

ADEM UPDATE

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Coastal NPS Program Provides Watershed Education



Students participated in many “hands-on” activities at the interactive workshop in June in Bayou La Batre

During 2017, ADEM’s Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program has been expanding its persistent message of environmental responsibility and personal stewardship for Alabama’s coastal waters.

Recently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Gulf of Mexico program invited ADEM to conduct an interactive workshop concerning coastal NPS issues. Thirty-two students were part of this year’s national Asian Youth Empowerment program, hosted by the local program director, Gloria Nguyen. The local

Summer Youth Camp class was held on June 7 at the BP-SOS office in Bayou La Batre.

BP-SOS (Boat People - SOS) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization devoted to Vietnamese-American civic and political activism. Their mission is to “empower, organize, and equip Vietnamese individuals and communities in their pursuit of liberty and dignity.” They have 17 office locations in the U.S. that support individuals, families, and communities.

These students were taught about topography, watersheds, types of nonpoint pollution, and possible impacts to the environment. They first built small-scale table-top watersheds to learn about the concepts of topography and gravity, land use coverages, and their role in watershed characteristics and types of NPS impacts.

The students also helped build a large, 20 by 25-foot, “We Live in a Watershed - A Watershed and NPS Pollution Module.” They selected from 5 color-coded “pollutant” pads and each student designated their placement in the model watershed. The students witnessed the dramatic NPS processes and impacts of surface waters as the simulated rain washed “pollutants” downstream. The resulting exercise was both colorful, entertaining, and educational for the children.

In addition to EPA and ADEM, the youth camp workshop module was also supported by the Alabama Farm Service Agency, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Districts, and the Natural Resources and Conservation Service.



The students built a 20-by-25 foot “We Live in a Watershed” pollution module.

ADEM Helps Sponsor Health Fair

A community unity “Health Fair and Back-to-School Giveaway” on Saturday, August 5 in Montgomery, turned out to be a huge success. More than 1,100 school children from around the River Region Community attended the event that was held at Health Services Inc.’s River Region Health Center at 1845 Cherry Street.

It was sponsored by the City of Montgomery, the Montgomery County Commission, the Health Services Foundation, and the Alabama Department of Environment Management. Thirteen ADEM employees participated in the fair, giving away educational items and providing the children a hands-on learning experience.

Over 500 book bags and school supplies were given away to the crowds of children who lined around the parking lot to get into the event, which also featured bouncy houses and games. In addition to these fun activities, the Health Fair focused on health awareness and disease prevention for students and parents with free health screenings and educational information to increase awareness of local, state, and national health services and resources.



More than a thousand children attended the Health Fair on August 5

Annual Brownfields Conference Held in Prattville



The final day of the conference featured a grant workshop

ADEM held its 4th Annual Brownfields Redevelopment Conference from August 9-11. This year’s meeting was held at the Marriott Convention Center in Prattville and was attended by developers, environmental consultants, local government leaders, and other stakeholders.

Brownfields are defined as rural or urban industrial sites that are abandoned or underused because of real or perceived contamination and also includes areas such as closed mills, abandon schools or other facilities. Numerous cities and counties in Alabama face the challenges of putting these idle properties back in use. The Brownfields Program is a valuable community

resource that, through redevelopment and reuse, can bring important economic benefits and also serve as a centerpiece in comprehensive redevelopment strategies.

ADEM designed the three-day conference with many sessions. The conference began with a walking tour of the historic Continental Gin in Prattville, which provided attendees with insight into the endless possibilities of Brownfield redevelopment.

Land Division Chief Stephen Cobb provided the opening remarks of the conference, and Prattville Mayor Bill Gillespie, Jr. welcomed the attendees. Alabama’s Secretary of Commerce, Greg Canfield, was a speaker and discussed the targeting of economic growth in the state. A number of Departmental employees made presentations on various topics including redevelopment and waste disposal requirements. There were also presentations by representatives from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, and private consultants.

ADEM Receives Recognition from ECOS

ECOS - the Environmental Council of the States - recently announced the recipients of its 2017 State Program Innovation Awards to be presented at the association's fall meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The annual awards program recognizes outstanding state initiatives that can serve as replicable models for other states. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management has been recognized for Electronic Inspections.

In a press release dated August 10, ECOS states that ADEM's new electronic inspection process allows state inspectors to capture data from a tablet device to enhance efficiencies, increase data accuracy, and improve timeliness of citizen access. Since implementation, the number of construction stormwater inspections performed by the Department has increased by almost 30 percent.

"I am appreciative of ECOS' recognition of our emphasis on automation, which allows us to be a top performer with the lowest per capita funding in the nation," said ADEM Director Lance LeFleur. "Our most recent automation project is different from other tablet-based inspection platforms in that it automatically uploads records for supervisor review as soon as Internet connection is available, and review can be accomplished while the inspector is still in the field, which reduces time in the office for our inspectors."



Cobb Named Land Division Chief



Stephen A. Cobb

Stephen A. Cobb has been named Chief of the Land Division, taking the place of Phil Davis who recently retired. In this role, Cobb is responsible for all of ADEM's waste regulatory and remediation programs, including solid and hazardous waste, Brownfields redevelopment, CERCLA, and underground storage tanks.

Prior to being named Land Division Chief, he was the Chief of the Governmental Hazardous Waste Branch, which is responsible for implementation of ADEM's various hazardous waste permitting, compliance and cleanup programs at local, state, and federal government facilities, including those owned or operated by DoD, TVA, and other federal agencies, various departments, and agencies of the State of Alabama, public colleges and universities, local governments, and fund-lead CERCLA-NPL sites.

During his 30-year ADEM career, Cobb has worked in progressively challenging roles as a hazardous waste permitting and corrective action project manager, as supervisor of the RCRA hazardous waste permitting and corrective action program, and as program manager for permitting, corrective action, compliance and enforcement, and hazardous waste notifications for the RCRA, CERCLA, Voluntary Cleanup, and Brownfields programs. He is a licensed Professional Engineer and a Certified Public Manager, with bachelors and masters degrees in agricultural engineering from Auburn University.

Surface Water Meeting Set for October

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management will host its 20th Annual Surface Water Meeting in October. This year's conference will take place at the RSA Activity Center in Downtown Montgomery. The two-day event is scheduled for October 25-26, and interested parties are encouraged to register online at www.adem.alabama.gov. The deadline for registration is October 13.

ADEM staff and other presenters will discuss important topics, present updates on various regulations for drinking water systems, and provide information on operator certification. The meeting is designed in part to help demonstrate how the Department partners with public drinking water systems to ensure compliance and safeguard public health.

ADEM UPDATE Available Online

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management publishes the *ADEM UPDATE* quarterly to inform Alabamians on the latest news and activities of the Department. As a cost-savings measure, the *ADEM UPDATE* is no longer printed. It is distributed electronically and available online through the publications link on the ADEM website at adem.alabama.gov.



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