

ARPC BOARD NOTES MAY 2025



TALLAHASSEE STATE COLLEGE **WAKULLA ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE**

Hope Childree, Associate Director

Ms. Childree presented on Tallahassee State College's (TSC) Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI), workforce development, and the path that the organization plans to take moving forward.

Ms. Childree gave an overview of degrees, certificates, and training programs available at TSC and at WEI specifically. New programs that will launch at WEI in Fall 2025 were highlighted, including veterinary assisting, landscape and turf management, medical assisting, and marine services technology. Ms. Childree discussed the three major study areas that WEI programs fall under—agriculture, oyster aquaculture, and drones—and detailed the specific courses available in each study area.

Ms. Childree fielded a number of questions from meeting participants and there was a lively discussion around oyster nurseries, spat requirements, the possibility of an oyster nursery to support the regional oyster economy, and oyster farming successes in the area.



RIPARIAN COUNTIES STAKEHOLDER COALITION

**MAY
2025**

Mr. Jones provided an update on the Riparian Counties Stakeholder Coalition (RCSC) and recent activities. RCSC consists of the six ARPC counties that border the Apalachicola River.

Mr. Jones provided a short background on the RCSC team and priorities, including oystering, the status of Apalachicola Bay, drought management, and Woodruff Dam repairs. Mr. Jones provided an update on issues relating to oystering, including monitoring of

Apalachicola Bay, the moratorium on Apalachicola Bay, and poaching. There was discussion that a letter written by the impacted counties to FWC could assist with receiving additional FWC patrol officers to address poaching.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) may submit permit plans to DEP to restart navigation on Apalachicola River as early as 2026. An upcoming discussion on this topic will take place in Mobile, AL, later in 2025. RCSC plans to

write a white paper on Apalachicola River issues and will be seeking each county's standing on the highlighted issues so that the Region can present a united stance via RCSC.

Mr. Jones discussed challenges and opportunities related to navigation on the Apalachicola River, drought modelling and water flows, dredging, funding, and USACE.



For more information, please visit www.arpc.org/rcsc.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS REGIONAL IMPACT



GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Florida Commerce Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) Grant

ARPC staff is monitoring the next RIF application cycle, which is anticipated to open in July 2025. Grant funding may be used for planning, engineering, and construction projects. No match is required.

Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) Grant

ARPC staff is accepting requests for assistance with applications for the upcoming CPTA Grant funding cycle. This grant can be used to fund economic development planning activities.

CONTACT CAROLINE SMITH FOR MORE INFORMATION!

ARPC staff are currently working on an annual update of the Apalachee Regional Economic Development Strategy. For more information on this process or how to participate, please contact Caroline Smith, ARPC Economic Development Manager, at csmith@arpc.org.

SMART CYCLING COURSE

Staff is hosting a bicycle education class November 15th in Tallahassee, Florida! Click here to access the online training prerequisite which can be done at any time. Bicycling increases in the summer and the online training will help both those biking and driving know what to expect to stay safe.

Enhance transportation safety in your area by sharing this save-the-date!



St. Marks Master Planning with Florida State University (FSU) Department of Urban & Regional Planning (DURP)

ARPC staff is coordinating an FSU student project with the City of St. Marks in which the students will work during the spring 2025 semester to propose a set of site alternatives for a new St. Marks Master Plan. The FSU project will conclude in summer 2025.



St. Marks Technical Assistance

ARPC Economic Development staff is assisting the City of St. Marks with grant writing and other planning activities.

Growth Management Assistance

This quarter, staff began working with the City of Saint Marks on the Evaluation and Appraisal Report for the Saint Marks Comprehensive Plan.

NEXT ARPC BOARD MEETING: AUGUST 28TH, 2025



HOW CAN WE HELP?

ARPC proudly serves as a dedicated catalyst for responsible growth and development in the Apalachee Region of Florida. Our dedicated staff work closely with local governments, community organizations, and stakeholders on a variety of challenges, developing innovative solutions from a Regional perspective. Fully committed to collaboration and community engagement, ARPC is better able to position our member governments, creating access and leverage for funding. Our dedicated team works tirelessly to address the unique challenges and opportunities that shape the landscape of our communities.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

GEOSPATIAL PLANNING

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

EMERGENCY PLANNING

HOUSING

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

