

# Apalachee Regional Planning Council

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday – November 17, 2016

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



*295<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting*

ARPC OFFICE – Conservation Centre Conference Room  
2507 Callaway Road, Suite 200  
Tallahassee, Florida  
[www.thearpc.com](http://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**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

RANDY MERRITT, CHAIRMAN (WAKULLA) - JOHN JONES, PAST CHAIRMAN (JEFFERSON)  
STEVE CUTSHAW, VICE-CHAIRMAN (LIBERTY) - JANE SAULS, SECRETARY/TREASURER (LEON)  
FRCA POLICY BOARD MEMBERS: JANE SAULS, WOODY STEWART AND LISA MILLER

**FULL COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
2507 Callaway Road – Tallahassee, Florida**

**THURSDAY – NOVEMBER 17, 2016  
10:30 AM Eastern Time / 9:30 AM Central Time**

**DRAFT AGENDA**

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions
2. \*Approval of Agenda
3. \*Approval of Minutes – September 15, 2016 Regular Board Meeting
4. Opportunity Florida Presentation – Richard Williams, Executive Director
5. Executive Director’s Report – Chris Rietow
  - A. \*Financial Report
  - B. Staff Program Reports
    1. Economic Development Planning
    2. Emergency Planning
    3. Revolving Loan Fund
    4. \*Transportation Planning
    5. Environmental Planning
    6. Correspondence / Items of Interest
  - C. New ARPC Personnel
  - D. Biannual Officer Elections Update
6. Board Member Reports / Local & Regional Issues Discussion
7. Ex-Officio Member Updates
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment – *(Buffet Lunch will be served immediately following the meeting)*

***\*Items Requiring Board Action***

**APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
**Wakulla Springs Lodge**  
**550 Wakulla Park Drive – Wakulla Springs, FL**

**MINUTES – September 15, 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	Don Stephens	Governor's Appointee
Franklin County	Brenda Ash	Apalachicola City Commissioner
Gadsden County	Henry Grant	Governor's Appointee
Jefferson County	Stephen Walker	Jefferson County Commissioner
	John Jones	Monticello City Councilman
Leon County	Nancy Miller	Tallahassee City Commissioner
	Lisa Miller	Governor's Appointee
Wakulla County	Randy Merritt	Wakulla County Commissioner
	Ed Brimner	Governor's Appointee

**Ex-Officio Members in Attendance**

Christina Coger	Northwest FL Water Management District
Virgie Bowen	FL Dept. of Transportation (FDOT)
Charles Harp	FL Dept. of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

**ARPC Staff in Attendance**

Chris Rietow	Executive Director
Bruce Ballister	Senior Planner/ Economic Development
Kwentin Eastberg	Transportation Planner / TD Coordinator
Gina Mendicino	Apalachee LEPC Coordinator
Janice Watson	Finance Director/ Loan Coordinator

**Others in Attendance**

Mary Louise Hester – Sen. Bill Nelson's Office	Kevin Vaughn – Wakulla Co. EDC
Kent Watson – Rep. Gwen Graham's Office	Bob Ballard – Wakulla Environmental Inst.
Tori Wilson – FL Dept. of Transportation	Cherie Bryant – Tally/Leon Planning Dept.
Wilanne Daniels – Jackson Co. Planning Dept.	Roy Baker – Opportunity Florida
Kim Cole-Sweazy – Jackson Co. Planning Dept.	

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

## **Item 2: Approval of the Agenda**

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

## **Item 3: Approval of the Minutes**

A motion was made by Ed Brimner to approve the Minutes of the July 21, 2016 ARPC Full Council Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Lisa Miller. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

## **Item 4: Wakulla County Welcome and Overview**

Kevin Vaughn, Director of the Wakulla County Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the ARPC Board to Wakulla County. He encouraged everyone to explore the grounds of Wakulla Springs and invited everyone to lunch at the Lodge Dining Room after the meeting.

## **Item 5: Wakulla Environmental Institute Presentation**

Chris Rietow introduced Bob Ballard, Director of the Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI). Mr. Ballard gave the Board a detailed presentation on the Oyster Farming Program at the Wakulla Environmental Institute. He explained the extended process the WEI went through to get approval from the various state and federal agencies for the oyster farmers to be able to lease the water column in Ochlockonee Bay from the State of Florida. He noted that the Bay was now fully permitted and operational. Mr. Ballard also explained in detail the extended benefits to the entire ecosystem from the filtered water that the new oyster farms provide. He explained that the cleaner, clearer waters promotes the growth of seagrasses which in turn provides added habitat for shrimp, crabs and fish, resulting in an enhanced ecosystem. Mr. Ballard explained the oyster farming process in detail, sharing with the Board numerous examples of baskets and other tools used in the aquaculture process. He expounded on the extended economic benefits created from the fishery industry not only in the volume of fish, but also in the many jobs both present and future to be created in the oyster and fishing industry as a direct result of the oyster farms. Mr. Ballard stated that it is projected that oyster farming will be the number one industry in Wakulla County in less than five years, noting that the goal is to have 500 fully operational leases in the Bay. He also added that the indirect effect of the new oyster farming industry was already being experienced by Wakulla County, especially in boat dealership and repairs. Mr. Ballard thanked ARPC staff for their assistance to the WEI in obtaining funding from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the access road to the WEI facility and to the recent assistance to one of the WEI oyster farming companies through the ARPC Revolving Loan Program. Chairman Merritt thanked Mr. Ballard for his presentation, and Mr. Ballard encouraged the Board to visit the Institute in the future and see in person the success and potential the program will be able to provide to the entire Region.

## **Item 5: Executive Director's Report**

**A. Financial Report:** Chris Rietow reviewed with the Board the Budget Reports and the Reconciled Check Registers as of July 31, 2016 and August 31, 2016, included in the Board package beginning on page 12. He also reviewed with the Board the ARPC's current list of accounts payable and accounts receivable and the proposed FY 16/17 Budget. Mr. Rietow explained that the ARPC Executive Committee had reviewed the proposed Budget in detail and had recommended its approval as presented.

**A motion was made by John Jones to approve the financial reports for July 2016 and August 2016, and the FY 16/17 Budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Stephen Walker. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.**

A copy of the ARPC FY 16/17 Budget is included with these Minutes as Attachment "A".

**B. Staff Reports:** Mr. Rietow highlighted the following ARPC Program Reports prepared by ARPC staff and included in the Board Package beginning on page 21. He asked the Board for any questions in reference to the Staff Program Reports listed below and requested ARPC staff in attendance to briefly update the Board on any additions to their printed reports.

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

**B-4. Transportation Planning:** Mr. Rietow, Mr. Ballister and Mr. Eastberg of ARPC staff discussed with the Board briefly the Freight Logistics Zone (FLZ) project. They explained that ARPC staff was assisting Gulf County in the process of creating a FLZ Plan and subsequent designation. The project includes developing an inventory of parcels in Gulf, Liberty, Franklin and Gadsden Counties to determine how they fit into a larger highway and rail freight corridor from the Port of Port St. Joe to Interstate 10. Mr. Ballister explained that if the FLZ is formally established, the result would be that the FL Dept. of Transportation would target future infrastructure investments to the area, making the entire area along the corridor more marketable to new industry.

**C. 911 Regionalization Project:** Mr. Rietow shared with the Board details on the proposed Next Generation 911 Regionalization Initiative. He explained that Regionalization of 911 Public Safety Response will be the standard within a decade, noting that the wide use of cell phones to report emergencies frequently results in the calls being routed to incorrect public-safety answering points. Mr. Rietow stated that the incorporation of GIS data into a more regionalized system will be the first step in providing prompt public safety response, noting that other States have already successfully implemented regional and statewide 911 models using GIS data. Mr. Rietow requested permission from the Board for the ARPC staff to take the lead in the creation of a GIS Committee with representatives from Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon and

Wakulla Counties who are responsible for maintaining GIS data in their respective counties. He explained that the Committee would meet regularly to maintain a progression toward completing the project within the next 12-18 months.

**A motion was made by Lisa Miller to authorize ARPC staff to take the lead in setting up a Regional GIS Committee for the purpose of working toward the establishment of a Next Generation 911 Regionalization Project for the Apalachee Region. The motion was seconded by Nancy Miller. A vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Rietow thanked the Board for their support and emphasized that developing a common data set for GIS across all counties and the eventual linking of the 911 Call Centers throughout the Region, will allow for more effective Public Safety Response for the citizens as well as the agencies charged with public safety.

**D. Zika Funding Resolution:** Chris Rietow reported that the Board had authorized a Resolution at the last meeting to support State Funding in North Florida for Zika Virus preparedness. Mr. Rietow explained that the funding was allocated only to areas where the Zika Virus had been documented and to date there were no instances in North Florida. He suggested waiting to send the Resolution to the State until the Region became eligible to apply for the funds. By general consensus, the Board unanimously approved Mr. Rietow's request and asked him to follow the issue closely and report back to the Board when and if the timing became relevant for the Resolution to be submitted.

**E. Executive Committee Meeting Report:** Mr. Rietow reported that the ARPC Executive Committee had met on September 7, 2016 and had approved the following items:

- ARPC FY 14/15 Audit Report as presented by Moran & Smith, LLP
  - Audit Report was presented with no comments or findings.
- ARPC FY 16/17 Annual Budget
- Revolving Loan Fund Applications
  - Saucey Lady Oyster Co. - \$50,000 at 6% for 60 months
  - Pretty Girlz LLC – Additional \$6,000 at 6% for 120 months
  - Watson Baled Straw LLC – Renewal of \$40,000 Line of Credit at 6% for 12 months

**Item 6: Council Attorney's Report**

Mr. Rietow reported that Mr. Blanton could not be at the meeting today due to a prior commitment. He stated that for over the past twenty years, Mr. Blanton's legal services had been on a monthly retainer with the ARPC at a rate of \$1,000 per month until 2010 when his services had been reduced to \$500 per month. Mr. Rietow explained that with the removal of the Development of Regional Impact process and the overall reduction in the Growth Management processes of the State, the need for legal counsel has reduced significantly. Mr. Rietow reported that the ARPC Executive Committee had approved Mr. Blanton's services to the ARPC beginning with FY 16/17 be changed to an hourly rate as needed rather than a monthly retainer. Mr. Rietow noted that the Executive Committee had allocated \$2,000 for general legal expenses in the FY 16/17 Budget approved earlier in the meeting.

**Item 7: Board Member Reports / Local & Regional Issues Discussion**

Mr. Rietow reported that Jackson County had contacted ARPC staff about potentially assisting them with the County’s SHIP program. He explained that several Regional Planning Councils (RPCs) in the State were already administering these type programs for some of their member counties. Mr. Rietow stated that he had discussed the potential project at length with the West FL RPC which had been successful administering a SHIP program for three counties in the West Florida Region. Mr. Rietow agreed to keep the Board informed as the project discussions advanced with Jackson County.

Nancy Miller reported that the City of Tallahassee was in the process of putting together an After-Action-Report on the local government’s response to Hurricane Hermine which had devastated the Region earlier in the month. Ms. Miller explained that the report will look at what the local government can do in the future to make the situation more manageable for all concerned, and to prioritize a list of public needs to assist local government in responding more promptly and effectively.

Chairman Merritt suggested that the City of Tallahassee and Leon County Emergency Management personnel also contact the Wakulla County Emergency Management Department to discuss storm response issues in conjunction with the preparation of the report. Chairman Merritt stated that Wakulla had the most effective response following Hurricane Hermine that had ever been documented by the Wakulla Emergency Operations Center. Ed Brimner added that a major factor in Wakulla County’s success was how very quickly after the storm there seemed to be overwhelming community participation in the clean-up. Mr. Brimner noted that a major portion of the work had been done by neighbors helping each other rather than residents simply waiting for local government to come and take care of it. A lengthy discussion ensued on the long-term benefits of local governments investing in underground utilities as existing utilities are destroyed by massive storms of this type. Also discussed was the ordinance process that would be required in a local government mandating the establishment of underground utilities.

Chairman Merritt asked for any further public comments and there were none. He announced that the next ARPC Board meeting would be held on November 17, 2016 at 10:30 am ET at the ARPC Office in Tallahassee. Chairman Merritt thanked the Board for their attendance and directed staff to follow up with the absentees from today’s 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 NOVEMBER 17, 2016.

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Merritt  
Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Rietow  
Executive Director

**ATTACHMENT "A"**

**APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL FY 2016 / 2017 BUDGET**

**INCOME/REVENUES:**

**Income Sub-Total by Category**

EDA Planning Grant	63,000			
Revolving Loan Fund - Admin	<u>25,000</u>	88,000	Economic Development	12%
FDACS - Animal Safety Planner	59,500			
FDEM - Hazards Analyses	21,700			
FDEM - HMEP Planning	25,000			
FDEM - HMEP Training	25,000			
FDEM - Local Emergency Planning	59,000			
FDOT - N FL MRC Admin	26,000			
FDEP - Small Quantity Generators	40,000			
SFRC - Coastal Resiliency	5,000		Emergency Planning	
Leon County - PSCPlan	<u>5,000</u>	266,200		37%
NWFWMD - SWIM Plan	60,000		Environmental Planning	
FDEO - C2B Trail Feasibility Study	<u>30,000</u>	90,000		13%
ARPC County Dues	68,000			
FL Regional Councils Association	60,000			
City of Port St. Joe - CDBG	32,000		Technical Assistance	
RCSC - Admin	<u>10,000</u>	170,000		23%
CTD - Transportation Disadvantaged	95,800			
FDEO - Gulf County Freight Logistics	<u>15,000</u>	<u>110,800</u>	Transportation	<u>15%</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME/REVENUES</b>	<b>725,000</b>	<b>725,000</b>		<b>100%</b>

**OPERATING EXPENSES:**

Accounting	1,000
Advertising	600
Audit	15,000
Board Meeting Expenses	3,000
Contingency	51,250
Consultants (Contract Required)	57,000
Dues (FRCA, NADO, SERDI)	21,000
Equipment Lease - Copiers	14,400
Fringe Benefits	92,400
Insurance (Work Comp, Liability)	9,750
IT Tech Support	2,400
Legal	2,000
Licenses (REMI)	4,500
Miscellaneous	500
Office Supplies	2,400
Postage	2,900
Rent	37,200
Salaries	365,400
Subscriptions & Publications	300
Telephone	6,000
Travel	<u>36,000</u>

**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES:**

**725,000**

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – Chris Rietow**

The following items will be reported and discussed with the Board:

- A. **\*Financial Report:** On the following pages are the following financial reports.
- Check Register and Budget Report for the month ending September 30, 2016
  - Check Register and Budget Report for the month ending October 31, 2016
  - Accounts Payable & Receivable Registers as of October 31, 2016
- B. **\*Staff Reports:** Detailed staff reports are included in the Board Package. Council staff will be available for questions.
- C. **New ARPC Personnel:** Update on the hiring of a new Regional Planner for the Emergency Planning Program as well as a new intern for the Economic Development Program.
- D. **Biannual Officer Elections Update:** Overview on the upcoming election process for ARPC Officers and appointments for new members.

### **ACTIONS NEEDED**

**\*Motion to accept Financial Reports for the periods ending September 30, 2016 and October 31, 2016.**

**Apalachee Regional Planning Council  
Budget Report as of 9/30/16**

Bal. 8/31/16

Bal. 9/30/15

50,161.35

1,814.96

LINE-ITEM	FY 15/16 Budget	September 2016	FY-To-Date as of 9/30/16	Budget Balance
<b>General Revenue</b>				
EDA Planning Grant 15/16	63,000	-	63,000.00	-
EDA Planning Grant 14/15	15,750	-	15,750.00	-
Revolving Loan Fund - Admin	26,500	9,605.97	26,105.97	394.03
Misc. Small ED Contracts	1,000	-	750.00	250.00
FDACS - Rapid Response Team	40,000	-	40,000.00	-
FDACS - Animal Safety Planner	58,000	4,552.86	57,960.95	39.05
FDEM - Hazards Analyses	22,497	-	22,497.00	-
FDEM - HMEP Planning	24,000	24,000.00	24,000.00	-
FDEM - HMEP Training 15/16	34,400	4,184.08	43,336.00	(8,936.00)
FDEM - HMEP Training 14/15	12,286	-	12,286.43	(0.43)
FDEM - LEPC Support Staff	48,000	-	48,000.00	-
FDEM - RDSTF Exercise 2016	32,950	-	32,941.86	8.14
FDEM - RDSTF COOP Evalutate	22,500	-	22,500.00	-
FDEM - RES Update	20,000	-	20,000.00	-
FDOH - N FL MRC Admin	25,500	-	27,187.50	(1,687.50)
GOMA - Franklin Resilience	17,000	-	17,000.00	-
Jackson County LMS	6,500	-	6,500.00	-
SQG Inspections	37,000	-	36,279.89	720.11
SFRPC - Coastal Resiliency	10,000	-	5,000.00	5,000.00
Misc. Small EP Contracts	13,880	-	13,859.50	20.50
ARPC County Dues	68,410	-	68,410.00	-
FRCA - Admin	32,302	13,083.56	38,068.84	(5,766.84)
RCSC - Admin	10,000	1,500.00	9,000.00	1,000.00
TCC - Wakulla Enviro. Institute	15,000	-	15,000.00	-
Misc. Small TA Contracts	3,175	-	3,175.00	-
CTD - Transportation Disadvantaged	96,000	-	95,848.00	152.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>755,650</b>	<b>56,926.47</b>	<b>764,456.94</b>	<b>(8,806.94)</b>
<b>General Expenses</b>				
Accounting	1,000	14.00	757.98	242.02
Advertising	600	19.60	516.43	83.57
Audit	30,000	10,000.00	30,000.00	0.00
Board Meeting Expenses	2,000	(151.50)	1,737.01	262.99
Contingency	18,850	1,111.34	3,024.93	15,825.07
Consultants (HMEP Training)	41,500	4,200.00	46,665.12	(5,165.12)
Contract Expenses (New contracts)	20,000	-	20,335.86	(335.86)
Dues (FRCA, NADO, SERDI)	21,600	4,167.25	21,569.00	31.00
Equipment Lease - Copiers	13,700	815.09	12,940.51	759.49
Fringe Benefits	92,700	10,684.98	94,360.10	(1,660.10)
Insurance (Work Comp, Liability)	8,400	-	8,384.00	16.00
IT Tech Support	2,400	268.49	2,370.95	29.05
Legal	6,000	500.00	6,000.00	0.00
Licenses (REMI)	9,000	-	9,000.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	1,000	47.46	895.69	104.31
Office Supplies	2,400	389.20	2,199.82	200.18
Postage	2,900	6.80	2,860.22	39.78
Rent	36,500	3,110.55	36,618.60	(118.60)
Salaries	402,800	47,973.60	402,791.91	8.09
Subscriptions & Publications	300	-	282.80	17.20
Telephone & Internet	6,000	572.88	6,517.87	(517.87)
Travel	36,000	5,237.10	38,322.12	(2,322.12)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>755,650</b>	<b>88,966.84</b>	<b>748,150.92</b>	<b>7,499.08</b>
	Bal. 9/30/16	18,120.98	18,120.98	Bal. 9/30/16
	Regions Bank Balance 9/30/16		18,120.98	

**Apalachee Regional Planning Council  
Budget Report as of 10/31/16**

*Bal. 9/30/16*  
18,120.98

*Bal. 9/30/16*  
18,120.98

<b>LINE-ITEM</b>	<b>FY 16/17 Budget</b>	<b>October 2016</b>	<b>FY-To-Date as of 9/30/16</b>	<b>Budget Balance</b>
<b>General Revenue</b>				
EDA Planning Grant 15/16	63,000	15,750.00	15,750.00	47,250.00
Revolving Loan Fund - Admin	25,000	-	-	25,000.00
Misc. Small ED Contracts	-	-	-	-
FDACS - Animal Safety Planner	59,500	6,624.87	6,624.87	52,875.13
FDEM - Hazards Analyses	21,700	-	-	21,700.00
FDEM - HMEP Planning	25,000	-	-	25,000.00
FDEM - HMEP Training	25,000	-	-	25,000.00
FDEM - LEPC Support Staff	59,000	-	-	59,000.00
FDOH - N FL MRC Admin	26,000	-	-	26,000.00
FDEP - SQG Inspections	40,000	-	-	40,000.00
SFRPC - Coastal Resiliency	5,000	-	-	5,000.00
Misc. Small EP Contracts	5,000	-	-	5,000.00
NWFWMD - SWIM Plan	60,000	20,532.00	20,532.00	39,468.00
FDEO - C2B Trail Feasibility Study	30,000	-	-	30,000.00
ARPC County Dues	68,000	15,873.50	15,873.50	52,126.50
FRCA - Admin	60,000	-	-	60,000.00
PSJ - CDBG	32,000	-	-	32,000.00
RCSC - Admin	10,000	-	-	10,000.00
Misc. Small TA Contracts	-	-	-	-
CTD - Transportation Disadvantaged	95,800	-	-	95,800.00
FDEO - Gulf County FLZ	15,000	-	-	15,000.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>725,000</b>	<b>58,780.37</b>	<b>58,780.37</b>	<b>666,219.63</b>
<b>General Expenses</b>				
Accounting	1,000	14.00	14.00	986.00
Advertising	600	-	-	600.00
Audit	15,000	-	-	15,000.00
Board Meeting Expenses	3,000	-	-	3,000.00
Contingency	51,250	433.45	433.45	50,816.55
Consultants (HMEP-T and CDBG)	57,000	3,280.00	3,280.00	53,720.00
Dues (FRCA, NADO, SERDI)	21,000	-	-	21,000.00
Equipment Lease - Copiers	14,400	1,011.97	1,011.97	13,388.03
Fringe Benefits	92,400	7,730.12	7,730.12	84,669.88
Insurance (Work Comp, Liability)	9,750	2,437.00	2,437.00	7,313.00
IT Tech Support	2,400	467.43	467.43	1,932.57
Legal	2,000	-	-	2,000.00
Licenses (REMI)	4,500	-	-	4,500.00
Miscellaneous	500	50.49	50.49	449.51
Office Supplies	2,400	86.50	86.50	2,313.50
Postage	2,900	107.60	107.60	2,792.40
Rent	37,200	3,110.55	3,110.55	34,089.45
Salaries	365,400	31,304.19	31,304.19	334,095.81
Subscriptions & Publications	300	-	-	300.00
Telephone & Internet	6,000	489.43	489.43	5,510.57
Travel	36,000	4,073.36	4,073.36	31,926.64
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>725,000</b>	<b>54,596.09</b>	<b>54,596.09</b>	<b>670,403.91</b>
	<i>Bal. 9/30/16</i>	<b>22,305.26</b>	<b>22,305.26</b>	<i>Bal. 9/30/16</i>
	<b>Regions Bank Balance 9/30/16</b>		<b>22,305.26</b>	

## AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 1

### ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – Bruce Ballister

Port St. Joe – North Port St. Joe Water II: ARPC staff originally received notice from the FL Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) that the project's score was in the fundable range for this Cycle. However, a glitch in the application resulted in the loss of 100 points and the potential total loss of funding. ARPC staff has assisted the City of Port St. Joe in filing a protest on the severity of the penalty for a minor error in the application package. The FDEO CDBG contract manager has since held a site visit which is normally preparatory to a funding letter if all application conditions are satisfied. The latest status report from the FDEO-CDBG case manager is that they are making all efforts to fund the project.

Jefferson County CDBG: At the second Public Hearing, ARPC staff will be requesting authorization to proceed with an application on the Kundra property south of I-10 as was originally proposed in November 2015. A meeting held November 1<sup>st</sup> resulted in a request for a second meeting to discuss financing and county policy issues. That meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Jackson County Planning Services: In addition to "on-call" services for the Town of Havana, ARPC has been requested to provide advice and technical support to the Jackson County Planning Department. Based on a meeting with the Jackson County School Board staff and County Planning Department, ARPC staff has been requested to draft a "from scratch" Interlocal Agreement that will focus on a process of cooperation and shared information on developments and siting, rather than the development restrictive elements of the present Interlocal Agreement.

Town of Campbellton Land Development Regulation (LDR): The Town of Campbellton is the nearest municipality to the proposed Economic Development Mega-Site in Jackson County. While the County is proceeding with a large-scale land use amendment and adjustments to its Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Campbellton has no recorded Land Development Regulations on file. Any projects that may possibly spin off the Mega-Site have a good potential of directly affecting properties within the Town's jurisdiction. ARPC staff is working with the Town of Campbellton on the development of a functional LDR.

Gulf County FDEO TA Grant: Chris Holley, Gulf County Economic Development Coalition (EDC) Executive Director met with the ARPC about assisting in the development of a proposal for a Freight Logistics Zone (FLZ) designation for that would benefit the Port of Port St. Joe. The project has been awarded a FY 16/17 FDEO Community Planning Technical Assistance (TA) grant. ARPC staff met with Mr. Holley, the Gulf County Planning Consultant and a previously contracted Site Finder Consultant who assisted in preparing the initial FDEO TA grant application. It was determined at the meeting for the ARPC to be the coordinating agency for the FDEO contract with Gulf County. The ARPC will administer the grant which includes contracting with specialized consultants to prepare the technical documents needed to complete the contract deliverables as outlined in the grant.

## AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 2

### EMERGENCY PLANNING PROGRAM

Denise Imbler  
Gina Mendicino  
Sara Thomas

#### Emergency Planning Program

ARPC staff has partnered with ER Assist – Disaster Grant Services on a pilot project to develop a FEMA-approved Debris Management Plan for one of the Region’s local governments at no cost. If the project is successful, the ARPC will attempt to provide the service to other interested members for a fixed fee. Calhoun County was selected and has been a willing participant in the pilot project. Staff has held two meetings with Calhoun County Emergency Management to date.



Franklin County SLR 2080

The ARPC received funding from NOAA to develop a vulnerability analysis (VA) addressing the impacts of Sea Level Rise (SLR) on the regional transportation network in the coastal communities of Franklin, Gulf and Wakulla counties. The ARPC and the WFRPC coordinated to hold a training

workshop for planners in the panhandle. On October 27, 2016, ARPC staff traveled to Pensacola and participated with the training workshop which served to familiarize the attendees with the available free online tools.



Staff Assists with Workshop

The ARPC continues to work with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) on developing grant documents for the upcoming State Homeland Security Grant Program funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Staff will be providing planning services to FDACS in the coming fiscal year.

#### 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 November 10, 2016 at the Tallahassee Fire Department Training Division. The regional HazMat Team had the opportunity to showcase their HazMat response truck to those who attended the meeting. Staff is currently preparing for the next LEPC meeting



which is tentatively scheduled for February 2, 2016 at the Capital Chapter of the American Red Cross. ARPC staff attended the quarterly meetings of the State



Emergency Response Commission (SERC) for Hazardous Materials that were held in Destin, Florida on October 18-19, 2016. The next quarterly SERC meetings will be held in Daytona Beach, Florida in January 2017.

### Hazardous Materials Training

ARPC staff facilitated an 8-hour Technician-level HAZWOPER course which was held on October 27, 2016. Staff is also working to develop a training schedule for the upcoming year. All training opportunities are posted on the ARPC website at [www.thearpc.com](http://www.thearpc.com).

### Planning Project – Updating SOPs

ARPC staff will be developing and/or updating each county's standard operating procedures (SOPs) for incidents involving the transportation of flammable liquids, chlorine, and anhydrous ammonia. The SOPs will be incorporated into each county's CEMP as well as the LEPC Emergency Plan. Staff will use the previously completed Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study as a reference during the completion of this project.

### **North Florida Medical Reserve Corps (MRC)**

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. During the month of October, the North Florida MRC has provided both medical and clerical support to the FL Dept. of Health in Leon County at flu clinics and school health screenings. The flu clinics provide a convenient opportunity for state employees to receive a flu vaccination, while the school screenings promote childhood health in Leon County. The North Florida MRC membership includes more than 50 licensed medical volunteers from around the Region.



## AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 3

### REVOLVING LOAN FUND REPORT – Janice Watson

Attached are the following Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) updates for Board information and review.

#### FY 15/16 and FY 16/17 Loan Payments & Loan Fund Balances

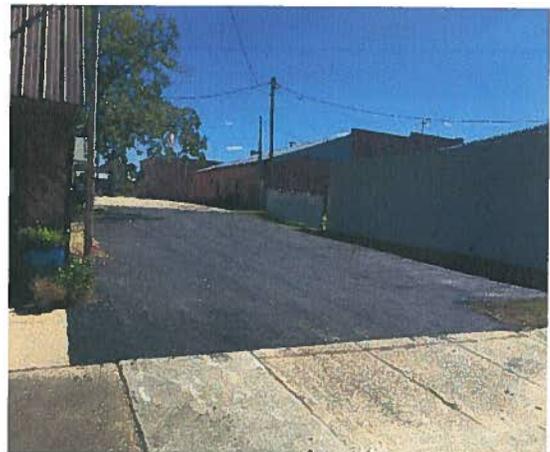
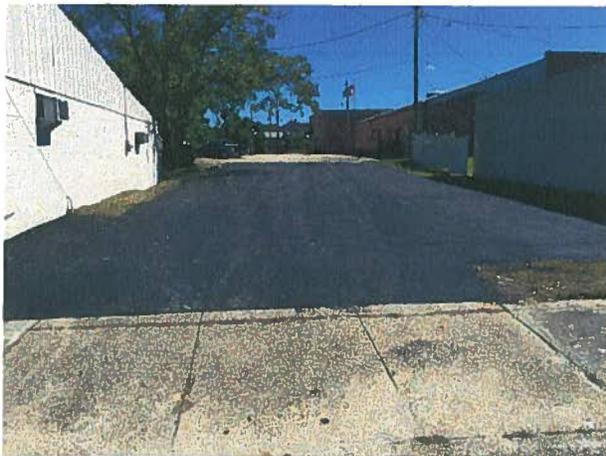
The loan payment worksheets summarize the RLF loan payments from October 1, 2015 – October 31, 2016. The summary on the bottom of the worksheets describe in detail the current balances in the RLF Loan Principal and Interest Bank Accounts as of 10/31/16 and also the cumulative activity in the bank accounts since 10/1/15. These amounts correspond exactly to the data which is semi-annually reported by ARPC staff to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA).

#### RLF Loan Portfolio Re-Cap

The portfolio worksheet gives specific details of all the outstanding loans of the RLF Program. It lists both the EDA-RLF loans and the Small Business RLF Loans.

#### **New Loan Closings**

Pretty Girlz – (Calhoun County): The additional loan to Emily Jones was closed on 9/16/16 and the parking lot paving was completed in October. The business continues to grow and all requirements to satisfy the insurance company have been met in reference to the parking lot.



Saucey Lady Oyster Co. – (Wakulla County): The loan to Tim Jordan and Walt Dickson of the Panacea based company was closed on 9/26/16.

Watson Baled Straw – (Calhoun & Jackson Counties): The annual renewal of the Line of Credit to Leon Watson of Watson Baled Straw was closed on 10/28/16. The ARPC retains a 1<sup>st</sup> position lien on 9 of the company's farm tractors.

**AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 4**

**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM – Kwentin Eastberg**

Introduction: The Transportation Planning Program at the ARPC has added some new projects this year as it continues to stay actively engaged within the Region. The Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program had its first quarterly meetings in September and the second quarterly meetings on November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. ARPC staff is also working on the Freight Logistic Zone Project outlined at the last ARPC meeting and held its first (informational) summit on October 12<sup>th</sup> in Liberty County. ARPC staff is also providing GIS Technical Assistance to Jackson County to provide better detailed information concerning the location of a newly proposed K-8 school in Marianna. Outlined below is a brief description of the Transportation Disadvantaged Program since the last ARPC Board Meeting.

**Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program**

Franklin County Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Designation Status: The recommendation for Gulf County ARC and Transportation to continue as the Franklin County CTC was approved by the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged at its Board Meeting held on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Sebring, FL. The designation will take effect on December 1, 2016 and extend until June 30, 2022.

TD FY 2016-2017 – 2<sup>st</sup> Quarter Update: On November 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Boards convened again. After the first quarter's meetings, it was determined that several board members who had left, retired, or otherwise shuffled positions, as well as other board members had expired terms. Below are the appointees for FY 2016/2017.

**TD Local Coordinating Board Member Appointments**

The Executive Director appointed the following members to the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Boards effective July 1, 2016. All terms will end June 30 on the year listed.

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>TERM ENDING</b>
Calhoun	(vacant)	Disabled	-
Calhoun	Tammy Rushing	Veterans	2019
Calhoun	Marissa Barfield	Medical	2019
Calhoun	Karsen Spradlin	FDOE/VR	n/a
Franklin	(vacant)	Citizen Advocate/User	-
Franklin	Charles Elliot	Veterans	2019
Franklin	(vacant)	Public Education	-
Franklin	Catey McMullon	FDOE/VR	n/a
Franklin	(vacant)	FDEA	n/a
Gulf	Letha Inez Matthews	Disabled	2017

Gulf	William J. Paul	Veterans	2019
Gulf	Johanna White	Workforce Dvp Board	2019
Gulf	Catey McMullon	FDOE/VR	n/a
Gulf	Rob Locascio	FDEA	n/a
Jackson	Evelyn Rainey	Citizen Advocate/User	2019
Jackson	Charlotte Gardner	Public Education	2019
Jackson	Keith Sutton	FDOE/VR	n/a
Liberty	Barbara Jacobs	Elderly	2019
Liberty	Joe Wall	Disabled	2019
Liberty	Marissa Barfield	Children at Risk	2019
Liberty	Susan Chafin	Medical	2019
Liberty	Karsen Spradlin	FDOE/VR	n/a

**ACTION NEEDED**

**Motion to approve the Executive Director’s appointments to the designated Local Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards.**

(Any updates to the appointee list received after the printing of this package will be announced at the ARPC Board meeting)



Caitlin Cerame and Dan Deanda gave presentations on the Ride-On Program at the Jackson County LCB meeting in September.

*(Photo Courtesy: Howard Vanselow, WFRPC)*

**Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards  
2016-2017 Remaining Meeting Schedule**  
Meeting locations, dates and times may change.  
Contact ARPC staff for current information regarding the meetings.

**Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards  
2016 - 2017 Meeting Calendar**

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 2017</b>	<b>JUNE 2017</b>
<b>Calhoun</b> 1:00 PM CT Senior Center, 16859 NE Cayson Street, Blountstown	<b>7 Tuesday</b>	<b>6 Tuesday</b>
<b>Franklin</b> 10 AM ET Courthouse Annex, 33 Market Street, Apalachicola	<b>8 Wednesday</b>	<b>7 Wednesday</b>
<b>Gulf</b> 1 PM ET Gulf Transp. Office, 122 Water Plant Road, Port St. Joe	<b>8 Wednesday</b>	<b>7 Wednesday</b>
<b>Jackson</b> 10:00 AM CT JTrans, 3988 Old Cottondale Road, Marianna	<b>7 Tuesday</b>	<b>6 Tuesday</b>
<b>Liberty</b> 3:30 PM ET Civic Center, 10405 NW Theo Jacobs Way, Bristol	<b>7 Tuesday</b>	<b>6 Tuesday</b>
<b>PROPOSED TOPICS</b>  Please notify Kwentin of additional agenda topics.  Topics may change pending the availability of the item.  Committee meetings will be scheduled as needed.	Rate Worksheets FTA App (due Feb) Legislative Reports Member Nominations Evaluation Corrective Action TD Day information  **** CTC Quarterly Report ARPC Quarterly Report CTD Report Minutes	TDSP Meeting Calendar New Members Certification Member Nominations Training Registration  **** CTC Quarterly Report ARPC Quarterly Report CTD Report Minutes

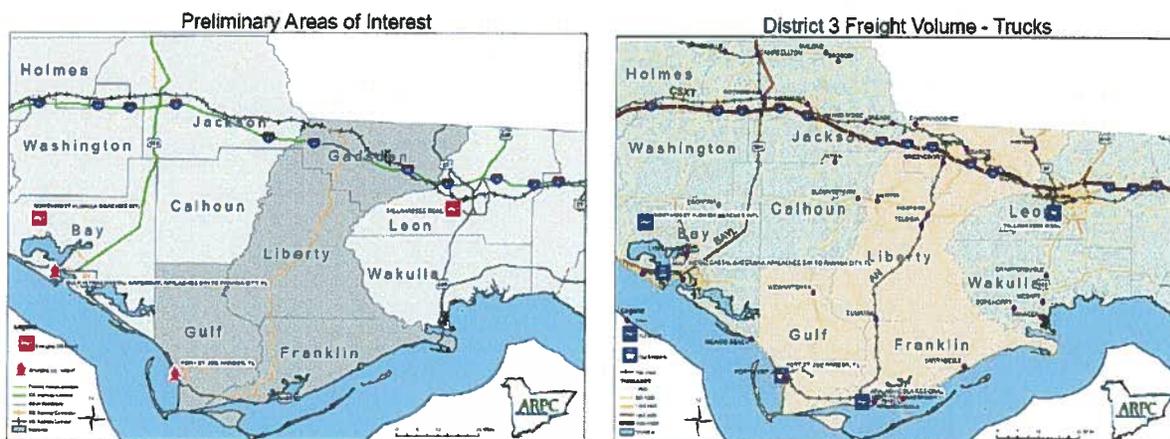
### Freight Logistics Zone (FLZ) Project Update

The FLZ project has been made possible through a Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant from the FL Dept. of Economic Opportunity (FDEO) to the Gulf County Economic Development Council (EDC). It was received by the Gulf EDC and a scope of work was developed to include Gulf, Gadsden, Liberty and Franklin Counties to develop a plan to become designated as a regional Freight Logistics Zone. The FLZ designation will allow for some funding priority for the projects within its boundaries and it is the ultimate intent that the designation will increase the use of the Port of Port St. Joe and rejuvenate the AN Railway line that connects Port St. Joe and Chattahoochee through Gulf, Franklin, Liberty and Gadsden Counties. The FLZ will allow for connectivity from seaports, airports, rail and highway systems to help increase the flow of freight and increase economic development in the Region.

The ARPC has contracted with Gulf County to oversee the completion of the FLZ project. On October 12<sup>th</sup>, the ARPC staff coordinated its first Summit in Liberty County at the Veterans Memorial Civic Center in Bristol. More than 40 people, interested parties and stakeholders attended the 2-hour event. The Summit was the first step in completing the FLZ project goals. It also completed the requirements of Deliverable #1 for the FDEO grant. ARPC staff is now working on Deliverable #2, which is a strategic sites inventory to be completed by Leotta Location and Design, LLC. by mid-December.

During the project research, ARPC staff met with the Tallahassee International Airport staff as they continue working on a project to establish a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ). The FTZ would have the potential to be a great boost to the Region and will encompass eight counties (six of which are in the ARPC Region). ARPC staff is working on scheduling someone from the Tallahassee Airport to make presentation at a future ARPC Bboard meeting.

Below are images of the mapping portion of the Freight Logistics Zone project:

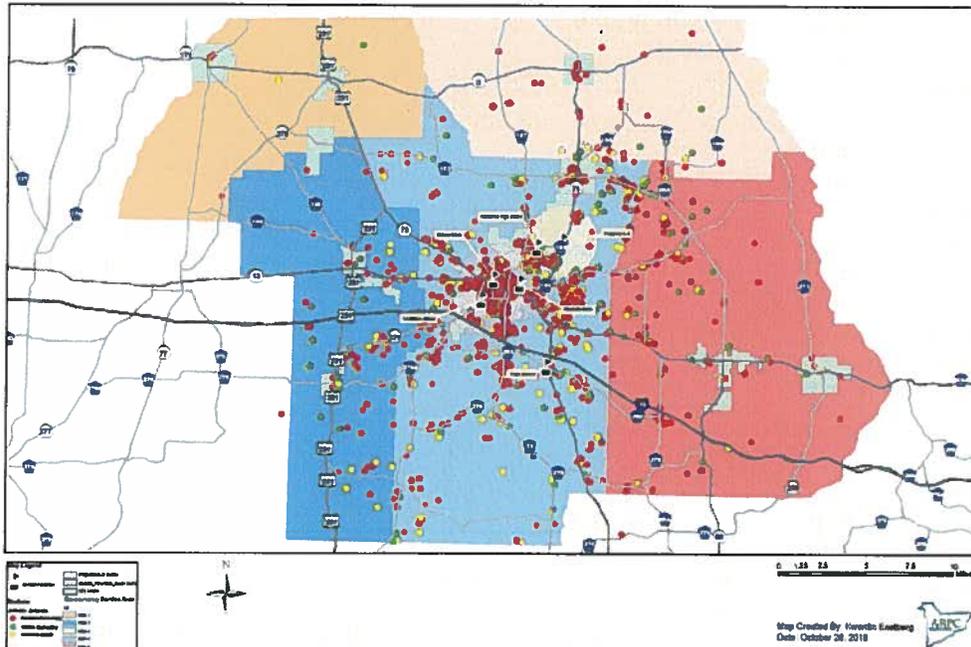


### Other Items of Interest

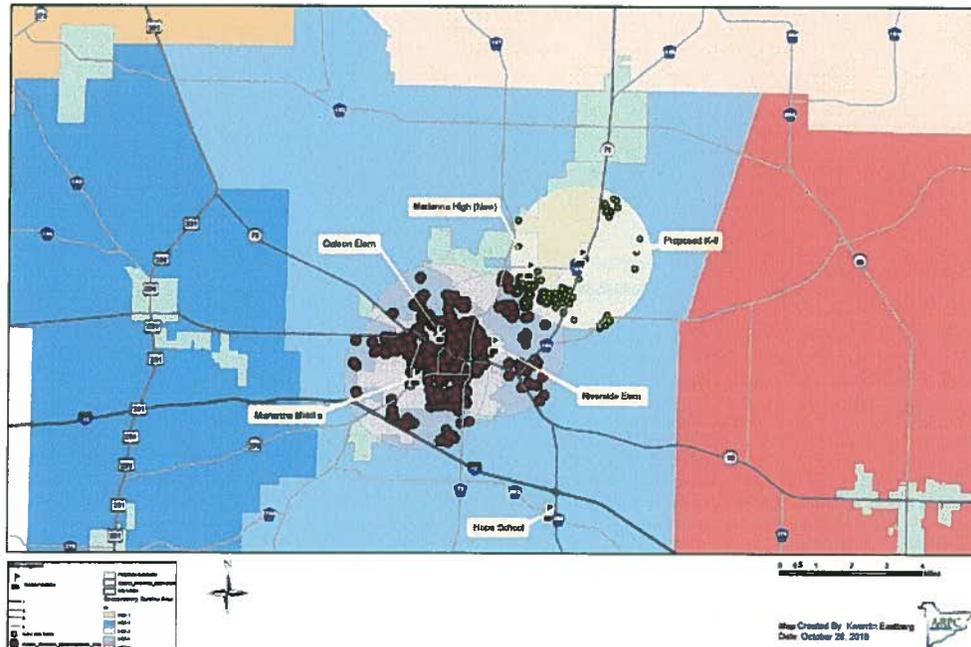
ARPC Transportation staff continues to participate in training opportunities on government grant programs. Over the last 30 days, staff has attended two funding workshops and a FDOT Grant Training at FDOT District 3 office in Chipley.

Staff has been assisting Jackson County Schools in a recent GIS project. The maps below depict a proposed K-8 school site in Marianna and the students distance from current schools to the new school location.

County-wide scale, Location of Students in Proximity to School



Affected Addresses inside the 2 Mile Buffer



ARPC Staff is working with the Hosford/Telogia Volunteer Fire Department in Liberty County to write a grant for the purchase of a specialized washer and dryer for their bunker gear and a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) refill station. If funded, the SCBA refill station will also have the capacity to serve other nearby Volunteer Fire Departments as well. ARPC staff welcomes the opportunity to provide Technical Assistance to Liberty County and is encouraged by the potential funding for Liberty County.

## AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 5

### ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING PROGRAM – Joe Crozier

#### **Chattahoochee to Bristol (C2B) Trail**

ARPC staff held the first official “C2B Trail” public meeting in Bristol on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Staff partnered with Dan Pennington from the FL Dept. of Economic Opportunity, Simone Nageon de Lestang with the U.S. Forest Service, and Ben Chandler from Chattahoochee Mainstreet to discuss the proposed trail, economic and environmental impacts, project challenges and project goals. The feasibility study is moving forward according to plan, and is due to be completed before the summer of 2017.



#### **Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan**

ARPC staff has completed the first deliverable of the SWIM Plan and submitted it to the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) for review. The deliverable included land use and physical characteristic updates of the Apalachicola River and Bay basin, among other aspects. The NFWFMD is waiting to assign the next round of deliverables until further progress is made in the US Supreme Court trial between Florida and Georgia which began on 10/31/16.

#### **Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition (RCSC)**

On Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, ARPC staff met with U.S. Representative Gwen Graham and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Colonel James Delapp, the newest commander of the Mobile District (which includes the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Basin) to discuss the needs of the Florida Stakeholders. ARPC staff continues to work with the six riparian counties and is planning to facilitate a “Most Endangered River” Conference scheduled for June 2017.



#### **Hazards Analysis (HA) Program**

Staff has completed 50% of the site visits to facilities that store extremely hazardous substances and has submitted the work to the FL Division of Emergency Management for review. Facilities visited for the first time this year included the Jim Woodruff Dam and Lock facility and the Tri-Eagle Sales Distribution Facility in Midway.

**AGENDA ITEM 5 – B – 6**

**CORRESPONDENCE / ITEMS OF INTEREST**

1. Water Wars Articles – Franklin County
2. Jane Sauls Library Dedication Article – Leon County
3. Port of Port St. Joe Articles – Gulf County
4. River Trek 2016 Article – Calhoun County
5. Workers' Comp Rates Increase Article – State
6. Brenda Holt NACo Article – Gadsden County
7. RESTORE Funding Plan Article – Gulf County
8. Gene Wright & Veteran's Memorial Article – Jackson County
9. Florida Regional Councils Association Newsletter – October 2016

11/3/16

## Water wars trial gets underway

By David Sharp  
The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Maine — Lawyers for Florida and Georgia clashed Monday in a long-running dispute over water rights, with Florida blaming low river flows for imperiling fisheries and Georgia denying responsibility and saying water restrictions could imperil its economy.

Florida attorney Phil Perry said the Sunshine State's neighbor flip-flopped and now claims "Florida's harms are imaginary and that Georgia has no responsibility."

Georgia's attorney suggested other factors, including a dam and dredging in Florida, are to blame for devastating the oyster industry in an Apalachicola Bay estuary.

"Florida is asking the court to put (Georgia residents) at the risk of significant hardship for no good reason,"

See TRIAL, A20

## TRIAL

Continued from A1

attorney Craig Primis said.

The attorneys began laying out their cases to a special master appointed by the U.S. Supreme Court in Portland, Maine's largest city, more than 1,000 miles away from the Southeast.

The dispute focuses on a crucial watershed in western Georgia, eastern Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. The Chattahoochee and Flint rivers flow through Georgia and meet at the Florida border to form the Apalachicola River, which flows into Apalachicola Bay in Franklin County.

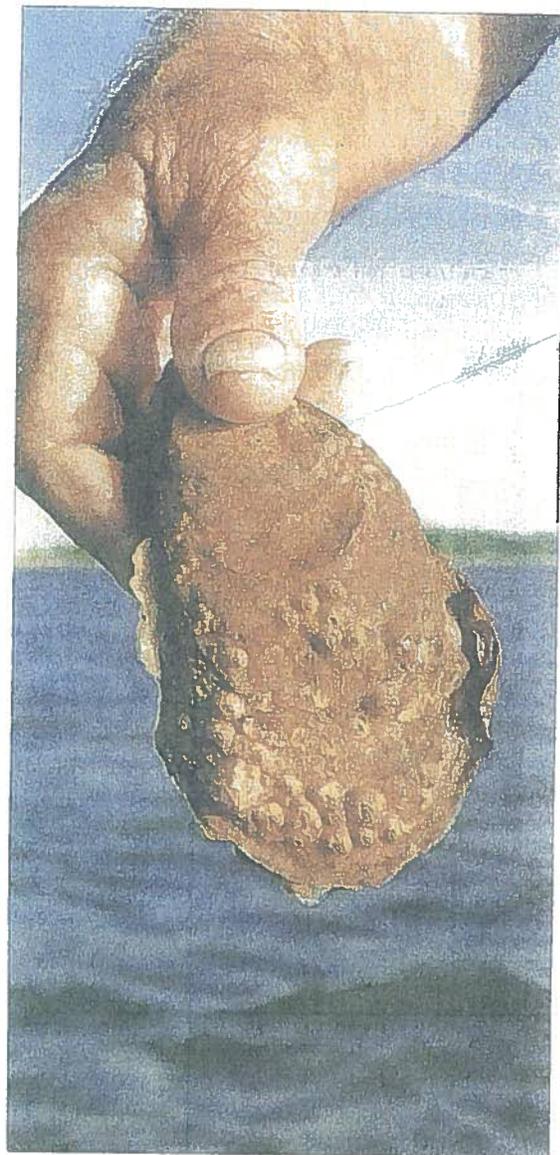
Alabama, which could enter the legal fray, has sided with Florida, encouraging a cap on Georgia's use.

Special master Ralph Lancaster, who has tried without success to get the states to settle their dispute, will make a decision after the trial, which is expected to last more than a month. The U.S. Supreme Court will have the final say after reviewing his findings.

The proceeding's significance was underscored by attorneys and spectators numbering 60, so many that extra chairs were taken into the courtroom. Among those watching were Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Jon Steverson and the mayor of Apalachicola, Van Johnson Sr.

Florida has blamed booming metropolitan Atlanta and the agriculture industry in southwest Georgia for siphoning away more than the state's fair share of water, causing the fresh water flow to dry up and increasing the salinity of Florida's Apalachicola Bay.

The decreased water flow has killed endangered mussels and stranded fish, harmed tupelo and



Oystermen in Florida's Apalachicola Bay are anxiously awaiting the outcome of the water wars trial, which began Monday in a federal court in Maine. TAIMY ALVAREZ/SUN SENTINEL

cypress trees and caused a die-off of oysters, Perry said.

But Primis contended Georgia consumes only a small portion of the water flowing from the river and that without clear and convincing proof it doesn't make sense to imperil Georgia's economy and drinking water in the flawed hope it could help a small number of people in Florida.

And he took umbrage at the suggestion that Georgia has a poor record of managing the water resource, saying Georgia "emphatically rejects the suggestion that it has not

been a good steward of water."

Johnson said 800 fishing families are suffering in Franklin County — a county of 11,000 residents, tiny compared with suburban Atlanta. But, he said, they're real people whose livelihoods depend on the environment even if their numbers are small compared with Georgia and its multibillion-dollar economy.

"Our environment is our economy," Johnson said. "When you damage the environment, then our economy suffers. We're just withering on the vine trying to survive."

## Florida, Georgia Water Wars Trial Starts Monday

*By The Associated Press – 10/31/16*

ATLANTA (AP) — Florida and Georgia this week are taking their long-standing fight over the supply of water in their shared watershed to court. Arguments are expected to last for weeks, and the result could affect millions of people and major industries in both states. Florida claims Atlanta and southwest Georgia farmers are using too much water from the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin and are hurting the oyster industry downstream. Georgia argues limiting its water use will harm the economy. The proceeding opens Monday before an official appointed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

### **WHAT'S THE DISAGREEMENT?**

The dispute focuses on the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin, which drains almost 20,000 square miles in western Georgia, eastern Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. The Chattahoochee and Flint rivers meet at the Georgia-Florida border to form the Apalachicola, which flows into the bay and the Gulf of Mexico beyond.

The states cite dramatically different reasons for the lower flows of water across the border from Georgia to Florida.

Florida says water use has risen sharply in the booming metropolitan Atlanta area and in southwest Georgia's agricultural industry, harming the environment and downstream industries, including oyster fishing.

Georgia's lawyers say the state's water use isn't to blame for lower flows into Florida's Apalachicola Bay, and that limiting its use of the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers will jeopardize Georgia's economy.

### **WHAT DOES FLORIDA WANT?**

Florida is asking for a cap on Georgia's water use, with added restrictions during drought. Attorneys plan to argue Georgia is to blame for lower river flows crossing the border to Florida, harming the environment and causing a collapse of the oyster fishing industry. Florida says conservation measures in Atlanta and elsewhere will help downstream areas without affecting the city's growth.

### **WHAT DOES GEORGIA WANT?**

Georgia wants Florida's request for a cap denied. The state argues Florida can't prove Georgia is to blame for downstream issues. Among other things, Georgia faults Florida's management of oyster fishing.

### **WHO MAKES THE FINAL DECISION?**

The case went directly to the U.S. Supreme Court. Because the justices don't have the time to review hours of testimony and reams of evidence, they appointed a "special master" to do it. Ralph Lancaster, the official hearing the case from his home state of Maine, repeatedly has urged the states to sit down and find a settlement. On a conference call this month, he again

warned attorneys on both sides that a ruling will make at least one "and perhaps both" states unhappy.

After both sides present their evidence and arguments, Lancaster will make a recommendation to the Supreme Court. The justices then review his findings and any rebuttals by the states before issuing a final decision. That process can take months, pushing the case into 2017.

#### **WHAT'S AT STAKE?**

Sidney Ansbacher, a Florida attorney specializing in environmental law, says "the future of the region" will be affected.

If Florida's request for a cap is granted, it could be "catastrophic" for metro Atlanta and Georgia industries, he said. Without a cap, Florida's shellfish industry dependent on fresh water flowing from the Apalachicola river into the bay might disappear, Ansbacher said.

"It's a zero-sum game," he said.

Ryan Rowberry, an associate law professor at Georgia State University, called economics "the biggest driver" of the litigation. In Florida, oyster fishing and other industries depend on the waterways. Georgia's attorneys say a cap would affect industries that contribute almost \$18 billion annually to the state's economy, including peanut, cotton and corn farming.

Environmental groups in both states also are concerned about the trees, fish and other species that could be affected.

Gil Rogers, director of the Southern Environmental Law Center in Alabama and Georgia, said his organization and others want to make sure the overall health of the massive river system is considered — not just the economic effects in each state.

Florida environmental groups asked in recent court documents that the court "protect the Apalachicola region," including 30 animal species and 103 plant species considered endangered or threatened.

#### **COULD THIS CASE RESOLVE THE LONG DISPUTE OVER WATER?**

It's unlikely. If the Supreme Court ultimately rules, Rowberry and others expect continuing legal disputes. Court decisions, Rogers said, aren't flexible enough to deal with all the factors affecting water supply in the region like climate change or shifts in rain patterns. And if one state isn't satisfied with the other's actions, resolution can only come from a court.

Rowberry said the two states still can try to come up with an agreement about water use. A contract could be designed to last decades and allow for mediation if one state "doesn't hold up their end of the deal," he said. But so far, neither state has been willing.

Alabama also indicated in recent court documents that it could file its own suit against Georgia in the future. The eastern part of the state uses the watershed, and Alabama sided with Florida in a friend of the court filing, encouraging a cap on Georgia's use.

Apalachicola Times 10/27/16

# New Corps colonel urges collaboration

By David Adlerstein  
The Apalachicola Times

Four months into his command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mobile District, Col. James A. DeLapp preached a message of collaboration on his inaugural visit to Apalachicola Oct. 14.

At a luncheon jointly hosted by the city and county at the Owl Café, DeLapp said the Corps is tasked with balancing a number of different authorized uses of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river systems that it oversees, including hydroelectric dams, recreation, economic

development, and flood control.

"Collaboration is the key," he said. "The Corps tries to meet all of those purposes.

"Everyone has their own unique interests, some are shared and some are divergent," DeLapp stressed, in his opening remarks, following a luncheon that prominently featured raw oysters and fresh shrimp. "The challenge the Corps has as the executor is to take all the interests together and to meet all of those.

"The Corps and I are not alone, we don't make those

See CORPS, A2



County Commissioner Smokey Parrish, left, speaks with Col. James Delapp, commander of the Army Corps of Engineers' Mobile District. DAVID ADLERSTEIN | THE TIMES

# CORPS

Continued from A1

decisions unilaterally although the district commander has quite a bit of authority," he said. "We can't do things we aren't authorized or provided funding to do. If we could it would probably be a much different day but you'd have things changing every two or three years."

"You may not always agree with the end solution, but we're trying to meet all of those purposes," he said.

Following the buffet lunch, the invited guests heard from several introductory speakers, including County Commissioner Smokey Parrish and Franklin County Seafood Workers Association President Shannon Hartsfield, who appealed to the new district commander to consider the needs of the Apalachicola Bay area. Parrish spoke passionately about the river's world-class status as a vibrant estuary, and urged the new Corps commander, who doubles as the district engineer, to consider this when flow regulations are established.

"It's our culture, it's our heritage, it's our way of life, and we want to continue that," said Parrish. "Look around, there's no 10-story condominiums, there's no theme parks."

He stressed the critical role

oysters have in processing the nutrients that come down the river, and keeping the bay healthy.

"Without that we lose our ecosystem, we lose our biosphere, we lose out environment," he said. "People here want their environment protected. They want to share their seafood with all the people who come here."

Parrish cautioned the colonel that a situation such as Lake Okeechobee, which is now costing millions of dollars to clean up, must be avoided for Apalachicola Bay.

In his remarks, Hartsfield spoke of how more and more seafood workers are turning to other occupations because of the difficulties in making a living on the water. Unfortunately, a scheduled trip to the bay had to be scratched due to the colonel's timing on his trip down the river.

"Cat Point is the only harvestable area in this bay, and we're talking about a drop in a hat in this bay," said Hartsfield, noting that he had just reviewed the latest details of the Corps' water control manual.

"I didn't see anything that's going to give us a future in our harvestable areas," he said. "It's a trend we've been seeing year after year and it's getting worse and worse. We're in reality, and guys are just now realizing it (the seafood industry) may not return."

"Oystermen for generations have focused on the bay.

My son would have been fifth generation," said Hartsfield. "It's scary, scary times and I don't know what kind of future Apalachicola is going to hold for us. "Everybody's making changes but there's only so much of change this seafood industry can change to," he said. "I'm hoping in the future some compromises can start happening. We need to figure out a way to give you some other options that can be done."

Apalachicola Mayor Van Johnson began the program by presenting DeLapp with a key to the city. Later, the University of Florida's Andy Kane, who heads up the local SMART task force on the seafood industry, gave three oyster shells to DeLapp, with holes in them that indicated where they had been drilled through by tiny organisms that have proliferated as saltwater levels have grown and freshwater flows have diminished.

Also speaking were Catherine T. Phillips, PhD, head of the regional office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, who spoke about the need to preserve the estuary's rich population of marine life, and Dan Tonsmeire, with the Apalachicola Riverkeepers, who urged a series of specific measures be taken on behalf of the area's concerns.

In his remarks, DeLapp, a Chicago native, said that he has learned in his various assignments, ranging from Phoenix,

Arizona and the Pacific Northwest to work on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Baghdad Iraq, that "every region of the country has its own unique challenges."

"Phoenix looks as every bit of water as liquid gold to them," he said. "No one understands the value of water more than those who have to manage that system to make sure they have every drop of water. In the Pacific Northwest they appear to be flush with water, there's not a big issue of releasing it."

"This ecosystem has its own unique challenges. I think collectively we can all help to make it the very best we can within the constraints we face," said DeLapp.

He said his trip along the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee and Flint rivers has enabled him "to really gain an appreciation for the rivers, as well as the industries and the communities that rely on those rivers."

He said dams and hydroelectric projects along the rivers have enabled economic growth and flood control. "To leverage those natural resources we have to allow economy to grow," said DeLapp. "But there's no doubt there's consequences to that growth. We've learned a lot of hard lessons as a country and some we're trying to mitigate and collectively we work together to do that."

"We don't have the silver bullet. We'd like to leverage all the science, to make good sound decisions on what we

need to do to move forward."

He also noted the funding challenges faced by the Corps. "What we do is not cheap, and today more so than ever our nation's really struggling to continue to fund these vital resources they've built over the years," said DeLapp. "We don't have the funding and resources to do it all on our own anymore. We must rely on universities."

He said he has not yet visited Lake Lanier. "With its 'big houses and big boats,' but will do so soon. "I want to make sure I saw this part of the river as well," he said. "What happens downstream is really what's most important."

"You get a much different view than on a drive, when you come down the river and see the challenges," DeLapp said. "We saw the depths and some of the snags and some of the things in the way."

In the question-and-answer period, DeLapp said that "there's no doubt the greatest challenge for this district is why were here, what everyone likes to refer to as the 'water wars.'"

He said the issue has moved beyond Mobile District, and now has multiple states involved in an ongoing court battle.

"We all have a great appreciation and understanding of that challenge," said DeLapp. "There are high stress demands. The last thing we want to do is negatively impact any one or any community."

# Jane Sauls' name graces Fort Braden library



**Sean Rossman**, Democrat staff writer 7:25 a.m. EDT October 27, 2016



*(Photo: Alvin McBean/Democrat)*

Leon County Commissioner Jane Sauls' biggest career accomplishment — and a reason she ran for office 20 years ago — now bears her name.

On Wednesday morning, the county unveiled the rededicated "Jane G. Sauls Fort Braden Branch Library" on Blountstown Highway. Hundreds of people helped commemorate the occasion, including county staff, elected officials and former commissioners who once shared the dais with the "dean of the County Commission."

Sauls attended her last commission meeting on Tuesday, when dozens of county staff came to pay their respects to the 5-term representative of District 2, which spans from Florida State University to Woodville and

Fort Braden.

The need for a Fort Braden library was one of the reasons Sauls sought the seat in 1996. The commission obtained a \$300,000 state grant for the building in 1999 and Sauls facilitated the county purchase of the land. The library opened in 2002.

Sauls thanked the community for its support over the years. She and her husband of more than 50 years, Marvin, plan on spending part of their retirement in North Carolina.

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**Leon County Commissioner Jane Sauls speaks at a Wednesday morning ceremony in which the county's Fort Braden Branch Library was renamed after her. Commission Chairman Bill Proctor, second to left, Leon County Administrator Vince Long and Commissioner Nick Maddox were among many to take part in the commemoration. (Photo: Alvin McBean/Democrat)**

"To have my name as part of the library's name is the most special tribute and reward to me," she said. "I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the confidence you have in me ... I must say that these past 20 years have gone by so quickly. I guess that's what happens when you enjoy what you're doing."

Sauls' commission colleagues shared anecdotes of her long career and commended her quiet nature, ability to lead thoughtful debates and reputation as a dedicated public servant.

Commissioner John Dailey called Sauls "a true stateswoman" and still remembers the advice she gave him when he was elected in 2006.

"Always do the best you can and always try to do no harm," Dailey recalled. "I've taken that to heart and I think the board has taken that to heart ... She will always be remembered for her ethical leadership and for paving the way for the rest of us and serving as a great mentor."

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# 'Keeping the momentum going'

By **Tim Croft**

The Port St. Joe Star  
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Recent weeks seem to bring the consistent drip of positive economic news.

First, the announcement that Eastern Shipbuilding out of Bay County had secured a \$10 billion contract to build vessels for the

U.S. Coast Guard.

In Gulf County, Eastern Shipbuilding owns 60-plus acres along the Intracoastal Waterway in addition to having a lease for 20 acres and bulkhead space on the former paper mill site.

While it is not yet clear to what extent Eastern's operations will expand into Gulf County, the company announced three years

ago it would be expanding this way; the Coast Guard contract has local officials optimistic those plans will soon come to fruition.

Then, a week ago, Port St. Joe Port Authority entered into a lease agreement with a wood-chip company for the former Arizona Chemical site.

That same company has agreed to a letter of intent

(LOI) to ship, from a base of the Arizona Chemical site and St. Joe Company waterfront property, from the Port of Port St. Joe.

"This is very big news and very exciting," said Eugene Raffield, chairman of the Port Authority last week. "This has been a long time, we have been waiting for

**See GOING, A5**

## GOING

*Continued from A1*

this day."

This week, on Wednesday, local economic development leaders were in Bristol for the kickoff of a regional effort aimed at identifying assets and economic opportunities in the four counties of Gulf, Franklin, Liberty and Gadsden.

The event is the start of technical work funded by a \$65,000 grant awarded to the Gulf County Economic Development Council by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

The grant is being administered by the Apalachee Regional Planning Council and the kickoff aims to bring together the four counties

linked by potential economic development assets.

Franklin County has received funding to assess opportunities around its municipal airport, a facility which has the Genesee Wyoming rail line, which connects to the Port of Port St. Joe, as a neighbor.

Gadsden provides the link to I-10 and Liberty several potential future sites of economic growth.

"This should be an interesting meeting," said Chris Holley, executive director of the Gulf County EDC. "This is all part of keeping the momentum going forward."

One of the more eagerly anticipated aspects of the meeting is a presentation by officials from Genesee Wyoming regarding the state of the rail line that threads from the Gulf County to Chattahoochee. Engineers were in Gulf

County last week assessing the condition of the rail and various sites with rail access that could prove to be boosts to economic development, including the former Material Transfer Industries and Premier Chemical sites.

With a contract and LOI pertaining to the port in hand, Holley said the county would begin the process of trying to secure Florida Department of Transportation funds for rail improvements.

Several million dollars, matches by the St. Joe Company, had been set aside, but the process is three steps and the first is to submit to FDOT a letter requesting release of the funds. Following steps will include quantifying job creation and a final plan for the funds. Holley said the initial letter, based on the signing of contracts and LOIs last week,

would be taken this week.

"It will take us a little while to get that done," Holley said. "I am excited to get it done."

There is also work to be tasked in workforce readiness, which is where CareerSource Gulf Coast enters the picture, as well as an analysis and understanding of the road network in the region and how that might be improved to foster economic development.

All this activity is occurring with the Florida Legislature soon to move into committee meetings and the ensuing legislative session early next year.

A permit for dredging the federally-authorized shipping channel to open development of the port is in hand; what is needed is a final number for that project.

Lawmakers have already earmarked \$20 million for dredging.

But getting that final number makes Mott MacDonald's ongoing work on engineering and designing the infrastructure for dredge spoil disposal to significant.

"I am anxious for Mott MacDonald to finish so that we have a finite number for dredging to present to the legislature," Holley said.

With RESTORE Act funds due to materialize in the coming year, the key, Holley said, is performing all the necessary preparation work, from sites to workforce, "ready."

"It all moves you to eliminating questions about the port and the opportunities," Holley said. "All of this is maintaining momentum; each thing all compounding on each other."

"All of this is part of this regional approach. There is a lot news right now and most of

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# Port Authority inks LOI

By **Tim Croft**

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Wednesday was a day the Port St. Joe Port Authority has been awaiting for years.

During a special meeting, Port Authority chair Eugene Raffield put his John Hancock to a letter of intent from a wood chip manufacturer to ship through the Port of Port St. Joe.

The letter of intent also includes a lease agreement for a portion of the former Arizona Chemical site, which is owned by the Port Authority; the company put down a security deposit as well as first and last months lease payments.

That is the first income the Port Authority has had in well over a decade.

"This is very big news and very exciting," Raffield said. "I'm excited, the company is excited."

See **AUTHORITY**, A6

## AUTHORITY

*Continued from A1*

Raffield said the company intended to begin moving equipment to the Arizona Chemical site in the coming weeks and some local jobs would be created; more on those job postings will come later.

The LOI is significant because it is the document state officials have long required from the Port Authority to begin providing access to various pools of money.

With a permit for dredging of the shipping channel in hand and some dredge funding already earmarked by the Florida Legislature

as well as pledges to release state dollars for improvements to the Genessee-Wyoming rail line, the money would only flow with a customer.

But with Eastern Shipbuilding, which owns more than 60 acres along the Gulf County Canal as well as a leased portion of the bulkhead on the former paper mill site, winning a \$10 billion Coast Guard contract, the port appeared poised for action.

In a sense, Raffield said, Eastern may have served as something of a first domino for the wood chip company.

"This has been a long time, we have been waiting for this day," Raffield said. "This opens doors for a lot of state and federal dollars."

In addition, Raffield said the deal-signing showed what could happen when all hands are on deck; noting critical Board of County Commissioners and Port St. Joe City Commission support.

"We can all be thankful we stood together as a team," he said.

During Wednesday's meeting, Raffield stepped down as chairman, though he will remain in place as director of the Port of Port St. Joe.

Board member Guerry Magidson succeeds Raffield as chairman.

In addition, the Port Authority signed a letter of support for the North Port St. Joe Project Action Committee as it the group moves forward with updating the area's master plan.

# Positive trends buttressing port

By Tim Croft

The Port St. Joe Star | 850-227-7827  
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As the Port St. Joe Port Authority inches closer to a contract with a customer, the news surrounding the port rode a positive wave last week.

Most prominent, the announcement from the U.S. Coast Guard that it had awarded a \$10.5 billion contract to Eastern Shipbuilding in Bay County to build nine offshore patrol cutters (see story A2).

The contract was the largest ever awarded by the

Coast Guard.

"It has the potential of being one of the greatest economic drivers in this region," said Port Authority chair Eugene Raffield. "I'm excited; (the Port Authority is) excited."

Raffield's fishing business has a long history with Brian D'Isernia, whose family owns Eastern Shipping.

A boat built by D'Isernia and christened in 1977 and part of Raffield Fisheries' fleet is the sister ship to the Andria Gail which was lost in events detailed in the movie "The Perfect Storm."

"The D'Isernia has

worked hard, had some ups and downs, and never quit," Raffield said. "I am happy for what they have accomplished."

And with Eastern the owner of the parcel of land beneath the Tapper Bridge which was once slated to become a barge terminal for the Port of Port St. Joe as well as roughly half the bulkhead at the former paper mill site, Gulf County appears poised to play a role in Eastern's future plans.

"We're excited for the opportunity to sit down with Brian once he comes back to earth and talk about the

potential for Gulf County," Raffield said.

Meanwhile, a local marine company will be moving 10,000 tons of aggregate in the coming weeks, providing additional shipping credit for the Port of Port St. Joe.

That credit is critical, said Tommy Pitts, project manager with Mott MacDonald, to secure U.S. Army Corps funds for future maintenance dredging of the shipping channel.

"Anything" shipped within the shipping channel or port planning area provides

See PORT, A7

## PORT

Continued from A1

tonnage for the Port of Port St. Joe, Raffield said, noting the port already receives credit through shipping by the two fisheries along the canal.

"It is good we have barge traffic and the seafood industry," Pitts said.

Raffield added, "These are the little starts of what a port does."

Those steps are taken, Raffield noted, while discussions taking place beyond the county keep the port on the radar with state and federal officials.

Pitts indicated that talks are ongoing with the office of U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Florida) regarding securing the

funding to move forward on dredging the federally-authorized shipping channel as permitted.

Dan Velazquez with the St. Joe Company said state legislative leaders during a visit of Bay County recently indicated the Florida Legislature would do what was needed to secure funding to make port development work, once a contract was in place.

Velazquez added that a company was discussing the former Premier Chemical site with the St. Joe Company.

And Raffield said a contract with a woodchip company was "very close" and could be signed any day.

The contract would include a lease agreement for the former Arizona Chemical site, which the

Port Authority owns.

"Sooner or later the fish are going to bite," Raffield said. "When the dominoes start falling the doors closed to us now will be opened.

"A lot of people know what we are doing, they are ready for this to take off. We just need to perform."

While contracts and letters of intent dominate the current port agenda, engineering and design work on the dredge spoil disposal infrastructure continues.

Pitts said Mott MacDonald have completed more than 60 percent of the work, aware all along about the timing.

"We are conscious of the timeline and that when you have a contract we will need to be ready," Pitts said.

# APALACHICOLA RIVERKEEPER

SAVING AN AMERICAN TREASURE

## Local Father & Daughter Paddle River Trek 2016

By Scott Stephens  
News Editor

RiverTrek 2016 launches on October 11 with 107 miles to go. RiverTrek team members are paddling to raise funds for Apalachicola Riverkeeper. On the morning of October 11, 2016, a team of ardent paddlers will launch their gear-laden kayaks at the northern end of the Apalachicola River just below the Jim Woodruff Dam in Chattahoochee and end their journey in Apalachicola at Battery Park on Saturday, October 15th.

Jim McClennan and his daughter, Mary Grace, will be joining other paddlers this year.

Over the course of his professional career, Jim has worked in the murky waters of state politics, serving as a speechwriter for Governor Lawton Chiles and communications director for then Lt. Governor Buddy MacKay.

He also spent several years as a PR executive with the firm that is now Sachs Media Group. Jim left Tallahassee (and everything political) in 2003 and now works as the marketing director for AppRiver LLC, a serendipitously named email and web security company located in Gulf Breeze, Florida.

A lifelong hunter, fisherman and outdoorsman, every weekend will find Jim out of doors in pursuit of his hobbies, most always on or near the water and very often in the Apalachicola River swamp. Stories from his family and childhood adventures in Blountstown are the basis of his recently published book, *Life Along the Apalachicola River*.

Jim told the County Record "For the people in Calhoun, Liberty and the other counties along the Apalachicola, the river is an important part of who we are. It sustained the generations who came

before us and its fish and game allow us a measure of self-sufficiency that we all appreciate. It's incredibly important to me that we pass that along to the generations who follow."

Mary Grace McClellan, A 2015 graduate of the University of West Florida's environmental management program, currently works for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). She spends much of her spare time hiking, kayaking and camping in the Apalachicola River basin and surrounding areas.

Though she grew up in Tallahassee and Pensacola, Mary Grace is part of a family that has lived in Calhoun County for several generations. In fact, she spent her first night in the river swamp well before her first birthday. However, it wasn't until college that she began to understand and appreciate the unique ecosystems and natural

treasures of the Apalachicola. Now, she's committed to helping preserve the river so that future generations can also enjoy and appreciate it.

"I grew up spending time in the swamp with my father, grandfather and uncles. However, it was only later -- when I began studying environmental science -- that I learned just how special the Apalachicola River really is. Not just to my family and me, but also because of the diversity of the plant and animal life it supports."

Executive Director of the Apalachicola Riverkeeper Shannon Lease stated "Apalachicola Riverkeeper is incredibly grateful to the public for their financial support of fundraisers like RiverTrek. Riverkeeper is a small organization with a mighty mission and saving the Apalachicola River and Bay for future generations to enjoy will take all of us working together."

## **WORKERS' COMP RATES PEGGED TO GO UP 14.5 PERCENT**

NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA - THE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE, September 27, 2016: Pointing to a major Florida Supreme Court ruling on attorneys' fees, state regulators issued an order Tuesday that said workers' compensation insurance rates should increase 14.5 percent starting later this year.

The long-awaited order by the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation trimmed a proposal that called for increasing rates 19.6 percent. Nevertheless, business groups immediately warned that a 14.5 percent increase would hurt employers.

"Today's workers' compensation rate increase is a hard hit to small business owners and our economy," Bill Herrle, executive director of the small-business group NFIB/Florida, said in a prepared statement. "While the (insurance) commissioner has done what was necessary in response to the Supreme Court undoing legislation that capped attorneys' fees and maintained reasonable rates, our small business owners will be paying the price."

The National Council on Compensation Insurance, which makes workers' compensation rate filings for the insurance industry, had proposed a 19.6 percent increase to take effect Oct. 1. Tuesday's order said the 14.5 percent increase is contingent on the National Council on Compensation Insurance revising its filing by an Oct. 4 deadline to incorporate changes requested by regulators.

The 14.5 percent increase would take effect Dec. 1 and apply to new policies and renewal policies. The Office of Insurance Regulation said the increase would not affect "in-force" policies, meaning many businesses would not see higher rates until their policies come up for renewal.

The National Council on Compensation Insurance, commonly known as NCCI, issued a statement Tuesday saying it was reviewing the order and will respond to the request for a revised filing "in a timely manner."

Most of the expected rate increase stems from an April ruling by the Supreme Court that said a limit on attorneys' fees in workers' compensation cases was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court ruling, in a case known as Marvin Castellanos v. Next Door Company, involved an attorney being awarded the equivalent of \$1.53 an hour in successfully pursuing a claim for benefits for a worker injured in Miami.

Business groups have long argued that limiting attorneys' fees is a critical part of holding down workers' compensation insurance costs. But critics have contended that the state's fee limits favored insurers and took away legal rights of injured workers, at least in part because workers would have a hard time finding legal representation in pursuing claims.

Much of the debate is rooted in a 2003 overhaul of the workers' compensation system by then-Gov. Jeb Bush and the Republican-controlled Legislature. Florida businesses at the time faced some of the highest insurance rates in the country. The overhaul, which included strict limits on attorneys' fees and other changes, ultimately led to a 60 percent drop in insurance rates.

The April Supreme Court ruling and Tuesday's order set the stage for what likely will be a renewed debate about the workers' compensation system during the 2017 legislative session. Along with business groups such as NFIB, the Florida Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Florida, the debate is expected to include plaintiffs' attorneys, labor unions and insurers.

"Florida is on the verge of finding itself right where it was in 2003 with some of the highest workers' compensation rates in the nation," Tom Feeney, president and CEO of Associated Industries of Florida, said in a prepared statement Tuesday. "We must make sure this doesn't happen by developing sound solutions to our state's workers' compensation system."

# Commissioner Holt appointed to NACo leadership role

## Special to the Herald

Quincy, FL – Gadsden County again gains key national representation within the National Association of Counties (NACo) Rural Action Caucus. Commissioner Brenda A. Holt received news of her appointment to the Rural Action Caucus that is critical to developing policies impacting rural life and development.

Holt was also nominated and confirmed by NACo President and Leon County Commissioner Brian Desloge to the Human Services and Education Steering Committee.

In a letter to Commissioner Holt, Commissioner Desloge stated, "I have the honor and privilege of appointing NACo's leadership team. As president of the National Association of Counties it is my pleasure to appoint you as a member of the Rural Action Caucus and to confirm your nomination as a member of the Human Services and Education Steering Committee."

NACo's Rural Action Caucus (RAC) is a key component of NACo. RAC is the voice for America's rural counties before Congress and the Administration. Nearly two-thirds of the nation's 3,069 counties are designated as rural, with a



**Gadsden County Commissioner Brenda A. Holt, Chairperson - District 4**

combined population of 60 million. The Human Services and Education Steering Committee provides legislative guidance to Congress on children's issues, foster care, public assistance and income support, services to senior citizens and individuals with disabilities, immigration policy, social services, and elementary, secondary and post-secondary education.

"It is truly an honor to represent rural counties, like Gadsden County, on a national level. Having the unique experience of being from a rural county, I look forward to providing my experiences and knowledge to help shape national policies. I want to thank Commissioner Desloge for having enough confidence in me to confirm my nomination to the committee and to appoint me to the caucus," stated Commissioner Holt.

County elected officials from these rural

areas are dedicated to solving many critical issues impacting rural life and development. These include infrastructure development, broadband deployment, development of new rural clinics and hospitals, road and bridge construction and maintenance, business development opportunities and many more county responsibilities.

County Administrator Robert Presnell stated, "Congratulations to Chairperson Holt on her confirmation and appointment to these key national roles. She has the knowl-

edge and ability to handle these roles and bring a first-hand perspective on issues in rural counties."

Since 1997, NACo's Rural Action Caucus has addressed critical federal, state and local issues.

# RESTORE funding plan off to Treasury

## BOCC conducts first budget hearing

By Tim Croft

The Star | 850-227-7827  
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The Board of County Commissioners approved the transmittal of its first-year spending of RESTORE funds during a special meeting Tuesday.

Commissioners, after a

final public comment period, approved the multi-year implementation plan for the county's direct allocation dollars, so-called pot one, from fines stemming from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The county has in the bank for the first year roughly \$2.8 million, which is earmarked in the BOCC plan for the beach restoration project on St. Joseph Peninsula.

Stella Wilson, with Dewberry, the county's consultant in crafting the multi-year plan, said the plan now heads to the U.S. Treasury, which has 90 days to approve the plan.

Treasury could also come back with questions and comments for further explanation, Wilson said.

She added that during the most recent public comment period, triggered by

the BOCC decision to alter the plan that emerged from the commission-appointed committee which reviewed and ranked some 32 projects, brought in more than 50 comments.

All but one were in support of devoting all the funds to the restoration project; the one dissent, from the National Wildlife Federation

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## COUNTY

*Continued from A1*

in Texas, addressed the lack of public input on the changed plan.

That engaged another round of what has become a familiar discussion during recent BOCC meetings concerning RESTORE.

The RESTORE Act Committee (RAC) ranked six projects for first-year funding, finalizing that plan and sending it to the BOCC.

The BOCC, without advance notice, altered the plan to devote all dollars to beach restoration.

Supporters of the move point to the fact that the restoration project was the only ranked project with matching funds, a 7-to-1 match, Dr. Pat Hardman said, and was also the only project shovel ready.

The issue raised by Commissioners Joanna Bryan and Carmen McLemore in prior meetings as well now as the National Wildlife Federation, was the lack of advance public notice or discussion about the change, which had also never been discussed by the RAC before it finalized a plan the committee spent

three years crafting.

And the change in the multi-year plan arrived after the BOCC took on, with no prior notice or public discussion as reflected in meeting minutes, the responsibility of providing some \$4 million in funding for beach restoration.

The only discussion by the commission was then-Commissioner Warren Yeager stating, after a referendum on local funding failed, that he would take the responsibility of finding the funding.

"We changed (the plan) without a lot of public comment," Bryan said. "It was probably not in the best interest of the public."

"I think the way we went about it was incorrect."

The Wildlife Federation also questioned whether the beach restoration project fit the goals of RESTORE funding in addressing water quality and water resource protection.

"This is a restoration project," said Yeager, now the county's in-house consultant on all things RESTORE. "By definition, by the best science available, this is a restoration project."

"We believe the public understands where we are at. We will defend this process."

Christy McElroy, a member

of the RAC from the outset, urged commissioners to include in the packet to Treasury the technical rankings of the project, which placed the Port of Port St. Joe at the top of the list.

Commissioners also approved moving forward on a request for qualifications to hire a federal grant writer as the final step toward securing the RESTORE funds.

Once the multi-year plan is approved, and the hope is that will come by the end of the year, the county will be required to submit federal grant applications to secure the funding.

The goal is to have funding in place by early next year in order to have the restoration project begin sometime in spring 2017.

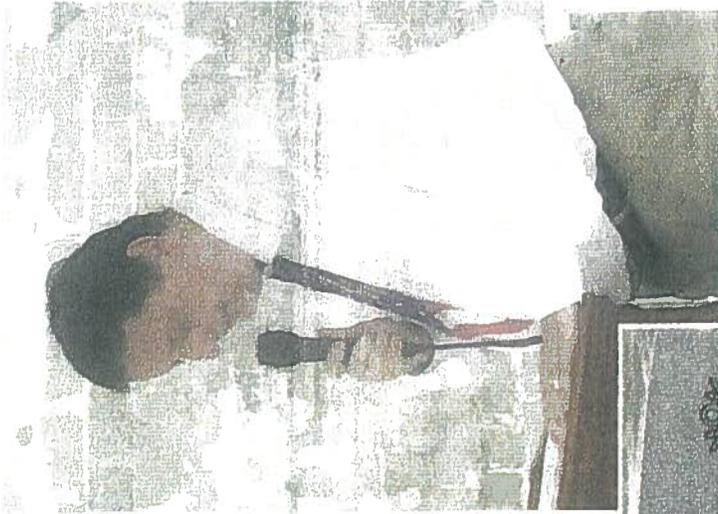
# Malone observes "In Honor and Remembrance" at new park

By Homer Hirt

The weather threatened, with dark clouds lowering to the north and heat lightning flashing towards the southwest, but the Town of Malone continued Monday night with the dedication ceremony of their new Veterans' Memorial nestled in an open space alongside the main highway.

The Memorial, a dream for over a year of Mayor Gene Wright's, was given a flag pole and a bright new Stars and Stripes by Woodmen Life, and Wright and the Town's councilmen accepted it in a moving salute just hours after the fifteenth anniversary of the 9-11 tragedy in New York City, at the Pentagon and in a field in Pennsylvania. Present were Jackson County Sheriff

Malone Mayor, Gene Wright



JACKSON COUNTY TIMES photos — Homer Hirt

**Pictured (L-R):** Dee Dee Patrick, Pastor - John Smith, Jim Peacock, Sheriff - Lou Roberts and Jackson County Fire and Rescue Chief - Scott Birge.

Lou Roberts and the County Fire and Rescue Chief Scott Birge, representing the first responders.

The crowd of about seventy five heard the welcome by Mayor Wright, who then introduced Pastor John Smith for the invocation. DeeDee Patrick sang God Bless the USA. Speaker for the evening was James Peacock, and a retire Secret Service special agent, who told, minute by minute, reactions by Federal officials on that fateful day.

Woodmen representative Mike Hutto, a Jackson County native, explained why his organization felt the need and the desire to give flags on occasions like this one. During the Flag Presentation the Sneads American Legion Post 241 raised the flag to the top, then lowered it to half staff in memory of the dead. Ms. Patrick sang the National Anthem and led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Post Commander Guy Edwards played Taps as the finale for the program.



Malone's new Veterans Memorial



***October 2016 - RPC News from Around the State***

**West Florida RPC Hosts Expo**

**Apalachee RPC Updating SWIM Plan**

**Tampa Bay RPC Assesses Risk for USF**

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Regional Planning Council**



**WFRPC Hosts Expo for Local Elected Officials**

On September 29th, the WFRPC hosted an expo at the Emerald Coast Convention Center in Fort Walton Beach for elected officials, members of their various programs' boards, and the community at large. The day included a four-hour continuing education on ethics training, facilitated by the League of Cities and featuring speaker, Attorney Jerry Miller; a program fair displaying the many programs and services facilitated by the WFRPC; a WFRPC board meeting; and a thank you dinner for the many citizens, volunteers, board members, elected Officials and staff members who keep WFRPC successfully moving forward in its quest to preserve and enhance the quality of life in northwest Florida.

Forty-four people attended the training, 54 attended the dinner, and many others visited the program fair and attended the board meeting. WFRPC Executive



Guests Enjoy Dinner at the Expo

Director, Austin Mount, said, "It was a great opportunity to bring so many important players of the WFRPC under one roof to discuss our growth and future, and just to say, 'thank you' to everyone who assists in our success."

## Apalachee Regional Planning Council



### ARPC Updating the Apalachicola Basin Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan

The ARPC is working with the Northwest Florida Water Management District and a variety of partners

to provide an update to the Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan of the Apalachicola River and Bay. The ARPC is the lead agency responsible for modernizing the SWIM Plan, which was last updated in 1996. The Apalachicola River contributes the third greatest freshwater input into the Gulf of Mexico and was recently titled the 'most endangered' river in America by American Rivers. The goal of the project is to provide a fresh characterization and analysis of the river while also gathering input from the stakeholders. One of the primary purposes of the update is to steer the Restoration Strategy for the region while potentially determining future projects.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is the driving force behind the update, tying back to the Florida Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) Restoration Strategy. NFWF (2016) explains the process further:



*"This multi-component, multi-year project is an integrated planning effort that will serve as an overarching framework for restoring and conserving the natural resources of Florida's Gulf Coast through the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF)."*

On October 14th, ARPC Staff met with Congresswoman Gwen Graham and Colonel James Delapp of the Mobile District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to discuss the needs of the Florida Stakeholders.



## Tampa Bay



## Regional Planning Council

### **TBRPC Assesses Disaster Risk for the University of South Florida**

TBRPC has been awarded a grant from the Land Economics Foundation in cooperation with the University of Tampa, and the City of Treasure Island. The grant will allow an examination of current commercial and residential land use policies that hinder economic growth in older, more established beach communities. The project is entitled "Land Use Mix for Fiscal Sustainability in Beachfront Communities." The City of Treasure Island has agreed to be a case study, with the results being used to propose commercial and residential policy changes that will encourage revitalization in the City and improve economic growth and development opportunities. The project will explore a change in commercial zoning, a revision of residential land use regulations, and alternative options to promote sustainable growth within the City. The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council is conducting a Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, and Consequence Analysis for the University of South Florida. This project examines the likelihood that natural and manmade disasters, such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and hazardous materials spills, will affect the university's Tampa campus and its 42,000+ students. TBRPC's report will also provide estimates of damage to campus buildings and other facilities, along with potential impacts on health and safety that may be caused by future disaster events.

Once completed, the USF Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, and Consequence Analysis is expected to be incorporated into the Hillsborough County Local Mitigation Strategy, the county's federally-recognized plan to reduce or eliminate the risks associated with disasters. This disaster vulnerability assessment is also an important step for the USF Emergency Management Department in its effort to achieve accreditation through the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP). Currently, only three other universities in the U.S. have obtained EMAP accreditation.



## **Recent RPC Awards**

### **2016 NADO Innovation Award**

**Apalachee RPC**

**Central Florida RPC**

**East Central Florida and Tampa Bay RPCs**

**North Central Florida RPC**

### **2016 FPZA Outstanding Redevelopment Plan Award**

### **2016 APA Florida Award of Excellence**

**Central Florida RPC**

*East Lake Parker/West North Combee Redevelopment Plan*

**2016 Driehaus Form-Based Codes Institute  
International Form-Based Code Award**

**Treasure Coast RPC**

*City of Delray Beach Central Business District Form-Based Code  
and Architectural Design Guidelines*

**2016 National Association of Development  
Organization**

**Excellence in Transportation Award**

**Central Florida RPC**

*Heartland Regional Transportation  
Planning Organization-Public Participation Plan*

**2015 National Association of Regional Councils  
Major Metro Award**

**Tampa Bay, Central Florida & Southwest Florida RPCs**

*Florida/Local/Regional Broadband Planning Project*

**2015 Congress for the New Urbanism Charter  
Award**

**Treasure Coast RPC**

*Seven50: Southeast Florida Regional Partnership Plan*

**About the Florida Regional Councils Association**



Created by the Regional Planning Councils in 1976, FRCA is the association which represents the 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 the RPCs, working together through FRCA, 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.

## Calendars

<b>2016 - 2017 FRCA Partners Meetings Schedule</b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Time</u></b>	<b><u>Place</u></b>
<p>FRCA hosts several Partners Meetings each year, the upcoming meetings are listed in the table to the right.</p>	<b>Dec 7th</b>	<b>9:00 am-12:00 pm</b>	<b>Tallahassee</b>
<b>Annual Meetings and Events Calendar</b>	<b>Feb 10th</b>	<b>9:00 am-12:00 pm</b>	<b>Tallahassee</b>
<p>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 <a href="#">link</a> to view the 2016 Calendar.</p>	<b>March 10th</b>	<b>9:00 am-12:00 pm</b>	<b>Tallahassee</b>

## FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

*Local Knowledge, Regional Solutions, Statewide Impact*

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