



Newsletter

Summer 2020

www.littlelagoon.org

**Next meeting:
Thursday
July 16, 2020
5:30 pm
Virtual Meeting using
Zoom teleconference
technology**

Welcome back to Stay-At-Home Days in Alabama. Is this ever going to End? Since it seems we are in a never-ending pandemic, it is time to try out the “new normal.” For the next member meeting, Zoom technology is going to be used by the guest speakers to provide an update and detail on the ~1,000’ living shoreline restoration project in the SW corner of Little Lagoon in the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge. Dr. Eric Sparks, Assistant Extension Professor, Mississippi State University and Jackie Sablan, Wildlife Biologist, Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, will give the virtual presentation.

Link for Zoom meeting on July 16, 2020 5:30 PM:

<https://msstateextension.zoom.us/j/95639313581>

Little Lagoon Pass Update

A formal trigger was issued by the COGS on Friday, May 22 due to shoaling at the mouth of the pass from SE winds and a channel constriction just north of the bridge. Trigger requirements are less than 90 sq ft continuous cross section area along the channel. Per the court order ALDOT is required to “expeditiously commence dredging” within 72 hours of the trigger. And “weather permitting” also begin dredging at the channel constriction. ALDOT gets kudos for immediately using long reach excavators to remove the shoaling at the pass mouth. For some reason they did not mobilize the dredge for nearly 1 week. They also took nearly another week to rig up and commence dredging and began dredging at the northern most end of the channel instead of at



the constriction north of the pass bridge. Dredging progress was painfully slow and it was apparent the new “Eddie Pump” technology which performed very well during the past several dredging cycles was not working well this time around. LLPS inquired with ALDOT about failures to mobilize and commence dredging “expeditiously”, not starting at the constriction north of the bridge, and the painfully slow progress. ALDOT did not respond about the mobilization timing or starting at the constriction but did indicate the slow progress was due to pump problems on the dredge barge. A new pump was rigged up and they are back to making moderate progress. Bottom line is the delays have resulted in the pass mostly closed for nearly 2 weeks as of this report. It appears the huge constriction north of the bridge will not be reached by the dredge for at least 1 or 2 more weeks assuming they continue without further problems or delays. We should not be happy that the pass will be essentially closed with minimal circulation and flushing and fisheries benefits for ~1-2 months.

Dennis continues to ask ALDOT about the shoal sand survey and the answer is COVID19 impact to investigation not getting performed yet. The plan is to arrange a meeting at the Pass with the ALDOT Engineer to discuss the slow progress and what is required per the Court Order.

Oyster Gardening Update

Baby oysters, set on shell, were delivered to 43 locations and 50 gardens on June 3rd. For the most part gardeners were ready for delivery and excited about the new season. We lost one garden due to pier damage from tropical storm Cristobal but got it replaced. We may have lost one other garden due to tampering and a garden being left out of the water. This year the baby oysters are set on smaller shell but the total shell count of 100 per garden should be the same. Shell size was reduced to decrease garden weight and to produce a better cluster for restoration. Oysters are growing fast but remain small and delicate. At this point all that is needed is periodic 'sloshing' and a check to make sure no predators have made it into the gardens. This can be done as frequently as several times per day to once every week or so. The key here is GENTLE. You can see a demonstration at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4IsvdP5ISc&feature=youtu.be> Stay tuned for further instructions as the season progresses and the oysters get larger. We need as many volunteers as possible to measure oysters monthly. For an oyster gardening manual, oyster measurement input screens and oyster measurement instructions see <https://oystergardening.org/gardener-resources>



Committee Activity Updates

- **Watershed Management Plan (WMP)** - Ron and Dennis attended a virtual meeting and provided input on general fisheries decline in Lagoon watershed and pushed for evaluation of weir on bayou connecting Lake Shelby and Little Lagoon. A briefing was provided that was given to LLPS by Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) showing declines based on DCNR survey data. It was suggested this should be a big part of the WMP due to local and tourist fisheries demands and perhaps DCNR could provide similar analysis for Perdido/Wolf Bay and State Park Lakes. History on the weir reveals the main reason for it was to control salinity in Lake Shelby and Middle

Lake and control the water levels. Before the weir was built in 1991, there were outflow pipes with gates on them to prevent salt water from entering the Lakes. LLPS has a strong fisheries impact concern with the weir. Project/remediation recommendations should be in final WMP.

- **Watershed Related** - Ron, Dennis, and Lloyd (LLPS member and frequent volunteer for numerous LLPS activities) attended virtual meetings in June on possible nutrient and pathogen point sources into Little Lagoon. Looking at inflow and outflow points for the network of canals in SE Lagoon, golf courses, and septic sewage systems as a focus of possible investigations. Lloyd has been investigating permit and monitoring well info for multiple sewer processing plants as well as golf courses for possible nutrient contributions to the Lagoon via our surficial aquifer. He has found some possible areas of concern. Probable project recommendation in final WMP. We are anticipating a WMP proposal for sampling/monitoring several possible point sources in the Lagoon from Marlon Cooke and Dr. Bebee with USA
- **LL Restoration Project Dan Bond (City of Gulf Shores)** - Project has been submitted by ADCNR to the Federal RESTORE Council and anticipate Notice of Award sometime in July. A sub-recipient agreement will be brought to the City Council this fall, then agreements with the Universities will have to be executed. As with all things RESTORE, it will take a little longer than hoped, but are on track and should start on the groundwork around the first of the year.
- **Laguna Cove property Dan Bond (COGS)** - GMC (Goodwin Mills Cawood) is under contract for design and are conducting preliminary site assessment. The schematic design phase has been pushed back until a public involvement/stakeholder meeting can be held. (maybe this fall, but not looking too good right now). Possible option is virtual meetings if cannot meet in person, and COGS will coordinate that with LLPS, West Beach HOA, and Laguna Key. They are not going to rush the process given the current situation. Hopefully, design will be complete next summer, with construction to commence Fall 2021.
- **Outreach** - Our 5-year scholarship program has grown from \$5000 (donated by Barney & Maxine Gass) to \$25,000 thanks to a most generous increase/donation by Barney & Maxine. The award has grown to each 4-year scholarship recipient receiving \$1,250 per year for 4 years (total for 4 years \$5,000) provided the recipient meets a minimum GPA of 3.0 and a minimum full course load for each year of college. In the words of Maxine & Barney- "In this difficult time in our country's history I feel we all need to continue helping others in any way we can. I would like to increase our scholarship to \$5,000 instead of \$1,000." Braswell McMeans was the first scholarship recipient and his award was increased from one payment for his first year of college of \$1,000 to 1 payment each year of college for 4 years of \$1,250. LLPS will form a scholarship fundraising committee and embark on fund raising and escrowing moneys for the fund on a continuing basis. Any volunteers, please contact Dennis.

- **GSHS Water Quality Monitoring** - Jackie McGonigal (Gulf Coast Center for Ecotourism) is offering to facilitate monitoring with Gulf Shores High School (Krista Marcum's students). She has offered to teach GSHS classes on Alabama Water Watch protocol. LLPS has agreed to provide some test kit funds if GSHS goes the AWW route. GSHS is contemplating how their monitoring education activities will look in the fall given the need for safety.
- **Website** – Water Quality monitoring Data Base, Graphical User Interface (GUI) and Excel outputs complete and data entry current thanks to help from Dr. Hugh MacIntyre and students with Dalhousie University (Nova Scotia, Canada). Activities pages loaded and up and running. News page taking shape. Next up, minutes, newsletter, library. Still no solution to financial module.
www.littlelagoon.org

Financials

October 1, 2019 thru December 31, 2019	
Starting Balance	\$58,783.14
Total Income	\$20,625.00
Total Expenses	\$267.67
Ending Balance	\$79,140.47

Notable expenses- \$114.39 Norton Anti-Virus
Notable revenue- \$20,000 Gass scholarship donation

If you have not paid your dues for the 2020 LLPS Membership Year, please do so as soon as possible. Membership form is attached.

ZOOM

Zoom is FREE. You do not have to have a Zoom account to attend a Zoom meeting. You will be prompted to download the software, once you have clicked on the link that you have been provided. When you join a **Zoom meeting**, you will see a screen "**Join a Meeting.**" and a box with your name in it. You can change your name in the box before joining a meeting so that you maintain anonymity.

On the Zoom website, you can click "Join a Meeting" at the top. This will prompt you to enter the Meeting ID. You may be prompted with pop-ups asking for permission to access your computer's audio and video functions. Accept the changes and you should soon join the live call in the Zoom app. Please mute your microphones.

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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 _____

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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**