



Alabama Chapter Newsletter

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHAIR

Steven A. Burns, Partner, Balch & Bingham LLP

I am grateful and excited to serve as your chair for the Alabama Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association for 2022! According to the A&WMA website, the Mission of A&WMA is “to assist in the professional development and critical environmental decision-making of our members to benefit society,” and the Core Purpose of the association is “to improve environmental knowledge and decisions by providing a neutral forum for exchanging information.” We will do our best this year to live up to these objectives.

For me, A&WMA has been at its best when we bring together environmental professionals from a variety of perspectives for technical presentations and networking. That has been a challenge during these times of pandemic, to say the least. I hope circumstances will allow us to see each other in person both for high-quality informational sessions as well as some good old socializing.

Most importantly, this is an association that exists to help YOU, our members, to learn, build your contact base, and enhance your career. If there are things you’d like A&WMA do that will benefit the environmental profession and you specifically, please don’t be shy about providing suggestions. We are always on the hunt for topics and locations for meetings and facility tours, so if you have a project or process you’d like to show off, please let us know! You can feel free to reach out to me or any of our chapter board members.

Very best wishes for a happy and healthy 2022.



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HOW CAN WE HELP?

IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN AN UPCOMING NEWSLETTER OR AN EVENT YOU WOULD LOVE TO ATTEND, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

ALAWMA@GMAIL.COM

UPCOMING WEBINAR

Please join us for an upcoming webinar:

How & Why do we develop an ESG Program?

With Dan Gilbert of ECT
January 26, 2022 at 12:00 PM

Details provided via email; please contact Adam George at ageorge@ectinc.com with any questions

ALABAMA COMPANY ENHANCES ENVIRONMENT WITH PANDEMIC-FRIENDLY PROJECT

Dennis Washington, this article first appeared on alabamane.wscenter.com

A Mobile business has found a way for their employees to help the environment amid COVID-19 restrictions on normal volunteer activities.

Evonik Corporation (EC) recently built and deployed more than 70 bird boxes on its property in Mobile County. EC Logistics Manager Helen Bush says the idea came about during a Partners for Environmental Progress membership meeting last fall.

“We watched a member talk about their quest to be certified for a National Wildlife Habitat Council project,” Bush said. “I realized we were already doing a lot of the same things so I looked at how joining that program could make our projects more meaningful to the Mobile community and natural wildlife here.”

Bush and other department leaders settled on a project to replace more than 70 bird boxes on EC property. The boxes, constructed years ago to enhance habitats for bluebirds and ducks, had deteriorated.

“One of the projects we did in the past was to build natural habitats for birds – ducks, bluebirds, purple martins and osprey,” Bush said. “We realized some of our birdhouses needed to be replaced.”

Because COVID-19 restrictions prevented company employees from voluntarily gathering together to assemble the boxes, Bush enlisted the help of the company’s maintenance department to create a kit employees could take home. EC Water Compliance Specialist Chris Bolling said employees quickly signed up.

“We were very amazed we got that many volunteers,” Bolling said. “It’s good to see an industrial company cares about the environment and is willing to involve their employees to do something like this. It’s really been fun.”

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Brinkley Thornton is a senior majoring in biology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham . Brinkley participates in undergraduate research in the Krueger-Hadfield Evolutionary Ecology Laboratory and hopes to pursue a masters of science and PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.



Luke Rakers is a senior majoring in Chemical Engineering at the University of Alabama. Luke used his experience from a co-op with SABIC to help with his undergraduate research in Temperature Swing Solvent Extraction. Luke hopes to use his experience to provide solutions to current environmental and wastewater challenges.

EVENTS

As more people are able to return to the office this year, we hope to bring back learning and networking events including Dinner Meetings and the Air Waste Regulatory Update

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you for your continued support of the Alabama Chapter of the Air and Waste Management Association.

Our next membership drive will be this spring.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

We would love to pass along job announcements for our membership! Job announcements sent to alawma@gmail.com will be forwarded to all active members within the week and included in our next newsletter that goes out to active and past members.

If you would like to include training opportunities or job announcements in upcoming newsletters, please let us know at alawma@gmail.com

MEET THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

STEVEN BURNS, CHAIR

Steven Burns is a Partner in the Environmental and Natural Resources section of Balch & Bingham LLP in Birmingham, Alabama. He counsels the firm's clients on issues including coal ash, solid and hazardous waste, water quality, flow and water quantity, Corps of Engineers permitting, threatened and endangered species, environmental litigation, and information management. Steven has twice served as Chair of the Alabama Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association, and he currently serves as Counsel and Secretary to the National Waterways Conference. Steven earned his law degree from Georgetown and graduated from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee.

TREY LIGHTSEY, VICE-CHAIR

Trey holds a B.S. in Biology and a M.S. in Environmental Engineering from The University of Alabama. He is currently Supervisor of the Electronic and Data Services group for Alabama Power Environmental Affairs where he performs traditional IT and software development, provides NELAC accredited laboratory support and manages environmental compliance data collecting and reporting for the Company. Additionally, Trey is husband to Alex and father to Jack (18) and John (13).

CHRIS AILOR, DIRECTOR

Chris Ailor has been with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management since 2013 after graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences from the University of Alabama. She is currently the Environmental Supervisor for the Agriculture and Gas Unit within ADEM's Air Division. The unit handles permitting, compliance, and enforcement of agriculture and gas industries by working with regulators, consultants, and industry personnel. Ms. Ailor previously worked in the Natural Resources Section of ADEM's Air Division where she was responsible for permitting, compliance, and enforcement for a portion of the State's wood products industry. She has previously served as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Alabama Chapter of the Air and Waste Management Association.

ALABAMA COMPANY ENHANCES ENVIRONMENT....

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"I didn't even get one," added Bush. "We ran out. People were eager to get one."

The boxes were installed throughout the company property in January and February. EC Environmental Health and Safety Specialist Brian Bennett said employees are excited to see them.

"We actually had more people calling and asking when could we build more, when are you going to do this again," Bennett said. "It's been great so far. Just being involved in putting them out and then starting to see the birds interested in them, getting closer and closer and then starting to use the boxes – it really shows the importance of that to the company and to the employees."

Bush said plans are underway to replace aging osprey nests and artificial habitats for bats and purple martins on EC property. She said the new osprey nests will need to be mounted on taller poles to get them higher than surrounding trees. Bush looks forward to resuming normal volunteer activities after the pandemic, but admits this project has been fun.

"It has been nice in a year where we haven't been able to see each other every day to be able to do something for each other and for the site that enhances not only the environmental benefit we can make but also something the employees enjoy doing," Bush said. "Hopefully it's more beneficial for the birds but it has been a lot of fun for us and pretty rewarding." *see alabamanewscenter.com for images of the bird boxes*

THE ALABAMA CHAPTER BOARD

CHAIR

Steven Burns
Balch & Bingham LLP
(One year term ending January 2023, then assumes position of Past Chair/Director)

PAST CHAIR/ DIRECTOR

Adam George
ECT, Inc.
(One year term ending January 2023)

VICE-CHAIR

Trey Lightsey
Alabama Power
(One year term ending January 2023, then assumes position of Chair)

SECRETARY

Anna Wood
ADEM - Air Division
(Two year term ending January 2023)

TREASURER

Kyle Flowers
KGS/Trinity Consulting
(Two year term ending January 2023)

DIRECTOR (Southern Section Liaison)

Phil Davis
Highland Technical Services
(Three year term ending January 2024)

DIRECTOR

Chris Ailor
ADEM-Air Division
(Two year term ending January 2024)

DIRECTOR

Gretta Martin
Sanders Engineering & Analytical Services, Inc (SEAS)
(Two year term ending 2023)

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Information on the following events is available on the Event Calendar at AWMA.org

March 8-10, 2022	Air Quality Measurement Methods and Technology Conference
April 6-7, 2022	Freight & Environment: Ports of Entry 2022 Conference
April 8-10, 2022	Leadership Training Academy
June 27-30, 2022	A&WMA 115th Annual Conference and Exhibition