

# Estuary Exchange

February 2026



**ST. ANDREW & ST. JOSEPH BAYS**  
**ESTUARY PROGRAM**  
*at FSU PANAMA CITY*

*Together for the Bays*



February is a great time to celebrate the people, places, and wildlife that make our watershed special. In this month's newsletter, you'll find estuary-themed Valentine's Day cards to share with loved ones, a Board Member Spotlight, and details on our upcoming Tides and Talks: Artificial Reefs, where we'll explore how reefs support marine life and coastal communities.

We're also honoring World Wetlands Day with fun facts about the wetlands that are essential for keeping our bays thriving. You can also find recent research highlights, upcoming meetings, volunteer opportunities, and events where you can find the Estuary Program out in the community.

## *Board Member Spotlight*

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Our watershed thrives because of passionate individuals committed to its protection and restoration. To honor these efforts, we're sharing our appreciation by highlighting the members of our Policy Board. Each month, we'll introduce you to those working behind the scenes to help strengthen our community and support the long-term well-being of our watershed.

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### Policy Board Member Spotlight: Commissioner Doug Moore

Commissioner Doug Moore joined the SASJBEP Policy Board in 2021 to help ensure a proactive, science-based approach to watershed protection is balanced with the needs of the community in protecting our waterways. As he stated during the Program's formation, "It is really about what we can do to balance out and protect our waterways," underscoring his dedication to the community's long-term resilience and the fundamental role of our bays.

With decades of leadership experience in law, finance, business consulting and public service, Moore brings a broad understanding of policy, community development, and economic resilience to the board. His role in guiding Bay County through Hurricane Michael recovery has given him a firsthand appreciation for how natural systems and community infrastructure intersect.

Commissioner Moore's involvement with SASJBEP has provided guidance and direction to ensure that "our watershed will be around for many, many, many years to come." He continues to ensure the SASJBEP has a focus on reducing stormwater impacts, addressing wastewater challenges, and helping the community stay resilient in the face of storm events.

## *Tides and Talks: Artificial Reefs*

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ST. ANDREW AND ST. JOSEPH BAYS ESTUARY PROGRAM  
PRESENTS



ST. ANDREW &  
ST. JOSEPH BAYS  
ESTUARY PROGRAM  
at FSU PANAMA CITY

# Tides & Talks

WHERE CONVERSATION STARTS

AND STEWARDSHIP FLOWS



February Topic: Artificial Reefs  
When: Thursday, February 12th, 3:00PM CT  
Where: Destination Panama City, 101 West Beach Dr.

For more info go to:  
[sasjbep.org/events/tidesandtalks](http://sasjbep.org/events/tidesandtalks)



Did you miss our talk on artificial reefs? Check out the recording featuring guest speakers from 3 artificial reef organizations in our watershed and follow us on facebook to see details on upcoming Tides and Talks events!

[See on Youtube](#)

## Science Corner



## Celebrating World Wetlands

World Wetlands Day is celebrated each year on February 2<sup>nd</sup> to recognize the value of wetlands and the many services they provide to our ecosystems. In honor of the occasion, we're sharing a few fun facts about the wetlands found throughout the St. Andrew Bay (SAB) watershed.

The SAB watershed contains about 200,000 acres of wetlands — that's roughly 8 Disney Worlds worth of habitat. These wetlands provide a huge range of benefits (also known as ecosystem services), including trapping sediment, filtering water, slowing wave energy, storing carbon, and supporting wildlife.

The SAB watershed is home to many different wetland types:

- Ephemeral wetlands scattered throughout longleaf pine forests provide critical breeding habitat for amphibians.
- Wet prairies in places like Deer Lake State Park support unique plants, including pitcher plants and orchids.
- Man-made forested wetlands at Conservation Park help filter wastewater effluent before it reaches West Bay.
- Salt marshes buffer shorelines and offer excellent habitat for many of the fish species people love to catch in St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bay.

The wetlands of the SAB watershed are one of the many habitats that make this region such a special place.

References:

*Saint Andrew and Saint Joseph Bays Estuary Program. 2024. Together for the bays: A guide on how to protect and restore the bays. Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan 2024-2034. Panama City, FL. <https://sasjbep.org/ccmp/>*

## Recent Relevant Research

*Click the images to view articles.*



The Secret Life of Tidal Marshes and



The Impact of Beachface Morphology on

## Find the Estuary Program

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*February 18th, 2026*

### Florida Oceans Day

When: February 18th, 10:00am - 3:00pm  
EST

Where: Florida Capitol - South Plaza

*March 6-8th, 2026*

### Emerald Coast Boat and Lifestyle Show

When: March 6th - 8th

Where: Aaron Bessant Park, Panama City  
Beach



*April 11th & 12th, 2026*

### Gulf Coast Salute Air Show

When: April 11th & 12th, 9:00am - 3:00pm  
CT

Where: Aaron Bessant Park, Panama City  
Beach



*April 26th, 2026*

### North Florida Wildflower Festival

When: April 25th, 9:00am - 2:00pm CT

Where: Magnolia Square, Blountstown, FL

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## Community Events

Click the images to explore upcoming events throughout the St. Andrew Bay Watershed!



Events in Panama City



Events in Panama City Beach



Events in South Walton County



Events in Gulf County



Events in Mexico Beach



Gulf County Chamber of Commerce - Events

## Upcoming Meetings

### Policy Board Meeting +

February 25th, 2026

1:00pm-3:00pm CDT; Room A301 Deans Conference Room; FSU PC Holley Building

Meeting ID: [928 1613 1724](#)

Join Zoom

### Management Council Meeting +

April 10th, 2026

10am-12pm CDT; Room A301, Deans Conference Room; FSU PC Holley Building Join Via

Zoom: <https://fsu.zoom.us/j/98797010571> Meeting ID: [987 9701 0571](#)

Join Zoom

### Science and Technical Committee Meeting +

February 19th, 2026

1:00 - 2:00 PM CDT; Admin Services Conference Room 108

[Join Zoom](#)

## Stormwater Working Group +

May 6th, 2026

10am-11am CDT; Virtual only.

## Community Action Committee Meeting +

Date TBD

Next meeting date to be determined.

## Teen Outreach Committee Meeting +

February 21st, 2026

10 am - 11:00 am CT Work day at Callaway park. Location TBD

[Join the TOC](#)

To access all past meeting materials, notes, and presentations, visit our [Library of Resources](#) page on our website. Link directly by clicking below!

[Library of Resources](#)

[Florida State University Panama City Campus Map](#)



# FWC Freshwater Commercial Fishing Public Meetings

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will be holding public meetings to gather input on proposed rule amendments for freshwater commercial fishing regulations.

Learn more about the proposed changes, see meetings dates, and RSVP below.

Find out more

## Volunteer Opportunities



The poster features a background image of three people on a boat in a body of water. The text on the poster includes: 'SASJ BAYS VOLUNTEER NETWORK', 'JOIN THE VOLUNTEER NETWORK!', 'Interested in getting involved in protection and restoration efforts within the St. Andrew Bay Watershed?', 'Join Our Email List!', 'SASJ Bays Volunteer Network connects organizations across the watershed with citizens looking for an opportunity to get involved.', a bulleted list with 'Organizations: Connect with volunteers for your events' and 'Volunteers: Learn about volunteer opportunities from our partners all across the watershed', a 'JOIN NOW' button with a right arrow, the URL 'HTTPS://LISTS.FSU.EDU/MAILMAN/LISTINFO/VOLUNTEER-SASJBEP', and 'St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program' at the bottom. A circular map of the St. Andrew Bay Watershed is also present.

The SASJ Bays Volunteer Network connects organizations with passionate members of the community that are interested getting involved. Join the email list to receive updates on upcoming volunteer opportunities from across the partners across the watershed and share organized events with others!

Join the Email List

# Job Opportunities

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University of Northwest Florida

- [Assistant Professor of Biology, Coastal Ecologist](#)

**Contact us at** [estuaryprogram@pc.fsu.edu](mailto:estuaryprogram@pc.fsu.edu)



St. Andrew and St. Joseph Bays Estuary  
Program

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