ARPC continues to work with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services on a series of drills and a full-scale exercise to test procedures for the statewide multi-agency food safety rapid response team. The drills are taking place in May and the full-scale exercise is scheduled for June 9, 2016, in the Tampa area.



Franklin County SLR 2080

The ARPC has received funding from NOAA and is developing a vulnerability analysis addressing the impacts of Sea Level Rise (SLR) on the regional transportation network in the coastal communities of Franklin, Gulf and Wakulla counties. In the coming months, ARPC staff will be updating the county specific components of the Regional Evacuation Study and the Tallahassee/Leon County Post Disaster Redevelopment Plan.

The ARPC is working with the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the North Florida Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) response agencies to design and conduct a full-scale terrorism exercise for regional specialty teams. The events of the exercise will serve as the kickoff to the 2016 Statewide Continuity of Operations Plan exercise that will begin on May 16, 2016. Six exercise planning meetings have been held with participating agencies to aid in the design process. The exercise will take place at the Florida State Capitol and will involve multiple components to engage the Region's specialty teams.

ARPC staff is partnering with ER Assist – Disaster Grant Services on a pilot project that will develop a free FEMA-approved Debris Management Plan for one of the Region's local governments. If this project is successful, the ARPC will attempt to provide the service to other interested members. Calhoun County has confirmed that they will participate as part of the pilot project.

Regional Hazardous Materials Program

The ARPC staffs the Apalachee Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) which is responsible for implementing the federal Emergency Planning and the Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) for the Council's nine-county district. The four primary activities of the Apalachee LEPC are hazardous materials planning, training, emergency exercises and public outreach.



Quarterly Meetings

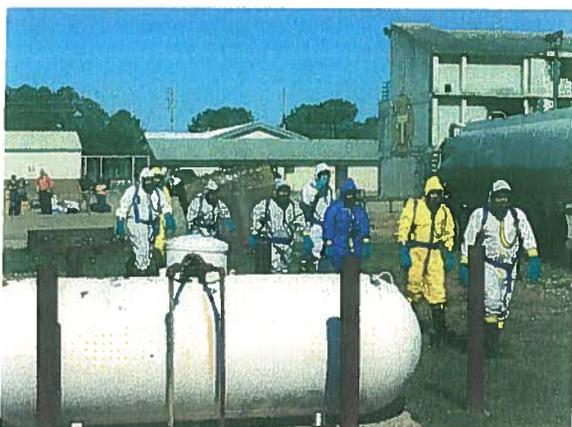
The most recent quarterly meeting of the Apalachee LEPC was held on April 26, 2016 at the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross. The next LEPC meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 26, 2016 at the same location. ARPC staff attended the quarterly meetings of the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) for Hazardous Materials that were held in St. Petersburg, Florida on April 6-7, 2016. The next quarterly SERC meetings will be held in St. Augustine, Florida on July 14-15, 2016.

Hazardous Materials Training

ARPC staff sponsored the following training since the last ARPC Board Meeting:

Date	Course	Location	Hours	Participants
3/28/16	160-hr HazMat Tech Online	TFD Training Division	N/A	9
5/3-5/16	24-hr OSHA HazMat Operations	TFD Training Division	24	17

ARPC staff worked through the Tallahassee Fire Department and the Florida Division of Emergency Management to purchase access to online training for a new hybrid 160-hr HazMat Technician Level training course that is being tested throughout the State. Staff also held a 24-hr Operations Level course for FL Dept. of Environmental Protection personnel as well as other regional first responders. An 8-hr HazMat Technician Level Refresher course has been scheduled for June 8th for FSU Environmental Health & Safety employees. All training opportunities are posted on the ARPC website at www.thearpc.com.



Planning Project – Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study

ARPC staff continues work on the 2015-16 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Planning (HMEP) project. Over the next six months, staff will complete a Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study that involves roadside surveys on US 90, US 19, US 319, US 231, and I-10. This highway placard survey is intended to provide information to first responders on which categories of hazardous materials are being transported throughout the Region. The survey will be complimented with data from local railways and should be completed in July/August. The last Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study was completed in 2009.

Biennial Exercise

Every other year, the LEPC is required to exercise the Apalachee LEPC Emergency Plan. This year's LEPC exercise has been combined with the upcoming North Florida RDSTF Specialty Team exercise which will be held on May 16, 2016 at the Florida State Capitol. Staff has worked to include a scenario that involves a hazardous materials release on the 6th floor of the Capitol Building.

North Florida Medical Reserve Corps

Staff continues to serve as the Coordinator for the North Florida Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) which includes an eight-county region in the Big Bend. The North Florida MRC will be participating with the Leon County Special Needs Shelter Exercise being held on June 7th. The North Florida MRC membership includes more than 50 licensed medical volunteers from around the Region. The next Orientation Session will be held on June 22, 2016.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 4

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM – Kwentin Eastberg

Introduction

The Transportation Planning Program at the ARPC continues to expand its outreach these past couple months. In addition to the TD program, ARPC staff is working alongside other programs within the Region, exploring new funding opportunities for the counties served and strengthening relationships with other organizations. Outlined below is a brief description of the activities in the Transportation Program since the last ARPC Board Meeting.

Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program

The last round of FY 15/16 quarterly meetings began during the first week of May. At the request of JTrans, the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Jackson County, ARPC staff coordinated an earlier meeting than what was previously scheduled in an attempt to transfer a portion of its grant funding from Trips to Equipment. The ARPC's efforts were worthwhile when the Local Coordinating Board (LCB) voted to approve the reallocation of funds to allow JTrans to apply to purchase a 2016 ADA compliant Dodge Grand Caravan. The Jackson County May 4th meeting also served as the final quarterly meeting of the year for the Jackson County Local TD Coordinating Board. The last quarterly meeting agendas include updating the Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan as well as reevaluating rates for trips among other items. The remaining TD Local Coordinating Board meetings will take place in accordance with the calendar below.

COUNTY	PLACE	DATES
Calhoun	Calhoun County Senior Citizens Center Conference Room 16859 NE Cayson Street, Blountstown	2:00 PM CT June 6, 2016
Franklin	Franklin County Courthouse Annex Courtroom 33 Market Street, Apalachicola	10:00 AM ET June 8, 2016
Gulf	Gulf County ARC Transportation Office 122 Water Plant Road, Port St. Joe	2:00 PM ET June 8, 2016
Jackson	JTrans Conference Room 3988 Old Cottondale Road, Marianna	11:00 AM CT May 4, 2016.
Liberty	Veterans Memorial Civic Center Room 13 - CR 12 South 10405 NW Theo Jacobs Way, Bristol	10:00 AM ET June 7, 2016

HMEP Planning Project Update

The Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) planning study continues to be a strong point of emphasis. Weekly trips are made to various areas throughout the Region to better collect information. To date ARPC staff has collected data from US 319 in Wakulla County, Hwy 231 in Cottondale, I-10 at the Sneads weigh station and also at the Lee weigh station, US 27 in Havana and US 90 in Gretna, with many more planned in the coming months.

The goal of this project is to achieve a better understanding of what kind of hazardous materials are being transported through the Region. Based on an analysis of the data, first responders will be able to tailor their training to align with the most probable release scenarios.

Grants and Other Opportunities

ARPC staff has been working on providing increased technical assistance to the nine ARPC Counties. Staff has been active and attending Liberty County Commission meetings, and as staff time allows, will expand that outreach to the other counties of the Region. The purpose of this increased presence is to obtain a better understanding of the needs of the County and to learn how the ARPC can better serve its member local governments.

ARPC staff also attended an economic development meeting with Career Source Chipola through Opportunity Florida and attended a subsequent Enterprise Florida Workshop following the meeting. This provided an excellent opportunity for ARPC staff to network and gain insight into the needs of the local governments of the Region and to potentially assist them in accessing appropriate funding opportunities as they arise.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 5

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING – Joe Crozier

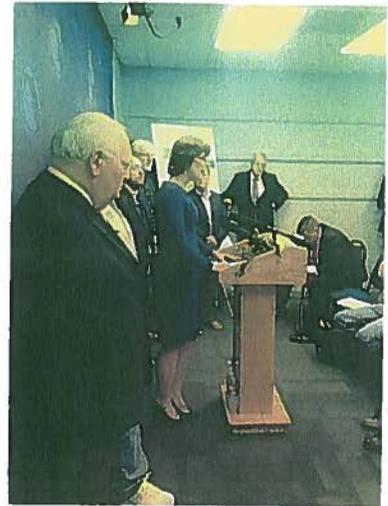
Apalachicola River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan

ARPC staff has nearly finalized the Scope of Work for the Apalachicola River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan with the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWMD). ARPC staff expects to receive final approval for the contract and Scope of Work as proposed at the June NFWMD Governing Board meeting. The project will take ARPC staff 18 months to complete. As part of Task Order No. 1, several stakeholder meetings will be scheduled in the summer/fall of 2016.

Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition (RCSC)

ARPC staff represented the Region and the Apalachicola River Caucus at the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Stakeholders (ACFS) Governing Board Annual Meeting held in Columbus, GA on May 11th and 12th. Joe Crozier serves as the Apalachicola River Caucus' Water Quality Representative on the ACFS Governing Board.

The ACFS, RCSC and ARPC staff were represented at the April 12, 2016 Press Conference held in Tallahassee which focused on current issues in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) Basin. The press conference was called to announce the designation of the ACF Basin as the most endangered river in the US by the American Rivers Conservation Group. US Rep. Gwen Graham and FL Sen. Bill Montford spoke at the press conference.



ARPC staff on behalf of the RCSC is assisting in the organization of a 2017 Apalachicola River & Bay National Conference to be held in Tallahassee in response to the recent designation of the ACF by American Rivers. Former Governor Bob Graham has tentatively agreed to be the keynote speaker and honorary Chair of the 2017 Conference. On the following pages are copies of articles outlining detailed information about the designation and the press conference.

Chattahoochee to Bristol Trail



ARPC has submitted an application to the FL Dept. of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) for a Technical Assistance grant to fund a feasibility study of the proposed Chattahoochee to Bristol Trail (C2B). As part of the development of the application, ARPC staff has met with The Nature Conservancy, Jackson County Planning and Parks staff, City of Bristol representatives,

and the Northwest Florida Water Management District, among others.

Small Quantity Generator (SQG) Program

The Small Quantity Generator program for 2016 is nearly complete. All Small Quantity Generators visits have been performed. ARPC staff is now compiling the final summary reports to be distributed to ARPC counties. ARPC staff attended the annual North American Hazardous Materials Management Association conference in May. The conference serves as a means to continue expanding the relationship between the ARPC and other State and County agencies, while receiving further training on the handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. ARPC staff provides this service to the Region through a grant from the FDEP. Before ARPC staff secured the FDEP-SQG grant, the funding for the State mandated program had to be paid out of County Local Government Revenue funds. 2016 represents the second year of a five-year grant to the ARPC from FDEP.

Water Wars Threaten America's Most Endangered Rivers



The Apalachicola River is part of a drainage basin in the Southeast that is taxed by a growing population and conflict between states.

Photograph by Carlton Ward, National Geographic Creative
By **Brian Clark Howard**

PUBLISHED APRIL 12, 2016

What do two rivers in the Southeast and California have in common? Both are threatened by battles over their water.

The Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Basin in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida tops a new list as the most endangered river in the U.S. this year, according to an annual report from the Washington, D.C.-based conservation group American Rivers. Second most endangered is the San Joaquin River in northern and central California.

"Both rivers suffer from increasing conflict among stakeholders who depend on their water," including cities, farmers, and wildlife, says Chris Williams, a senior vice president at American Rivers. "And these issues are exacerbated by population growth and climate change." Other rivers high on the list include the Susquehanna in Maryland and Pennsylvania, the Smith in Montana, and the Green-Duwamish in Washington.

The annual list, which dates back to 1984, is based on three criteria: A river must be under serious threat, of regional or national significance, and at a turning point in a decision related to conservation. Last year, the Colorado River was number one, and since then two of its three biggest threats have been withdrawn: a controversial development and a plan for a tram. (A uranium mine proposal remains a threat.)

Past annual lists also helped raise awareness about the Hoback River in Montana, where oil and gas leases were defeated, and the Elwha River in Washington, where a series of dams was removed to restore the ecosystem.

Water conflicts are particularly timely now, notes Williams, given several imminent regulatory and court decisions.

"It is time to move away from the old-fashioned model of fighting over water, through grabs and lawsuits, and toward a cooperative model in which stakeholders sit down together and hammer out agreements, so everybody can get what they need," Williams says.

He points to recent successes in negotiating water-sharing agreements on the Colorado and Yakima Rivers. (Learn more about restoration work in the Colorado Basin.)

Water Wars

In the Southeast, a pending case in the U.S. Supreme Court may decide how water from the Apalachicola system is allocated, after a fight between Florida and Georgia. At the same time, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is updating its management strategy for the basin.

But American Rivers says federal action is unlikely to resolve the issues for the region, which faces water shortages and rising population. For a long-term solution, communities should come together to develop a plan they can all live with. In general, more water needs to flow into the river's lower basin and out to Apalachicola Bay because the estuary has been starved of water and nutrients in recent years, harming fisheries and wildlife, the group says.

An orchard dries out near Clovis, California, thanks to drought and low flow in the San Joaquin River. Can the river be saved in the face of such high demand?

In California, the state is expected to make some tough decisions on allocating San Joaquin water soon.

New York's St. Lawrence River and surrounding wetlands could also be revitalized if a pending plan to allow certain releases of water through a dam is approved, Williams notes. Yet that plan has languished for years. Montana's Smith River is threatened by a proposal for a copper mine.

The Big Picture

Overall, the condition of U.S. Rivers remains mixed, American Rivers says. Water quality has improved dramatically in many places in the 40 years since the Clean Water Act was enacted. And some obsolete dams have come down, opening up more river miles to fish.

"That being said, we still have a lot of work to do," Williams says. "Wetlands are still disappearing, a large percentage of rivers are still not fishable and swimmable, creeks are getting plugged from mountaintop removal mining ... We have come a long way in 40 years but we still have a long way to go."

Here's the complete list of America's Most Endangered Rivers of 2016, and their threats, as determined by American Rivers:

1. Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin

Alabama, Florida, Georgia

Threat: Outdated water management

2. San Joaquin River

California

Threat: Outdated water management

3. Susquehanna River

Pennsylvania, Maryland

Threat: Harmful dam operations

4. Smith River

Montana

Threat: Mining

5. Green-Duwamish River

Washington

Threat: Outdated dam and floodplain management, pollution

In the St. Lawrence River, seaweed grows over a bass spawning bed. Conservationists hope more water can be returned to the river.

6. Pee Dee River

North Carolina

Threat: Harmful dam operations

7. Russell Fork River

Kentucky, Virginia

Threat: Mountaintop removal mining

8. Merrimack River

Massachusetts, New Hampshire

Threat: Polluted runoff

9. St. Lawrence River

New York (and Canada)

Threat: Harmful dam operations

10. Pascagoula River

Mississippi, Alabama

Threat: New dams

ENVIRONMENTALISTS RATCHET UP PRESSURE ON 'ENDANGERED' RIVER SYSTEM

By MARGIE MENZEL
THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

THE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE, April 12, 2016.....After decades of legal battles between Florida, Georgia and Alabama over a river system they share, an environmental group on Tuesday warned that the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Basin is "at the breaking point."

American Rivers --- which releases a yearly list of the country's 10 most-endangered rivers --- named the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint system its number one for 2016.

The group said "outdated water management and spiraling demand" are the basis for the ranking and called on the governors of the three states to act "swiftly" to form a water-sharing agreement that protects the rivers. It also called for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to overhaul an operating plan for the river system.

"There is enough water in this basin, the science shows it very clearly, for everybody to get what they need and to share a little bit of pain during the drought," said Flint Riverkeeper Gordon Rogers, who is based in Albany, Ga. "This is crazy that we are at this particular crossroads."

The call for tri-state collaboration comes as a special master appointed by the U.S. Supreme Court is pushing Florida and Georgia to settle a lawsuit over the river system. Florida wants to cap Georgia's water use and spur more freshwater flows downstream to the Apalachicola River and Apalachicola Bay in the Panhandle.

Meanwhile, the Corps of Engineers, which runs the dams and reservoirs of the river system, is updating its operations manual for the first time since 1958 --- and an early draft would require lower freshwater flows to the Apalachicola than the current manual. The Corps of Engineers has relied on a 2011 ruling from a federal appeals court that said Georgia has a legal right to water from Lake Lanier, at the top of the system near Atlanta.

Apalachicola Riverkeeper Dan Tonsmeire said the "most endangered river" ranking underscores the fact that the Supreme Court and the Corps of Engineers will make their final decisions within the year.

"Those two final decisions are going to cast the future for the Apalachicola," he said. "So this is our best --- and maybe our last --- chance to really turn around the management in the basin that will recover the Apalachicola ecosystem."

The so-called "water wars" over the system have been going on since 1990. As metro Atlanta's need

for drinking water has exploded, the Apalachicola Bay --- at the south end of the river system --- has suffered a series of droughts and low freshwater flows, decimating the oyster industry that has long been crucial to Franklin County's economy. The bay was declared a federal fishery disaster in 2012, and many oystermen had to leave the area to find work.

"We can't go through another drought like that," said Shannon Hartsfield, president of the Franklin County Seafood Workers Association.

Despite years of court rulings that favored Georgia, Florida sued its northern neighbor in the Supreme Court in 2013.

Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal created an "office for interagency coordination and management of water resources" and put Jud Turner, also the director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, in charge of it.

Turner brushed off Tuesday's most-endangered designation, along with the "spiraling demand" identified by American Rivers.

"While the ACF Basin provides water for municipal and industrial water supply, threatened and endangered species, hydropower generation, agricultural irrigation and critical aquatic species and floodplain habitats, such competing needs do not make it a 'most endangered' waterway," he said in a statement.

Turner also said Georgia "is actively implementing programs and the Corps has been operating federal dams on the Chattahoochee arm to help meet most, if not all, of these needs."

Deal visited Gov. Rick Scott in June and met with Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley in March 2015, but Georgia has strongly opposed efforts by the other two states to alter the management of the system through federal legislation.

Last year, for instance, U.S. Rep. Gwen Graham, D-Fla., whose district includes the Apalachicola River and Apalachicola Bay, filed a bill that would require the Corps of Engineers to consider freshwater flows to the basin as part of the operating plan. Although it drew bipartisan support from the Florida delegation, the bill has languished.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court's special master, Ralph Lancaster, warned the warring states that if they fail to come to terms, they won't like his.

Apalachicola River named most endangered in nation



An Apalachicola River bluff in the Apalachicola Bluffs & Ravines Preserve west of Tallahassee.

A vast river basin that includes Florida's biggest river, the Apalachicola, has been named by an environmental group as the most endangered in the nation because of withdrawals and disruptions.

A report released today by American Rivers said the Apalachicola system is at a "breaking point" because of obsolete management and competition for waters that flow through Georgia, Alabama and Florida.

The group has published endangered-rivers reports since 1984, naming St. Johns, Suwannee, Peace and others in Florida, but never before has a state river topped the annual lists.

"American Rivers is calling on the governors of Alabama, Florida and Georgia to swiftly act to form a water-sharing agreement," the group said.

The Apalachicola River forms where the tributaries of the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers join at the Florida-Georgia line. The river then flows south more than 100 miles to oyster-rich Apalachicola Bay.



Conflict between the three states over the three-river basin has persisted since the late 1980s, with Florida raising alarms over declines in the bay.

The bay "is dependent upon a sustained flow of fresh water from the river mixing with the salt waters of the Gulf of Mexico," said Bob Graham, ex-U.S. senator and state governor.

"Mismanagement of the Apalachicola-Flint-Chattahoochee Basin has led to the collapse."

Dan Tonsmeire, head of Apalachicola Riverkeeper, said critical decisions are expected this year from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a lawsuit at the U.S. Supreme Court.

"If those decisions can be made in a way that sustains the Apalachicola, we have a chance," Tonsmeire said. "If not, I think the Apalachicola will lose ecological functioning, and we will be doing what they are doing in the Everglades, saving parts and pieces."

Kevin Spear - Orlando Sentinel

By: WCTV Eyewitness News

April 12, 2016

APALACHICOLA, Fla. -- A group has named the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin in Alabama, Florida and Georgia as the most endangered the country.

According to American Rivers, the river is one of several at a crossroads. Key decisions made in the near future could control the river's fate, the group says.

The rivers were chosen based on the criteria of the magnitude of the threat, a critical decision point in the coming year and the significance of the river to people and nature.

The group claims that outdated water management decisions and spiraling demand have put the basin at a breaking point.

Senator Bob Graham says that the river plays a key role in the region.

"The Apalachicola River may be the most important river in the United States that most Americans are not familiar with," Graham said. "The Apalachicola played a significant role in the history of the south and nourishes the Apalachicola Bay, one of the world's most productive estuaries."

Graham also says that past mistakes could have helped avoid the problem.

"In recent years, this mismanagement of the Apalachicola-Flint-Chattahoochee Basin has led to the collapse of this vital environmental and economic resource," Graham says.

U.S. Senator Bill Nelson's concerns echo Graham's.

"If sufficient freshwater flows aren't restored soon, the once-thriving Apalachicola Bay could be lost forever," Senator Nelson says.

The group says that the rivers in the basin are so heavily exploited that some are at risk of drought even in normal years. It also says that Georgia's water use has skyrocketed and the Army Corps of Engineers is releasing less fresh water downstream.

Some of the Apalachicola's streams and sloughs run dry for months at a time.

Shannon Hartsfield, president of the Franklin County Seafood Workers Association says that the next drought could be the end of the Apalachicola Bay.

"The ecological needs of Apalachicola Bay should be on an equal footing with the other competing water users further north. We are hopeful that the State of Georgia will do their part to help us too. If we don't redirect the Corps of Engineers on this, we're done for," Hartsfield says.

American Rivers and their partner organizations are asking the governors of Alabama, Florida and Georgia to form a water-sharing agreement that protects the rivers.

Apalachicola Riverkeeper Dan Tonsmeire is hopeful that the publicity can serve as a wake-up call.

"We have a chance to turn this around," Tonsmeire says. "If we act together, we can recover the ecological functions of the Apalachicola without compromising Georgia's water supply."

Flint River Basin Most Endangered

By Kevin Dowdy | April 12, 2016 SOWEGALive.com

Washington — American Rivers today announced its annual list of *America's Most Endangered Rivers*®, naming the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin in Alabama, Florida and Georgia the Most Endangered in the country. Outdated water management and rising demand have put the basin at a breaking point.

The water conflict that has gripped the region for almost three decades has come to a head with Florida's U.S. Supreme Court suit against Georgia and the latest attempt by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to update its protocols of managing the basin.

American Rivers is calling on the governors of Alabama, Florida and Georgia to swiftly act to form a water-sharing agreement that protects the rivers, and on the USACE to significantly improve water management to sustain river health.

"It's time to move from water conflict to a new era of cooperation," said Ben Emanuel of American Rivers. "This basin is ground zero for water supply challenges, but it is also fertile ground for new and sustainable water supply solutions. This Most Endangered River listing is a call to action for all of us to come together to safeguard reliable clean water supplies for today's communities and future generations."

More than four million people, including 70 percent of metro Atlanta, rely on the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers for drinking water.

Comprising much of West and South Georgia, the Flint flows over 340 miles to the Georgia and Florida border where it mingles with the Chattahoochee River at Lake Seminole to form the Apalachicola River. The Flint River and associated aquifers provide water for drinking, swimming, fishing, commercial, industrial and agricultural pursuits for in excess of one-million people in the 8,460 square-mile watershed.

The rivers in the basin are so heavily exploited that some run at drought flows even in normal water years. In droughts, some tributary streams are completely dry and many of the Apalachicola's bottomland sidestreams and sloughs run dry for months at a time. Apalachicola Bay is receiving little more than life support under existing water management schemes affecting fisheries far out into the Gulf of Mexico. Without reforms, the bay is headed for irreversible ecological collapse.

Throughout the Flint, flows and aquifer dynamics have been profoundly altered. In the upper Flint, low flow conditions are 60 -70% less than historic levels. In Ichawaynochaway Creek, a lower-Flint tributary equal in size to the upper Flint, low flow conditions are routinely 80-100% lower than historic levels. Spring Creek, another major lower-Flint tributary, has not reached the Flint in the last 11 out of 15 years during seasonal lows. The flows of two additional major tributaries of the lower Flint have been affected as well. Resulting mainstream flows in the

lower Flint are 40 – 50% less during droughts, and median flows of the upper Flint are *30% less throughout the hydrograph, all year long*. In the Dougherty Plain of the lower Flint, aquifer levels have been severely destabilized a new dynamic that has introduced uncertainty to the region, and directly contributed to the surface flow issues.

The state of GA plays a major role in managing water use in the basin, and the US Army Corps of Engineers plays an important role in managing flows on the Chattahoochee side of the system. A better coordinated approach to water management in the ACF is not only possible, but has already been detailed in a groundbreaking document, a water sharing plan published by ACF Stakeholders, Inc. This 56-member organization of citizens throughout the watershed, representing every conceivable economic sector, plus representatives of local governments, spent over 5 years researching and negotiating a sustainable water management plan which plainly demonstrates the ways and means of stabilizing water management in the ACF. The Governors and the Corps Do not have to invent or reinvent a wheel. This particular wheel is ready to roll, and can be implemented before the next drought hits.

“The regions’ recent rains won’t solve the problem of chronic mismanagement and excessive water use,” said Emanuel.

“By applying the best available science and with stakeholder involvement, we can stop the recurring ecological and economic damage to the Apalachicola River, floodplain and Bay and the communities that are sustained by them. We can reverse this disastrous trend in the ACF system and recover the ecological functions of the Apalachicola without compromising Georgia’s water supply, if we act together, now,” said Dan Tonsmeire of Apalachicola Riverkeeper.

“While the metro Atlanta region has made significant strides in water conservation, we are far from reaching our true conservation potential. All river users must pursue aggressive water conservation measures to ensure that we are using these precious water resources as wisely as possible,” said Jason Ulseth of Chattahoochee Riverkeeper.

“After experiencing the decline of so many amazing river systems like those of the Chesapeake Bay, Everglades and Colorado River, we have to be smart enough not to repeat the same mistakes. Litigation and political campaigning are the least effective ways to manage water so that it is sustainable for future generations,” said Gordon Rogers of Flint Riverkeeper. “The three states and the Army Corps must use the best available science and stakeholder involvement to resolve this issue. The citizens of the ACF basin have already provided solutions for this regional problem. The Army Corps, the Governors and Congress should take a signal from the citizens, and work together to solve the problem.”

“The naming of the ACF Basin to this list from American Rivers further emphasizes the critical need for Alabama to complete the development of a sustainable Alabama Water Plan,” said Mitch Reid, program director for Alabama Rivers Alliance. “Further, we must truly engage our neighbors to protect our shared water resources.”

The annual America's Most Endangered Rivers® report is a list of rivers at a crossroads, where key decisions in the coming months will determine the rivers' fates. Rivers are chosen for the list based on the following criteria: 1) The magnitude of the threat, 2) A critical decision-point in the coming year and 3) The significance of the river to people and nature.

Over the years, the report has helped spur many successes including the removal of outdated dams, the protection of rivers with Wild and Scenic designations and the prevention of harmful development and pollution.



Flint River in Bainbridge

Basin including Chattahoochee River most endangered in country, group says

From the Times of Gainesville

GAINESVILLE, GA — Outdated water management and rising demand has placed the Chattahoochee-Apalachicola-Flint River Basin in Georgia, Florida and Alabama, of which Lake Lanier is an integral part, at the top of the country's most endangered list, according to the Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group American Rivers.

In a report released today titled "America's Most Endangered Rivers," the group urges the three states to complete a water-sharing agreement as the best means to improve management of the critical resource.

"The water conflict that has gripped the region for almost three decades has come to a head with Florida's U.S. Supreme Court suit against Georgia and the latest attempt by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to update its protocols of managing the basin," the report states.

More than 4 million people, including 70 percent of metro Atlanta, receive their drinking water from the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers.

But demand from a growing population poses a long-term threat to the health of river ecosystems and the availability of water in times of drought, according to advocates.

"While the metro Atlanta region has made significant strides in water conservation, we are still a long way from reaching our true conservation potential," said Jason Ulseth, the lead river protection advocate and spokesman for the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper.

"All river users must pursue aggressive water-saving measures to further limit the waste of these precious water resources as wisely as possible."

Georgia and Florida officials have recently joined mediation sessions to achieve a potential settlement, and another meeting is scheduled for later this month.

Florida has charged that Georgia's "overconsumption" of water in the basin has created an economic hardship for the Sunshine State, particularly on the oyster industry in Apalachicola Bay. Georgia has denied the allegations.

The State Environmental Protection Division refuted the report in a statement to The Times, arguing that plans were in place to improve management of the entire river system.

"While the ACF Basin provides water for municipal and industrial water supply, threatened and endangered species, hydropower generation, agricultural irrigation and critical aquatic species and floodplain habitats, such competing needs do not make it a 'most endangered' waterway," said Jud Turner, director of the Georgia EPD.

“Georgia is actively implementing programs, and the Corps has been operating federal dams on the Chattahoochee arm to help meet most, if not all, of these needs. Additional improvement in operations of these dams can be made to better meet this range of water needs.”

The EPD announced in late January that Georgia no longer required the proposed Glades Reservoir in northern Hall County to meet the state’s water supply demands through 2050. Instead, the state is only considering Glades as additional storage to augment downstream flows on the Chattahoochee River in times of drought.

This shift could be part of a “water wars” settlement.

“It may not feel like this is a river basin in trouble right now given all the recent rain,” Ulseth said. “However, the next severe drought is a certainty, and we must start making significant strides in water sharing and management now to prevent catastrophe in the future.”



AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 6

CORRESPONDENCE / ITEMS OF INTEREST

1. Article: Court Sets Arguments in Gretna Slots Case for June 7th
2. Article: New ammunitions manufacturing facility to locate in Greensboro.
3. Article: 5th Annual Rural Summit, announced at the last ARPC meeting.
4. Newsletter: FL Regional Councils Association (FRCA) April 2016

COURT SETS ARGUMENTS IN GREтна SLOTS CASE

The Florida Supreme Court will hear arguments June 7 in a case involving a Gadsden County horse track that could have widespread implications for pari-mutuels throughout the state. The court will decide whether Gretna Racing, a tiny horse track with a card room west of Tallahassee, should be allowed to have slot machines without the express permission of the Legislature. The court accepted jurisdiction in the case after a split appellate court ruled in October that the track cannot have slot machines without the authorization of the Legislature, even though voters in the county approved slots in a referendum. The 1st District Court of Appeal sided with Attorney General Pam Bondi and Gov. Rick Scott's administration and also asked the Supreme Court to weigh in on the issue of whether pari-mutuels can have slot machines if local voters approve, or if the games require the express say-so of the Legislature. A ruling in the Gretna case could affect five other counties --- Brevard, Hamilton, Lee, Palm Beach and Washington --- where voters have also approved referendums authorizing slots at local pari-mutuels. The Gretna case hinges on a semantic analysis of a 2009 law establishing eligibility for slot machines at pari-mutuels. The 2009 law, which went into effect the following year, was an expansion of a 2004 voter-approved constitutional amendment that authorized slot machines at seven existing horse and dog tracks and jai-alai frontons in Broward and Miami-Dade counties. The 2009 change allowed a Hialeah track, which wasn't operating at the time the amendment was approved, to also operate the lucrative slots. The law in question consists of three clauses, including one that deals with counties outside of Broward and Miami-Dade. State regulators denied the Gretna track a slots license, arguing the Department of Business and Professional Regulation was "not authorized to issue a slot machine license to a pari-mutuel facility in a county which ... holds a countywide referendum to approve such machines, absent a statutory or constitutional provision enacted after July 1, 2010, authorizing such a referendum."

THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2016

Ammunition manufacturer moves to Gadsden County



CEO John Coffman speaks during Tuesday's ceremony.

By Byron Spires,
Herald Editor

Armada Ammunition, a small arms manufacturing facility, announced their opening Tuesday morning at their new facility in Greensboro.

This has been an 18-month process to find a location for Armada here in Gadsden County, CEO of Armada Ammunition John Coffman said at the press conference.

Coffman explained that the company will be manufacturing pistol and rifle ammunition for law enforcement and the U.S. military for training purposes. The idea to start their own manufacturing of ammunition, he said, grew from the national shortage of available ammunition in 2014.



It would be the collaboration of Tallahassee Community College's Florida Public Safety Institute (FPSI) and the Gadsden County Development Council (GCDC) that would start the ball rolling for Armada to locate in Gadsden County. FPSI and Armada have created a strategic partnership for training and testing.

E.E. Eunice, director of FPSI, said he was looking forward to the partnership with Armada.

Over the past 18 months, Coffman stated, his company looked at over 30 different potential locations before settling on the former 8,000-square-foot agriculture supply building located just west of Interstate 10 on State Road 12.

Greensboro has annexed up to the west side of I-10 which includes the property now owned by Armada.

Greensboro Town Manager Harold Emrich stated that he was proud to see the partnership with Gadsden County and GCDC has resulted in advanced manufacturing jobs for the county.

County Commissioner Gene Morgan, who represents Greensboro, said this day was a result of all of the stakeholders coming together to bring jobs to the county.

"We thank you for choosing Greensboro," Greensboro Town Council Member Wilford Kennedy stated.

GCDC Chairman Lee Garner said that two-and-a-half years ago the county planted the seed of economic development and Armada was the result of that effort.

County Commission Chairperson Brenda Holt stated that Gadsden County has a workforce and this is the place to bring your business.

Gretna City Manager Antonio Jefferson, who will be the next Opportunity Florida chairman, pledged his support to help Armada grow.

Plans are to hire 6-8 employees to start, with a build-out of up to 100 employees within three years, Coffman said.

Charleston's church tragedy pastor visits Gadsden

By Sandi Beare,
Herald Correspondent

One of the first events held at the Gadsden County Sheriff's Department's 5th Annual Rural County Summit last week was a collaboration between church and law enforcement to forge a way forward after several race-related community difficulties throughout the nation.

A faith-based evening of song, sorrow and celebration saw the Florida Annual Conference of the 11th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church fill East Gadsden High School's gymnasium, which holds up to 1,200 people. Bishop Adam Richardson introduced the evening ceremony as an endeavor to address race relations in a comprehensive way; 'spiritual, it leans upon values of faith.

"It is the love motif in action; it is forging a cross-cultural relationship based on mutual respect. It was prompted by the amazing depth-of-spirit found among family members who lost loved ones in the senseless massacre in Charleston on June 17, 2015 at Mother Emanuel Church," said Bishop Richardson.

Reverend Betty Clark, pastor of Mother Emanuel Church since the tragedy, brought about 30 of her community's citizens and church members with her. They made a passionate appearance. Mother Emanuel



Sheriff Morris Young and Rev. Betty Clark during last week's church service at EGHS. Photo by Chadwick Carlisle

is the oldest AME Church in the Deep South, built in 1860. Nine candles were lit in remembrance of the nine church members who died by a white assassin's hand. One introducer said, "The evil one wanted a race war; instead the community came together in love and help - black and white together. Change comes and reverberates through the nation."

Reverend Clark said she grew up in a time when discipline was in the household; chores you did helped move along your work ethics; "Our (parents) didn't pay us, they helped make us model citizens. We're trying to get people into churches to help their community. God calls us to live a life of faith. We must communicate

what God has done for us. God will be glorified and the devil will be horrified! When life seems dark, that's when we need God the most."

The nearly four-hour service crossed religious, age, race, gender and wealth-lines. It was held on the first day of the 5th Annual Rural County Summit, created and continuously hosted by the Gadsden County Sheriff Department and called 'Building Mutual Understanding and Fostering Trust Between Law En-

forcement and the Community They Serve.'

Sheriff Morris Young said when we see all the traumatic things going on in the world today, we ask why? "At some point we have to come together," he said as he introduced and thanked his staff, family and friends. He said the summit had attracted participants from 86 agencies across the country.



FORWARD

A quarterly update from Florida's Regional Planning Councils

April 2016 - RPC News from Around the State

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Completes Regional Waterways Plan

Northeast Florida Regional Council Hosts 10th Annual Regional Leadership Academy

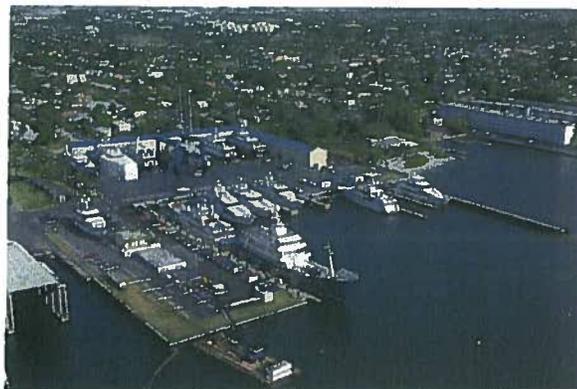
North Central Florida Regional Planning Council Partners on High Tech Economic Impact Analysis

Northeast Florida Regional Council Announces R3 Challenge

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Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Completes Regional Waterways Plan for St. Lucie and Martin Counties

Marine Industries Career Training

The TCRPC completed a Regional Waterways Plan for Martin and St. Lucie Counties, which involved an evaluation of economic opportunities provided by the Counties' nearly 140 miles of navigable waterways. A key finding focused on the marine industry sub-sector and its workforce development needs.

The plan resulted in new high school/post-secondary career tracks to expand the local industry workforce. The Council, local school districts, and the Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast collaborated to identify appropriate industry certifications, internship opportunities with marine businesses and in-school mentors, and participated in career expos to recruit career track students. For more information please contact Ms. Kim DeLaney at TCRPC (772) 221-4060 or kdelaney@tcrpc.org.

Northeast Florida Regional Council Hosts Regional Leadership Academy

The NEFRC continued a ten-year program by welcoming the Class of 2016 to its Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy. The 14 candidates represent a variety of fields including law enforcement, aviation, and education. Each month, the class explored one county in the region, examining regional issues such as transportation, public safety, natural and cultural resources, food, sustainability, and education. Since 2006, the Regional Leadership Academy has produced more than 250 regionalists and lifetime members of the Regional Community Institute. For more information please contact Brian Teeple at NEFRC (904) 279-0880 or bteeple@nefrc.org



North Central Florida Regional Planning Council Partners with Gainesville Area Council for Economic Outreach

High Tech Industry Economic Impact

The NCFRPC partnered with the Gainesville Area Council for Economic Outreach to analyze the economic impact of the high tech industry in the Gainesville area. Through Innovation Gainesville, a communitywide initiative of the Gainesville Area Council for Economic Outreach, the University of Florida, Santa Fe College, Alachua County and the City of Gainesville, the economy of the area is being transformed by leveraging the applied research conducted at the University and workforce training provided by the College.



The analysis evaluated a projected five-year impact of over 1,200 jobs created by 12 high tech firms that either started, relocated or expanded within Alachua County. The analysis indicated that the creation of these direct jobs will result in over 2,000 estimated direct jobs. In addition, the economic impact of the creation of these jobs is estimated to generate an increase of over \$200 million in gross county product. Real disposable personal income is estimated to increase by over \$70 million. For more information please contact Scott Koons at NCFRPC (352) 955-2200 or koons@ncfrpc.org.

Regional Resiliency Rebound Challenge: An Ideas and Design Competition for Northeast Florida



The NEFRC has issued an ideas and design challenge called Regional Resiliency Rebuild (R3). After Superstorm Sandy, a Rebuilding Task Force launched REBUILD BY DESIGN, a regional design competition to promote resilience for the Sandy-affected region. Our R3 Challenge has similar objectives except the idea is to think about how Northeast Florida could thrive after a disaster, before disaster strikes.

1. Contribute to a better understanding of the region's vulnerabilities, strengths, and Interdependencies through dialogue and visioning;
2. Generate design proposals that focus on regionally applicable solutions, increase resilience, develop and promote innovation, and integrate local efforts in the region;
3. Build capacity of local communities and federal agencies while promoting an integrated regional approach;
4. Connect to local efforts and strengthen the collaboration within governments and between government, business, academic, non-profit, and other organizations;
5. Ignite innovation, outside-the-box perspectives, and address new trends; and
6. Envision world-class projects with regional impact (either large scale or replicable across the region).

This is largely where the similarities end. Unlike its predecessor, the R3 Challenge seeks to encourage consideration of regional vulnerabilities and to inspire creative ideas BEFORE the disaster happens. We provided a map so participants will know the areas that have been subject to a disaster. We asked the participants to imagine that the built and natural environments in these areas have been severely impacted by a storm, and that most buildings and infrastructure in these areas are no longer viable. The map helps us imagine a disaster before it happens, and this can make us better positioned to rebuild what is appropriate where it is appropriate, to rethink and to regroup after a disaster. Submissions are due on May 2, 2016. For more information go to www.nefrc.org and follow the P2R2 link to the R3 challenge.

About the Florida Regional Councils Association



Created by the Regional Planning Councils in 1976, FRCA is the only association in the state that represents all 10 RPCs in Florida. FRCA is a results-oriented organization dedicated to furthering the interests of regional planning councils and their member local governments, especially with respect to economic development, transportation, emergency preparedness, and local technical assistance initiatives. During the past 10 years FRCA, through its RPCs, have:

- originated \$74.9 million in federal investments in 39 different economic development projects in Florida, creating 5,623 jobs, retaining 10,310 jobs and leveraging more than \$606 million in capital investment.
- loaned \$41.9 million through their small business revolving loan funds which resulted in the creation and retention of 3,760 jobs.

- completed 560 RPC economic impact analyses in support of private business entrepreneurs and local economic development organizations, to help them compete nationally and globally for investment and skilled jobs.
- trained 38,573 first responders/emergency management personnel.
- validated 12,673 projects under the Federal Consistency Review Program ensuring access to billions of dollars of federal infrastructure and economic investment dollars.

Recent FRCA Awards

2014-2015 Florida National Association of Development Organizations Innovation Awards

Central Florida RPC
Heartland 2060

Central Florida RPC, Southwest Florida RPC & Tampa Bay RPC
Florida Local/Regional Broadband Planning Project

North Central Florida RPC
Incorporating Safety into Transportation Planning

Northwest Florida RPC
Regional Action Plan for Sea Level Rise

Apalachee RPC
Wakulla Environmental Institute

2015 National Association of Regional Councils Major Metro Award

Tampa Bay RPC, Central Florida RPC & Southwest Florida RPC
Florida/Local/Regional Broadband Planning Project

2015 FPZA Outstanding Redevelopment Plan Award

Central Florida RPC
Bartow Community Redevelopment Plan

2015 Congress for the New Urbanism Charter Award

Treasure Coast RPC
Seven50: Southeast Florida Regional Partnership Plan

Calendars

2016 FRCA Partners Meetings Schedule

FRCA hosts seven Partners Meetings each

43 July 1st

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
	9:00 am-	Hyatt Regency,

year, listed in the table are the upcoming Partners Meetings. To view the complete meeting schedule click on the link [Calendar 2016](#).

	12:00 pm	Orlando
August 16th	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Diplomat, Hollywood
Sept 30th	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Hyatt Regency, Orlando

Annual Meetings and Events Calendar

FRCA is pleased to share a calendar of national and state meetings and conferences of interest to our members, partners and affiliates. Click on the [link](#) to view the 2016 Calendar.

FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

Partnerships for the Future

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