

ARPC BOARD NOTES

MARCH 26TH, 2026



SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT FAMU

- **Tangela Lofton, Regional Director, Florida SBDC at FAMU**

Ms. Lofton provided an overview of the Small Business Development Center and the services available. Florida is home to 2.3+ million small businesses, defined as 499 employees or less. Research indicates that 90 percent of businesses fail due to lack of knowledge, experience, and capital.

Through SBDC, small businesses can access over 200 business consultants at one of over 40 locations, from Pensacola to Key West. Some of the free services offered include one-on-one counseling, training and workshops, market research tools, and government contract assistance. SBDC at FAMU serves the counties of Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor and Wakulla.

Additional services include:

- Pre-venture assistance
- Business planning
- Marketing (traditional/digital/Search Engine Optimization)
- Access to capital
- Financial management/analysis
- Business resiliency & recovery
- Organizational assessment tools
- Premium subscription tools provided for free through the SBDC

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Florida's Rural Business Resource Tour is a new, multi-county initiative bringing federal, state, and local business resources directly to rural communities. Get the help you need to start, grow, and strengthen your business—right in your own backyard.

Hosted by Florida Commerce and the Florida SBDC Network, this multi-agency traveling resource fair is designed to connect rural businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs with the tools, training, and support they need to thrive - all in one convenient location.

For more information, visit www.floridasbdc.org/ruraltour/

MARCH 2026



April 20 ↓
EXPEDITION KICK-OFF
& FINALE → April 25

5:30-7:30 PM ♣ TALL TIMBERS 5-7:30 PM ♣ THE LODGE AT WAKULLA SPRINGS



Baldwin Family | Lowry Murphey Family Foundation



From April 20th to 25th, Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation will lead a once in a lifetime journey from the Red Hills in Georgia to the St. Marks lighthouse at the Gulf, and **City of Tallahassee Commissioner Porter and Leon County Commissioner Minor will join the trek!**

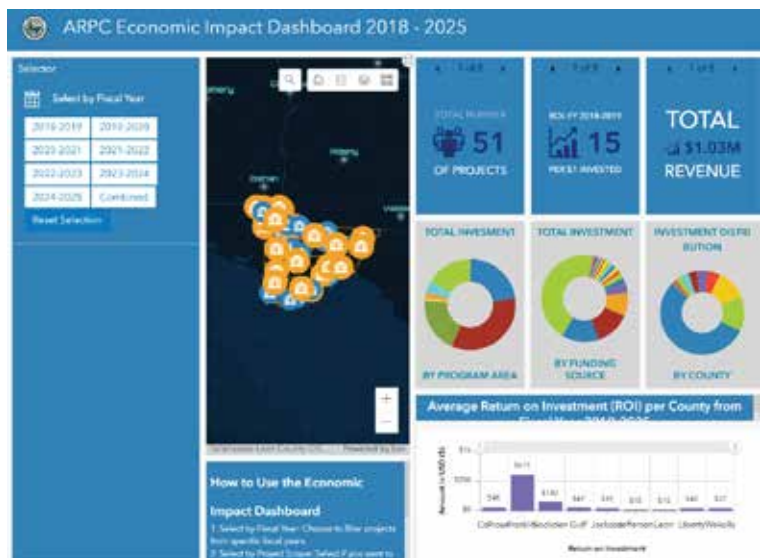
This five-day expedition will bring together leaders, landowners, scientists, and conservationists to

experience one of the most important remaining links in the Florida Wildlife Corridor and be featured in a statewide conservation documentary! There will be several opportunities to engage with the team and cheer them on:

- **April 20 – Meet and Greet at Tall Timbers**
- **April 21 – Exhibition Launch at Paradise Park in Thomasville**
- **April 25 – Final Exhibition Celebration at Wakulla Springs**

APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL ECONOMIC IMPACT DASHBOARD

ARPC continues to have a tremendous impact throughout the Region, and the Economic Impact Dashboard provides an overview of how that impact translates. Click here to see the full dashboard.



COUNCIL ACTIONS

- The following actions were taken by the Council at the March 26th, 2026 Full Council Meeting:
- Resolution 2026-03 approved – R RTP Update Process
 - Resolution 2026-04 approved – CTC Provider
 - Resolution 2026-05 approved – CTC Provider
 - Resolution 2026-06 approved – CTC Provider
 - Resolution 2026-07 approved – CTC Provider



The ARPC Annual Report takes shape in the form of a planner this year! Contact our office for a copy today.





UPCOMING TRAININGS!

The Big Bend Healthcare Coalition is primarily a preparedness organization and offers several training and exercise opportunities to its membership throughout the year.

- April 1: Water Shortage Exercise
- April 7-8: Cybersecurity Response
- April 28: Hazmat Shelter-In-Place
- May 4-8: 0-305: Type 3 All Hazards Incident Management
- May 2026: Medical Response and Surge
- June 2026: Workplace Safety

Contact Christian Levings at CLevings@arpc.org for more information!

ANTICIPATED GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

ARPC staff anticipates upcoming Spring 2026 grant cycles for the Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) grant, Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) grant, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through Florida Commerce.

For assistance with grant proposal development, please contact ARPC staff.

ARPC's Growth Management Program is happy to support member local governments by developing contracts on a case-by-case basis to fit the needs of each county and municipality. For more information and to inquire about one-time and/or continuing services contracts, please reach out to Brianna Williams at BWilliams@arpc.org.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

Please join us in welcoming Stella Kearns to the ARPC team. Ms. Kearns will serve as ARPC's Growth Management & Land Use Regional Planner, working closely with Brianna Williams in the Growth Management Program.



NEW RLF LOAN CLOSING!

Green Reef Mining & Minerals is a company focused on the mining and processing of historic oyster shell deposits. The company will have the ability to provide a wide range of materials to a variety of industries, including road base, poultry, horticulture, and habitation restoration.



The company will have over 20 years of combined experience specific to this mining deposit. This specific experience allows for quicker set-up, start-up, production, and sales. Green Reef has a thorough understanding of this deposit, increasing efficiency and its ability to explore additional market growth.

NEXT ARPC BOARD MEETING: MAY 28, 2026



HOW CAN WE HELP?

ARPC proudly serves as a catalyst for responsible growth & development in the Apalachee Region of Florida. Our dedicated staff work closely with local governments, community organizations, & 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



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