

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

04/25/18



Okaloosa County Hosts Estuary Workshop

Okaloosa Island – The Emerald Coast Convention Center hosted the Northwest Florida Estuary Program Workshop Wednesday.

The Estuary program works to preserve the environment across the Florida Panhandle, by combining the resources of Okaloosa, Walton and Washington counties, to protect the more than \$1.6 Billion tourism industry which provides 36,000 jobs in our area.

The program focused on improving stormwater infrastructure, dirt road paving and habitat restoration in the area.

Commissioners Kelly Windes and Carolyn Ketchel led groups from our area which focused on the Choctawhatchee bay.

The workshop also included officials from Escambia county and ECUA.

Estuaries are partially enclosed bodies of water with one or more rivers or streams flowing into it and a free connection to the open sea, like the Choctawhatchee Bay

Keynote speaker Holly Greening, the former Executive Director and Senior Scientist of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, spoke to the group about the economic value of a healthy bay and the details behind the success of the Tampa Bay Area Estuary.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT CHRISTOPHER SAUL 585-7059 OR AT

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Figure 1 Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel prepares to give input during the Estuary Workshop on Wednesday April 25th



Figure 2 Commissioners Kelly Windes and Carolyn Ketchel prepare work on a timeline of the Choctawhatchee Bay and Basin during a Workshop on April 25th



Figure 3 Commissioners Kelly Windes and Carolyn Ketchel work on a timeline of the history of the Choctawhatchee Bay and Basin on April 25th