



**Newsletter
Spring 2021**

www.littlelagoon.org

**Next meeting:
Thursday, April 15,
2021, 6:00 PM
Virtual using Zoom**

This may be the last LLPS member meeting using Zoom due to COVID-19. Log into the presentation using your computer or mobile device from the comfort and safety of your home and hear about one of our local High School student's Oyster Gardening activities in Little Lagoon. You need to provide your own refreshments.

GSHS Senior Andrew Meza- "Seasonal Utilization of Oyster Gardens as Habitat for Larval Fish and Invertebrates." Our oyster gardens in the Lagoon provide additional habitat for small/larval "shrimp, fish and crabs." Andrew, with Ron and Dennis as mentors, was the primary investigator in a GSHS STEAM project to study and characterize what he found in our Lagoon oyster gardens as well as what he found in a "shell only" garden. 13 species were noted during the sampling effort. Oyster garden cages averaged 1,005 animals per cage. Find out more about what Andrew found in the effort to characterize fauna associated with oyster gardens and shell only gardens in Little Lagoon by joining the Member meeting Zoom presentation on April 15. Kudos to Tom and Laurie Eberly for providing their pier and oyster gardens for this study!

To join the Little Lagoon Preservation Society (LLPS) quarterly meeting on April 15, 2021 at 6:00 PM using Zoom on your computer or mobile device use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83538070495?pwd=YXI3Ukp6VlFJV0xHRC9zd0ZWMVhHUT09>

Meeting ID: 835 3807 0495

Passcode: 192628

Little Lagoon Pass Update

City of Gulf Shores (COGS), as the court appointed measuring agent for Lagoon Pass channel, issued a "Trigger Notification" on January 29, 2021. ALDOT is required by the court to "expeditiously commence dredging" within 72 hours of formal trigger notification. They appeared to be ready to dredge within the 72 hours and made their way out to the main channel constriction north of the pass bridge. A small amount of progress was made before they had a "pipe weld issue" with the dredge spoil transportation pipeline. Repairing the pipe and getting back to dredging took several weeks. In early March there was a booster pump failure. Repairs were made and they were back to pumping March 16, barely. As of the last report on the 16th, they were checking for pipe clogging and/or seal issues. Within the past 10

days they had moved towards the northern end of the channel, past the seawalls on the west side and were making progress. As of this writing, they were not currently dredging, assumption is another issue/failure. The Pass does appear clear enough that the Lagoon is getting adequate flushing and a small boat (shallow draft) could negotiate passage.

LLPS has received a summary of shoal volume surveys each year by Dr. Webb from 2013 - 2019. They show a constant shoal sand volume of around 120,000 cu yds from 2015 thru 2019. We have been promised the 2020 volume after they finish the survey for March 2021. Recall a trigger is issued once the shoal volume exceeds 150,000 cu yds. We also received some detail on how the shoal volumes are estimated and the process used. Flood shoal deposits in water depth shallower than 8' and historical imagery is the basis for the measurement. This process was developed by Dr. Douglas, Dr. Browder, and Dr. Webb.

Oyster Gardening Update

LLPS currently has 31 gardeners for the 2021 season. We also have 6 locations which will have 9 cages per location and will be stocked and maintained for data collection and research by Rayne Palmer who works for PJ. The project is for her Master's thesis. Since the 9 cages per research location are essentially 2 gardens each, the lagoon total is 43 gardens. Dennis and PJ keep extra resources for Gardens so additional gardens can be added for this summer. If you think you could host a garden for this season, please contact Dennis as they could add a few more based on resources.

Committee Activity Updates

Watershed Management Plan (WMP) –

There will be an outreach effort in early May as the final plan nears completion. Because of likely presence of COVID in May, Geosyntec is considering the following options: 1) large, in person meeting (50-person cap), 2) Small in-person meeting (max. 20) with live stream provided for those that cannot attend in person, or 3) Virtual Presentation (no limit) with option to record. Steering committee members Ron and Dennis voted for option 2.

LLPS has been requested to help Dr. Beebe on his "Little Lagoon Watershed Nutrient Assessment and Source Tracking" and UA Graduate student Mary Brandon Huettemann for her thesis research on aquifer nutrient recycling associated with high water/tropical events in the Lagoon. Any LLPS members on or near the Lagoon front can help by allowing installation of minimally invasive, shallow (6') wells on their property to sample for nutrients, other pollutants and water level of the aquifer. We got responses for 10 possible well locations but can use more. Contact Dennis if you can help with a small (1¼" diameter) well!

Lagoon Restoration Project- Dan Bond (COGS)- Ron, PJ, Dan, and Dennis met to discuss large scale oyster gardening in Little Lagoon. All were in favor of the "Park" being in the Eastern end of the Lagoon fronting the Erie Meyer Foundation wetlands property. Discussion on permissions from Erie Meyer Foundation, riparian rights "rent" for the property and permitting. Agreed on two "Nests" in the Lagoon for move-out of oysters as they mature. Hoping to have infrastructure installed and commence gardening by June 1, 2022.

Laguna Cove- Dan Bond (COGS) COGS will be having a Town Hall Meeting on April 20 to discuss various topics – environmental, school system, City efforts, and most likely Laguna Cove plans. Formal announcement to come out April 9.

Outreach

GSHS Scholarships- The Fund-raising team has lost members, various reasons. Dennis is looking for a team leader plus members to plan this effort. If you have skills planning, organizing, and executing projects of any kind, please talk to Dennis about working on the Fund-raising project for GSHS Scholarships.

Lagoon Clean-up- COGS Engineer Mark Acreman received and passed onto DCNR a list on locations of debris in Little Lagoon. Thank you to all who helped with the query effort and if anyone knows of additional debris clean up areas in and around the Lagoon, please contact Dennis.

GSHS Outreach - Andrew Meza has completed his paper for his Steam project with input from mentors Ron and Dennis. He will prepare a slide show and present his finding to LLPS at our quarterly meeting and to GSHS a week later.

Krista Marcum's classes have been conducting oyster garden maintenance and collecting population estimates on growth and population at Dennis's pier. Back in the classroom, they will calculate estimated restoration/ecological value associated with ~several thousand oysters at the pier. Dennis visited two GSHS Marine Biology classes and put on a phytoplankton identification and quantification seminar for the classes. Students then placed sample slides under scopes and did their own identification and tallying. Words were flying around like "phyto phun, Chaetoceros, Skeletonema, Psuedo-nitzschia" which led us to believe they got into it!

Jackie McGonigal, Program Director with The Gulf Coast Center for Ecotourism and Sustainability, has submitted a NOAA B-WET grant request to train teachers to perform and teach Alabama Water Watch (AWW) protocol WQ monitoring in the Lagoon to Gulf Shores HS science students. Students would then monitor WQ in the Lagoon using AWW methods. Funds are also requested for students and teachers growing, quantifying, and measuring natural set oyster spat grown on "cones" in the Lagoon. Part of the grant request would also fund several kayak outings for the purpose of biomass evaluations. Applicants should know in April to May about awards. Ron and Dennis provided significant input to the grant request effort and LLPS wrote a letter of recommendation as a partner.

WQ Monitoring - Maybe next week. Water Quality material storage area has been rebuilt after Hurricane Sally and hopefully collection pier at Site 1 may get rebuilt this week.

Financials

January 1, 2021 thru March 31, 2021	
Starting Balance	\$77,136.64
Total Income	\$1,410.00
Total Expenses	\$859.49
Ending Balance	\$77,687.15

Notable expenses- \$210 Chamber dues, \$189 USPS PO rental, \$351.11 WQ Supplies

[Membership – Little Lagoon Preservation Society](#)

We invite you to be a part of preserving Little Lagoon for generations to come. Your support is crucial if we are to preserve and protect this unique environment. Please join us as a member of Little Lagoon Preservation Society



Members receive a quarterly newsletter, meeting notifications, and updates regarding special issues.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Email allows us to keep our costs down so that a greater percentage of your donation may be applied toward our goals. Your email will be used by LLPS only to distribute newsletters and any important LLPS communications.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

\$25 \$50 \$75 other \$ _____

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

\$10

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

\$200 other \$ _____

Business members are eligible to place a logo on LLPS brochures and a link to their web site on the LLPS site, www.littlelagoon.org.

**Please complete this form and mail it with your check payable to LLPS
Little Lagoon Preservation Society
P. O. Box 3193
Gulf Shores, AL 36547**