

Environmental Stewardship Awards-To be Read at Commission Meeting

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Agriculture

Award Recipient: Neil Underwood Farms

Summary: Underwood Farms utilizes conservation practices which reduce potential for pollution impacts to the environment and local creeks and rivers. This farm employs strategies to minimize nutrient pollution. These initiatives are commendable

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Forestry

Award Recipient: Alabama Forestry Commission

Summary: The Alabama Forestry Commission has long played a vital role in safeguarding the forests of Baldwin County. They offer valuable educational programs and resources focused on forest management, prescribed burning, and the wildland-urban interface. Their ongoing work to manage, restore, and protect both private and public forestlands is truly commendable.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Education Program

Award Recipient: Gulf Coast Eco-Center

Summary: The Gulf Coast Eco Center in Gulf Shores is a newly developed environmental education campus that offers hands-on learning focused on coastal ecosystems, sustainability, and outdoor exploration, complete with classrooms, gardens, and an adventure course. These programs are commendable.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Education Teacher

Award Recipient: Justice Manning

Justice Manning: Retired Volunteer with the Master Environmental Education Program.

Summary: Since June of 1998, Mr. Manning has been a cornerstone of the Baldwin County Extension's Master Environmental Education (MEE) Program, dedicating over two decades to fostering environmental awareness and stewardship among Baldwin County youth. Mr. Manning exemplifies the spirit of environmental stewardship. His dedication, leadership, and passion make him a truly deserving candidate for this honor.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Government Agency

Award Recipient: Town of Magnolia Springs

Summary: The Town of Magnolia Springs, Mayor Houser & the Magnolia River Water Watch Task Force, over the course of 2025, spearheaded a community-led investigation of bacterial source tracking throughout the Magnolia River Watershed. They remain vigilant in protecting the Magnolia River, an Outstanding Alabama Water. Their efforts are commendable.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Government Employee

Award Recipient: Dr. William E. Puckett

Summary: Dr. Bill Puckett, serving with the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee, has demonstrated unwavering dedication to environmental stewardship and the enhancement of Alabama's natural resources, including those in Baldwin County. He has achieved this through building strong partnerships and fostering collaborative relationships.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Individual Citizen

Award Recipient: Lisa Mason-Sanders

Summary: Lisa embodies the spirit of environmental stewardship through her volunteerism, leadership, and steadfast commitment to protecting natural resources. Her efforts have strengthened the Magnolia River Water Watch program and helped cultivate a strong sense of environmental awareness and collaboration within the community. Her contributions are truly commendable and deserving of recognition.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Small Business

Award Recipient: Hydro, LLC

Summary: Hydro, LLC, and its president, John Curry, have been critical team members and committed partners in coastal Alabama over the last decade of watershed planning and restoration engineering and design. Time and time again, John has offered his expertise well beyond contractual obligations. His willingness to donate time and services to run model scenarios, answer questions, and share knowledge at workshops and meetings has undoubtedly elevated the tools, understanding, and resources available to all of us.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Environmental Project of the Year

Award Project: Lower Perdido Island Restoration

Award Recipients: The Nature Conservancy & Town of Orange Beach

Summary: The Nature Conservancy and the City of Orange Beach led the effort to restore the Lower Perdido Islands. The project used locally sourced sediment to rebuild 30 acres of subtidal, marsh, dune, and upland habitat on Walker and Robinson Islands. More than a decade of planning went into the initiative, and funding from NOAA ultimately brought it to life. Today, the restored islands provide valuable habitat for wildlife and birds, while also supporting the recovery of seagrass beds. This project has been exceptional.

Environmental Stewardship Award Category: Special Recognition

Award Recipient: Roberta Swann

Summary: Roberta Swann served as Director of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program for more than 20 years, retiring from the role in January. During her tenure, she worked alongside over 300 community leaders to advance restoration, capacity building, and policy initiatives aimed at protecting and enhancing Alabama's coastal resources.

Following the Deepwater Horizon event, Roberta played a pivotal leadership role along Alabama's Gulf Coast, guiding efforts to develop watershed management plans for all tidally influenced watersheds—plans that today are either complete or nearing completion. In Baldwin County, she was among the key leaders who helped transform D'Olive Watershed through impactful restoration projects, creating a nationally recognized model of collaboration. Her dedication continued to shine through her advocacy for restoration, conservation, public access, and the revitalization of the cultural and natural heritage tied to coastal waterways. Roberta's lasting contributions have made her a true champion of conservation.