

Alabama Coastal Foundation
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Vol. 1 No. 11

The Osprey Outlook

Note From the President

As we enter the holiday season it is understandable that our usual feelings of charity and joy may be dampened by the continuous news of an ailing economy. But we must remember that tough times also bring strength, ingenuity, and unity. We can sit back in despair or we can rally and work together to solve our collective problems. With your help, ACF will continue to be a clear and positive voice. We have been at work planning and preparing our programs for 2009 and we are ready to take on the challenge of making a positive difference in the environmental issues facing South Alabama. One of the best things we can do is educate our children and ACF will continue to do this by providing wonderful programs like the Coastal Kids Quiz and Bay Buddy as well as participating in the Mobile, Baldwin, & Washington County Water Festivals. We will also continue to act as coalition builders by providing workshops and forums for public education on environmental issues. This includes working with local officials and businesses to improve public policies for storm water management and other pressing topics. We look forward to the re-instatement of our water-monitoring program and are coordinating an exciting new program to map the water quality and environmental impact of development along Fish River in conjunction with the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program. We will continue hands-on projects like the building and erection of Osprey platforms and tree plantings through our habitat restoration projects. In our role as a factual source and consensus builder in the community, ACF has the strength to foster and lead in the environmental realm. But we need your help in these efforts. We need your participation as volunteers, your help in telling others about ACF, and your financial support. We work hard to raise money through fund-raisers and grants but without your support our programs would not be possible. Please join us in being a positive voice and take a few moments to send your tax-deductible donation to ACF. Each dollar given not only provides for quality programs, but also speaks of your commitment to our local environment and your desire to be part of the solution.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving,
Catherine Hall, ACF Board President

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45+ members and supporters of ACF got together November 18 for ACF's quarterly membership meeting. The event at Oysterella's featured special guest RBC Bank. ACF will be working in the coming year to help protect the Big Creek Lake Watershed through a grant from RBC Bank.

The RBC Blue Water Project is a wide-ranging, multi-year program to help foster a culture of water stewardship, so that people have clean fresh water today and tomorrow.

ACF will work with local partner Mobile Area Water and Sewer Service to begin implementation of the Big Creek Lake Watershed Management Plan, which was completed in early 2008. The 2-year, \$25,000 grant will help fund Best Management Practices Workshops, Septic System Maintenance Seminars and other education efforts in the watershed.

The Alabama Coastal Foundation was one of 12 applicants chosen to receive a Leadership Grant as part of the RBC Blue Water Project – a 10-year, \$50 million global philanthropic commitment to projects that help protect freshwater. "The goal of the Blue Water project is to protect freshwater, and we believe the Alabama Coastal Foundation supports our mission and can help raise awareness about the importance of the issue in the Southeast," said Scott Custer, RBC Bank chairman and CEO.

The Water Resources Research Institute, DonorsChoose, Friends of the Mississippi River and the World Wildlife Fund are also recipients of the 2008 Blue Water Project grants in the United States.

A special thanks to Hand Arendall who generously sponsored the membership meeting!

Image: Anna Keene, Bethany Kraft & Catherine Hall from ACF accept a check for \$25,000 from RBC representatives Cedric Hatcher and Drew Williams.

Tanner Williams Rain Garden Project Complete



ACF volunteers, along with teachers, parents and the 3rd grade class at Tanner Williams Elementary School in Wilmer

put the finishing touches on the rain garden project at the school on Halloween. The school plans to use the site as an outdoor classroom area. Interested in learning more about how rain gardens can help manage stormwater runoff? Call our office at 990-6002. *Image: The class above makes a scary Halloween face for the camera after finishing planting.*

Give the Gift of Conservation!



Gulf Coast Bay Buddy Update



The Gulf Coast Bay Buddy Program is finishing up a great fall semester! Thanks to our members and volunteers, the program has been presented to over 900 students in kindergarten through third grade since early September. We are especially pleased to have trained six new volunteers to lead presentations in area

schools during the 2008-2009 school year. Special thanks to volunteers Alison Prichard, Jaime Miller, and Rynnie Henderson for their help and dedication to the Bay Buddy Program. If you are interested in learning more about the Gulf Coast Bay Buddy Program, including sponsorship and volunteer opportunities or how to get your child's school involved, please contact Anna Keene at 251-990-6002 or by email at akeene@joinacf.org for more information.

Image: Students from Silverhill Elementary participate in Bay Buddy this past October.



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