

# **Alabama Coastal Area Management Program Strategic Plan 2013-2018**



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## **Alabama Coastal Area Management Program Strategic Plan 2013-2018**

The Alabama Coastal Area Management Program (ACAMP) is administered through the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Lands Division Coastal Section (ADCNR) and Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). This Strategic Plan describes the action items that the ACAMP staff plans to undertake during the next five years in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program.

The establishment, by the state, of the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program and its subsequent approval in 1979 by both the State of Alabama and the Federal government, allowed for the annual Congressional allocation of Federal funds, through the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), to the State to implement the program in accordance with both Federal and State guidelines.

This five-year strategy includes the identification of performance measures, required by Congress via the Federal granting agency (NOAA). The goals, objectives and action items along with the performance measures set forth in this strategic plan describe an integrated approach to coastal area management that includes technical assistance, education and outreach, and regulatory and policy development.

Revision and update of this plan will be accomplished by the staff through a periodic review of accomplishments and assessment of needs in a changing coastal environment.



## INTRODUCTION

The goals and objectives of the ACAMP, which are also described in this strategic plan, originated from the passage of the Alabama Coastal Area Act by the Alabama Legislature in 1976. This Act and its subsequent amendment, the 1982 Alabama Environmental Management Act, provided the statutory authority for the development and implementation of a management program that would “promote, improve and safeguard the lands and waters located in the coastal areas of this state.” Thus, the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program was established with five broad policies set forth in the Acts.

These policies as written are<sup>1</sup>:

- a. “ To preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, to restore or enhance, the resources of the state’s coastal area for this and succeeding generations;
- b. To encourage and assist counties and municipalities wherever applicable to exercise effectively their responsibilities in the coastal area through the development and implementation of administration programs to achieve wise use of the land and water resources of the coastal area giving full consideration to needs for economic development, as well as to ecological, cultural, historic, and aesthetic values.
- c. To assure that in development of the state’s coastal area adequate consideration is given to such uses of the coastal area adequate consideration<sup>2</sup> is given to such uses of the coastal area as the establishment of harbor facilities for the receiving of oil, gas and other commodities from ships and tankers; pipelines from such ports; and utility plant sites, utility generation, transmission, distribution, and transportation facilities;
- d. To urge that all state agencies engaged in program affecting the coastal area cooperate and participate with local governments and regional agencies in effectuating the purposes of this Act; and
- e. To encourage the participating of the public, of federal, state, and local governments and of regional agencies in the development of coastal area management programs. With respect to implementation of such management programs, it is the state policy to encourage cooperation among the various state and regional agencies including establishment of interstate and regional agreements, cooperative procedures and joint action particularly regarding environmental problems.”

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<sup>1</sup> Legislation: Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA; Pub. L. 92-583, 86 Stat. 1280, enacted October 27, 1972, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1451–1464, Chapter 33); Reauthorized 1990; Alabama Coastal Area Act of 1976 (Act 534).

<sup>2</sup> This error is verbatim from the recorded legislation and not one produced by this plan.

## ***VISION***

*Alabama's coast and waters are healthy and thriving for this and future generations.*

## ***PURPOSE<sup>3</sup>***

*"To promote, improve and safeguard the lands and waters located in the coastal areas of this State through a comprehensive and cooperative program, designed to preserve, enhance, and develop such valuable resources for the present and future well-being and general welfare of the citizens of this State."*

## **ACAMP STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS**

1. Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal resources through an ecosystem approach to management.
2. Enhance and promote sustainable economic development in the coastal area.
3. Protect, restore, or enhance public access to coastal resources.
4. Reduce vulnerability to natural hazards.
5. Use local government capacity building and education and outreach activities as catalysts to increase conservation of coastal resources.

## **OUTCOMES**

- Reduced impacts from regulated activities in coastal Alabama.
- Healthy and productive coastal Alabama ecosystems.
- Coastal Alabama communities less vulnerable to loss of life and property from coastal hazards.
- Local governments and citizens engaged in conserving Alabama coastal resources.

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<sup>3</sup> Legislation: Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA; Pub. L. 92-583, 86 Stat. 1280, enacted October 27, 1972, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1451–1464, Chapter 33); Reauthorized 1990; Alabama Coastal Area Act of 1976 (Act 534). Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Coastal Area Management Plan 1999, Section Two, Page 21.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### **Goal 1: Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal resources through an ecosystem approach to management.**

Outcome: Reduced impacts from regulated activities in coastal Alabama.

Outcome: Healthy and productive coastal Alabama ecosystems.

A. Objective: Direct resources to reduce impacts from regulated activities.

#### Action Items:

- i. Coordinate meetings with ADEM Coastal Section and other resource agencies to develop and implement a strategy designed to target resources on reducing impacts from regulated activities in Baldwin and Mobile Counties.

*The implementation strategy may include technical assistance, financial assistance, public outreach and education, and monitoring and tracking and other appropriate actions or changes.*

- ii. Provide funding/support for research and/or studies called for in above implementation strategy. Partner with appropriate agencies to undertake research, outreach, and provide technical assistance.
- iii. Work with NGOs, local, state and federal agencies to develop, promote and implement alternative project designs and solutions, such as Living Shorelines Techniques, to reduce impacts from regulated uses.
- iiii. Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation strategy using the 312 performance measures (Appendix I).

B. Objective: Enhanced cooperation between ADCNR and ADEM with regard to the ACAMP.

#### Action Items:

- i. Provide for a formal and clear process for ADCNR and ADEM coordination on planning and regulatory issues by:
  - a. Clarifying the wording in the ACAMP Amendment III in a revised document IV document and,
  - b. Restating this wording in the annual Cooperative Agreement between the two agencies.

Any changes made to formalize and clarify this interagency coordination will be in accordance with the legislation creating the ACAMP and with the agreement of



the ADCNR Commissioner, State Lands Director, and ADEM Director prior to and per their signature in the Cooperative Agreement.

- ii. Continue the informal coordination with ADEM to include both planning and regulatory issues.
- iii. Continue to interact informally and formally to implement the program. Promote policy driven program implementation through the development of agency program policy in the ACAMP Program Document<sup>4</sup>.

C. Objective: Focus resources on identifying and addressing critical issues.

Action Items:

- i. Continue to work with other state, federal and local entities to identify critical issues in coastal Alabama. This will include participating in various committees and working groups.
- ii. Provide funding and/or support for research and/or studies to identify and address critical issues. Partner with appropriate agencies to undertake research, outreach, and provide technical assistance.
- iii. Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation strategy.

D. Objective: Improve interagency coordination.

Action Items:

- i. Continue to participate in various interagency working groups in order to improve interagency coordination. This will include participating in the Technical Interagency Committee, various Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) committees and working groups, the Mobile Harbor Beneficial Use Working Group, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (Gulf Alliance) Habitat Conservation and Restoration Team (HCRT) and/or other similar working groups.

E. Objective: Support local government capacity to manage/regulate land use and development.

Action Items:

- i. Support the Weeks Bay Coastal Training Program (CTP) and its efforts to educate local governments on protecting water resources with the use of best management practices and model ordinances.

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<sup>4</sup> The ACAMP Program Document is a separate entity from this ACAMP Strategic Plan.

- ii. Encourage resilient and sustainable growth practices by providing funding to local communities for comprehensive and strategic planning efforts.
- iii. Assist local governments in comprehensive planning, zoning and other ordinance development and revision, including special area management plans, and studies. This assistance includes providing funding for plans and studies, technical assistance and GIS support.

F. Objective: Continued participation in the Gulf Ecological Management Site (GEMS) program.

Action Items:

- i. Continue active coordination with the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, the Gulf of Mexico Foundation (GMF) and the Gulf-states GEMS managers.
- ii. Review and evaluate proposals for new GEMS sites.
- iii. Continue participation in the NOAA Community Restoration Program - GMF - GEMS partnership.

G. Objective: Continue active participation in regional habitat restoration efforts.

Action Items:

- i. Actively participate in Gulf Alliance Habitat Conservation and Restoration Team (HCRT) activities.
- ii. Continue to work with the HCRT to address wetlands and estuarine habitat restoration action items from the Governor's Action Plan.
- iii. Continue to participate in other regional habitat restoration groups, such as the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council and other similar groups, in order to advance habitat restoration in coastal Alabama and around the Gulf.

H. Objective: Assist with implementation of the Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) strategy.

Action Items:

- i. Assist with solicitation and evaluation of nominations/proposals to forward to NOAA for approval and acquisition. Assist with implementation upon approval.
- ii. Assist with the review and update of the Alabama CELCP strategy annually and as funding allows or is needed.

- I. Objective: Assist with development and implementation of the Alabama Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP).

Action Items:

- i. Participate in the development of the CIAP Plan.
- ii. Assist with implementation of program projects.

- J. Objective: Continue to promote Regional Sediment Management and the beneficial use of dredged materials in coastal Alabama and around the Gulf.

Action Items:

- i. Continue to actively participate in the Mobile Harbor Beneficial Use Working Group and other interagency working groups dedicated to beneficial use.
- ii. Continue to actively participate in the GOMA HCRT Gulf-wide Regional Sediment Management Master Plan Sub-Committee.





**Goal 2: Enhance and manage sustainable economic development in the coastal area.**

Outcome: Healthy and productive coastal Alabama ecosystems.

- A. Objective: Continue to work toward final approval for the Alabama Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (ACNPCP).

Action Items:

- i. Identify current gaps needed for ACNPCP approval and jointly develop approaches for implementation through ADCNR and ADEM to further identify needs.
- ii. Identify funds and implement projects in unapproved areas.
- iii. Implement or continue projects in approved areas.

- B. Objective: Fully utilize Coastal Area Management Program Special Use Area capabilities to optimize management of coastal resources.

Action Items:

- i. In an update of the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program document, clarify the State's selection process, delineations, and update of Geographic Areas of Particular Concern (GAPC), Areas of Preservation and Restoration (APR), and Special Management Areas (SMA).
- ii. Review, clarify, and map the existing GAPC and APR boundaries.
- iii. Review use priorities, highlight inconsistencies, and summarize findings for GAPC and APR.
- iv. Coordinate with ADEM to incorporate recommended use priorities into GAPC and APR programming.
- v. Draft proposed revision to the ADEM Division 8 Coastal Program rules paragraph 335-8-1-.04 Special Management Area, in order to reflect changes, revision and updates to GAPCs and APRs and their use priorities.

- C. Objective:     Develop and implement an Alabama Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) program.

Action Items:

- i.     Continue to work with the MBNEP and other partners to develop a CMSP program, as detailed in the ACAMP February 2011 Section 309 Assessment and Strategy.
- ii.    Implement the CMSP program in coastal Alabama. Evaluate and update the CMSP as needed.



**Goal 3: Protect, restore, or enhance public access to coastal resources.**

Outcome: Healthy and productive coastal ecosystems.

Outcome: Local governments and citizens engaged in conserving Alabama coastal resources.

- A. Objective: A Public Access Inventory that maximizes use and resource benefits through sustainable methods.

Action Items:

- i. Identify, map, and photograph existing public access locations and document site amenities.
- ii. Develop and/or update “2001 Alabama Coastal Public Access Management Plan” using revised public access inventory.
- iii. Develop and distribute outreach materials using updated public access inventory and plan. This action will include a distribution plan targeted towards reaching as many of the public as possible, including a web based application. The procedure will also include a regular update of the Public Access Slide Presentation.
- iv. Establish an ongoing procedure to review and/or revise Public Access Management Plan and Public Access Inventory.
- v. Revise public access site survey and public opinion survey as part of section 309 strategy revisions.

- B. Objective: Fully implement the 306a program by utilizing the full 10% allotment.

Action Items:

- i. Coordinate with local governments, ADCNR Divisions and other agencies to promote 306a projects.
- ii. Solicit, review, rank on a competitive basis, and fund proposals for 306a projects.



**Goal 4: Reduce vulnerability to natural hazards.**

Outcome: Coastal Alabama communities will be less vulnerable to loss of life and property from coastal hazards.

A. Objective: Support local government participation in hazard reduction programs and adoption of best management practices to increase resilience.

Action Items:

- i. Partner with local, state, and federal agencies to sponsor hazards related training for local government.
- ii. Encourage resilient and sustainable growth practices by providing support to local communities for the development, revision, and implementation of long-term plans including: floodplain management plans, hazard mitigation plans, comprehensive plans, and disaster recovery plans.
- iii. Encourage community participation in the Coastal Resilience Index Program and FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS).
- iv. Support local government adoption of the most recent International Building Code.
- v. Encourage local government adoption of flood damage prevention ordinances and supplemental building codes to account for storm surge, flooding, erosion and scour.
- vi. Encourage and/or support local government acquisition of repetitive loss property and encourage establishment of undeveloped public lands (parks, preserves, etc.) in coastal high hazard areas.

B. Objective: Continue active participation in the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Coastal Community Resilience Priority Issue Team.

Action Items:

- i. Actively participate in Gulf Alliance Resilience activities.
- ii. Continue to work within the Resilience Team to address action items from the Governor's Action Plan.

C. Objective: Support beach nourishment and proper sand bypassing at inlets.

Action Items:

- i. Participate in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Regional Sediment Management Program.
- ii. Coordinate with the Geological Survey of Alabama (GSA), U.S. Geologic Survey, and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM, formally known as the Minerals Management Service) to assist local governments in sand source identification.
- iii. Support local dune maintenance and restoration programs.





**Goal 5: Education and outreach activities will serve as a catalyst to increase citizen protection of coastal resources.**

Outcome: Citizens engaged in protecting Alabama coastal ecosystems.

A. Objective: Citizen participation in activities to protect coastal resources.

Action Items:

- i. Utilize strategic plan goals and objectives to focus education and outreach needs of the program.
- ii. Continue education and outreach integration throughout the activities undertaken by the ACAMP.
- iii. Continue participation in the many annual community outreach events held by the Coastal Section, state and federal agencies, local governments and the public.
- iv. Transfer research results to public and local governments through the Weeks Bay CTP and watershed programs.
- v. Continue active participation and partnership with Weeks Bay's CTP, watershed, and education programs.

B. Objective: ADCNR Coastal Section education and outreach materials include information on the ACAMP.

Action Items:

- i. Coordinate with the ADCNR SLD, Information & Education Section and the IT section to create ACAMP web pages within the SLD page of the Outdoor Alabama web site.
- ii. Coordinate with SLD and IT to generate and purchase a redirected domain name to the ACAMP pages that can be used for marketing and promotional purposes of the program's activities.
- iii. Create collateral materials, such as brochures, white pages, promotional items, etc., as needed to promote education and awareness of the ACAMP and its programs to the public.
- iv. Engage in social media as appropriate and allowable for ACAMP activities and events.

C. Objective: Continue partnership with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Network

Action Items:

- i. Work to complete the actions in the Governor's Action Plan and assist in the development of new actions as needed.

D. Objective: An informed and active Coastal Resources Advisory Committee.

Action Items:

- i. Engage the Coastal Resources Advisory Committee in semi-annual meetings to inform them of current ACAMP activities.
- ii. Request input and guidance from committee on ACAMP development and direction as corresponded and influenced by NOAA.

E. Objective: Sustainable Tourism of the Alabama Gulf Coast

Action Items:

- i. Coordinate with the Alabama Gulf Coast Convention and Visitor Bureau to continually promote sustainable tourism practices along the Alabama Gulf Coast.



## APPENDIX I PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### SECTION 312 EVALUATION METRICS *Approved March 15, 2013*

The goals and objectives for the following metrics are from:

**Metric 1:**

Based on the Alabama Coastal Area Act policy and goal in the 2013-2018 Alabama Coastal Area Management Program (ACAMP) Strategic Plan to “Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal resources through an ecosystem approach to management.”

**Metric 2:**

Based on the 2013-2018 ACAMP Strategic Plan goal to “Enhance and promote sustainable economic development in the coastal area.”

**Metric 3:**

Based on the 2013-2018 ACAMP Strategic Plan goal to “Reduce vulnerability to natural hazards.”

#### **Metric 1**

It is a goal of ACAMP to, “Protect, restore, and manage the use of coastal resources through an ecosystem approach to management.” Much of Alabama’s two coastal counties are inlaid with numerous waterways and wetlands. South Alabama has seen significant growth in recent decades, threatening valuable resources with development. Coastal Alabama has the benefit of several inter-agency coordinated efforts. To ensure the sustainable economic use of the State’s coastal resources, ACAMP will protect, restore, and manage their use through an ecosystem approach integrated with best management practices; aligned through agency programs.

**Goal:** The ACAMP partners, with state and federal agencies, will advance coastal resource management and engage local governments and citizens to reduce ecosystem impacts. This will be directed through the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program’s renewed Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).

**Objectives:** By 2017, ACAMP will have completed 25 activities that implement MBNEP CCMP strategies.

**Strategy:** The ACAMP, established in 1979, works to improve interagency coordination to support local capacity to conserve coastal resources through active participation in ecosystem best management practices. ACAMP is a required and guiding member of several local coastal restoration programs including the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP). MBNEP released a draft of its MBNEP CCMP Assessment in February 2013 for public comment and with ACAMP and other partners is continuing to develop strategies for the final MBNEP CCMP. The MBNEP CCMP is expected to be finalized in 2014. The CCMP is focused on six areas: public access, beaches and shorelines, fish, heritage and culture, environmental health/resiliency, and water quality. ACAMP will support the implementation of the strategies in the CCMP. ACAMP will count the number of activities it completes

to implement strategies. Activities are defined as (1) a new signed MOU or MOAs with another organization(s) to facilitate implementation of a strategy and (2) providing technical assistance and/or financial assistance for a completed project that implements a strategy. ACAMP may count multiple activities as completed under one strategy. ACAMP will begin to undertake activities in 2012 that it anticipates will further the implementation of strategies in the future MBNEP CCMP and will count these activities if they implement a strategy in the final MBNEP CCMP.

**Performance Measure:** Activities completed that implement MBNEP CCMP strategies.

**Target:** Between 2012- 2017, 25 activities are completed that implement MBNEP CCMP strategies.

## **Metric 2**

It is the mission of the State of Alabama to promote protection, conservation, and sustainable economic use of the State's coastal resources. Baldwin and Mobile counties have several major coastal tributaries in addition to the Mobile Tensaw Delta and Mobile estuary. The ACAMP 2008-2011 Strategic Plan's third goal is, "Protect, restore, or enhance public access to coastal resources." The ACAMP works with coastal communities to sustain the public's access to these resources and maximize their economic benefits.

**Goal:** To restore, create, or enhance public access in the Alabama coastal area.

**Objectives:** Using the 2013 Strategic Plan and Request for Proposal process, five individual public access projects will be completed by 2017; one project per fiscal year.

**Strategy:** ACAMP will refer to the 2013 Strategic Plan to, "maximize(s) resource benefits using sustainable methods." ACAMP issues a yearly request for proposals and will address one access location per year based on public benefit, critical impacts, and funding availability. ACAMP will select and partner with an entity to restore, create or enhance public access in the selected coastal area.

**Performance Measure:** Number of public access sites which are restored, created, or enhanced with technical or financial assistance from ACAMP.

**Target:** Between 2012-2017, five public access sites restored, created, or enhanced with technical or financial assistance from ACAMP.

## **Metric 3**

The Alabama Coastal Area Management Program (ACAMP) actions include a number of strategies to support community resilience. These include providing support through, "... development, revision, and implementation of floodplain management and hazard mitigation plans, and flood damage prevention ordinances," and, "... adoption of supplemental building codes to account for storm surge, flooding, erosion, and scour." The ACAMP works with coastal communities that they may be less vulnerable to coastal risks. In the last decade, Alabama has received the direct or indirect impact of at least seven

named hurricanes. Resilience to natural coastal hazards may also include sea level rise, drought, erosion, flooding, thunderstorms, tornados/water spouts, and wildfires. The ACAMP and partners work to create risk ready, proactive communities.

**Goal:** To support local governments by promoting one project in a community per year thereby enhancing local capacity to reduce coastal impacts and increase resiliency.

**Objectives:** By 2017, five projects will be completed that support resilience in communities where planning was outdated or did not exist.

**Strategy:** ACAMP issues a yearly request for proposals to conduct coastal planning. Project selection criteria will prioritize projects that are focused on the development of new plans or the updating of existing plans that address resilience: local comprehensive plans, local mitigation strategies, local post-disaster redevelopment plans, beach or floodplain management plans, local adaptation strategies, economic development strategies or land development regulations. In addition, projects that focus on developing the plans for construction projects that reduce vulnerability to coastal risks may also be selected. By 2017, the ACAMP will promote sustainable coastal resilience by reducing vulnerability in five communities.

**Performance Measure:** Number of locally implemented projects completed to enhance coastal resiliency as a result of technical or financial assistance from the coastal management program.

**Target:** Between 2012-2017, five locally implemented projects will be completed to enhance coastal resiliency as a result of technical or financial assistance from the coastal management program.