



Newsletter

Winter 2020

www.littlelagoon.org

**Next meeting:
Thursday
January 9, 2020**

5:30 p.m.

**Gulf Shores Activity Center
260 Clubhouse Drive**

Lions and Tigers and Rising Seas, Oh My!

Well actually, no lions and tigers, but rising sea levels are a real threat. Coastal Alabama is an area of rich culture and beautiful coastlines; however, coastal living comes with ever-increasing risk. Communities are already experiencing increased flooding and exacerbated storm surge due in part to sea-level rise. Our region, with low level topography and extensive marsh and other critical habitats, is highly susceptible to the effects of sea level change. The combined effects of sea level rise and tropical storms can have dramatic impacts on coastal communities and ecosystems, including more flooding, faster erosion, land loss, and saltwater intrusion into freshwater resources. Come join Mikaela Heming, Project Coordinator and Extension Associate specializing in science communication, Northern Gulf of Mexico Sentinel Site Cooperative, to discuss how we know and have calculated that this is happening. We will talk about the effects that you've seen in Little Lagoon and consider options to increase community strength to this rising issue.

LLPS member meeting is on January 9, 2020 5:30 p.m., at the Gulf Shores Activity Center. The first half hour of the meeting provides an opportunity to meet, mingle and enjoy refreshments. The program begins at 6 and will include a question-and-answer period.

Little Lagoon Pass Update

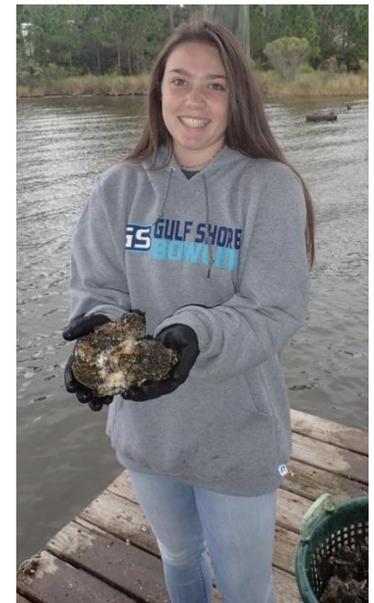
The trigger for dredging Lagoon Pass was issued on November 1, 2019 after 10 consecutive days of less than 90 sq. ft of continuous cross section area measured in the pass channel. They started at the worst constriction area north of the bridge and are currently nearing completion in the north part of pass. Two weeks ago, progress slowed due to mechanical issues and pipe weld breaks. Those are resolved, and they hope to finish dredging by Jan 3, 2020 and will "sound" the channel to see if there are areas needing touch up. Dennis has formally asked Don Powell with ALDOT for shoal sand measurements (required every two years per court order), and to consider adding shoal sands on the NE part of the pass for measurement and dredging. Emphasized that those sands are building and prograding towards the new City pier.

Oyster Gardening Update

Early Friday November 8th, Krista Marcum (GSHS) brought her Gulf Coast Ecology honors class to Dennis's pier to harvest 4 gardens (16 cages) of oysters. They estimated the number of oysters in the gardens and the average size of the oysters they had grown. Their 4 gardens totaled 4,082 oysters with a mean height of ~55MM(2.2 inches). That's a lot of oysters! Krista and the students should be proud they helped with remediation and habitat creation in Little Lagoon and with helping to repopulate decimated reefs in Mobile Bay (currently at 3% of historical levels).



PJ Waters, who runs the Mobile Bay Oyster Gardening Program, then gave a seminar on measuring and counting to 23 volunteers (including 3 GSHS science students) who broke into 8 teams and “fanned out” across the Lagoon to harvest an additional 44 gardens. Results were impressive. The Little Lagoon Oyster Gardening program produced an estimated total count of 53,460 oysters for 2019 from 48 gardens (192 cages/mini reefs). Average size was estimated 55MM (~2.2 inches). Monday of the following week the oysters were “planted” on closed public reefs in Mobile Bay.



The plan is for the adult restoration oysters (not for consumption) to spawn in Mobile Bay in late Spring of 2020 and produce billions of spat (baby oysters) for Mobile Bay reefs and contribute quality habitat to Bay reefs. The 53,460 oysters represent 2.66 acres of restoration potential in the Bay, and have a \$57,725.16 restoration value (2019 \$\$\$\$).

Gulf Coast Oyster Gardening for remediation/restoration in MS/AL reached the 1 million oyster milestone in 2019. The program started in 2001 and produced 50,000 oysters. 11 years later, in 2012 the program had produced 500,000 total oysters. 7 years later 1 Million oyster totals were reached. This year, Little Lagoon produced 1/3 of the total oysters under the gardening program.

Committee Activity Updates

- **Watershed Management Plan (WMP)** – Lots of activities and products moving forward. Watershed Characterization chapter currently in review. Promotional video is in review and will be sent out for comments. Gulf Shores Park Lodge and Learning Campus being considered for an early Feb Community Engagement meeting. Social media plan and proposed website content have been provided to Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP), and a community survey has been created for the website and distribution.
- **LL Restoration Project** Dan Bond (COGS) met recently with PJ Waters and Brett Webb on restoration project details. Currently there is a pause in funding from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) grant agreements, but in March it should move forward. Still TBD is whether University of South Alabama, Mississippi State University, Auburn, or the City will administer the Grant Agreements.
- **Laguna Cove property** - Gulf Shores selected Goodwyn Mills Cawood (GMC) who will start park design within the next two weeks, but still needs approval by Gulf Shores City Council. Public hearings tentatively will be 1st week or so in Feb.
- **Outreach** – GSHS Earth Science teacher Krista Marcum and students completed oyster gardening objectives for this year. She has done some training on phytoplankton sampling and identification and WQ monitoring with her students and bought a \$3,000 YSI Pro Plus probe. Dennis helped her set up and calibrate the probe and reviewed classroom phytoplankton ID's by the students. Krista's Gulf Coast Ecology class was nominated by GSHS Superintendent for award. She also obtained a \$2,200 grant for a digital microscope for the classroom. Per COGS, GSHS/LLPS will receive \$3,500 from Republic/COGS for WQ Monitoring and Oyster gardening expenses.
- **Website** – Taking shape. Home page, partial: "Who we are," "What we do," WQ section, WQ data curves, Membership page, PayPal. Working: library material etc. from old website, beta phytoplankton Database set up, Activities Page (WQ Monitoring, Oyster Gardening, Quarterly Members Meeting, Outreach), financial module plan. See www.littlelagoon.org

Financials

October 1, 2019 thru December 31, 2019	
Starting Balance	\$51,375.54
Total Income	\$7,394.97
Total Expenses	\$277.48
Ending Balance	\$58,493.03

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.

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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
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