

ADEM UPDATE

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New Environmental Park Unveiled



The project began in 2011 and ended with an opening ceremony on June 11

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management and the City of Montgomery have completed a joint project on the west side of the city. Previously known as Genetta Park, ADEM and the City unveiled the Fairview Environmental Park with a news conference and ceremony on June 11.

Representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, including Region 4 Administrator Heather McAteer Toney, attended the event.

The \$3.5 million project started in 2011, and was completed in April. It is located at the corner of West Fairview Avenue and Interstate 65. The project is

designed to improve the quality of stormwater runoff from Genetta stream before it goes into nearby Catoma Creek, which flows into the Alabama River.

The park serves as a constructed wetland allowing water to flow through without the use of concrete ditches. It removes pollutants by acting like both a filter and a sponge.

The project was mainly funded by a \$1.6 million grant from ADEM, and \$1.9 million from EPA.

“This is really good to see,” said ADEM Director Lance LeFleur at the news conference alongside Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange. “This was one of our first activities when I joined the department five years ago, and this is the kind of project I like to see.”

The four-acre park is expected to service stormwater runoff from approximately a seven-mile area that flows into Catoma Creek, which is classified as an impaired stream, for organic enrichment and dissolved oxygen.

The environmental park will also serve as an educational venue for the community. Along the park’s railings and fences are signs listing various plants and featuring ecological information for the public to read.

“We are celebrating a partnership to make our environment cleaner,” said Mayor Strange. “This is really good for west Montgomery, and all visitors to this area.”



The venue is now named the Fairview Environmental Park

Recycling Challenge Increases Awareness



Wetumpka Middle School students were thrilled to pick up their check from ADEM Director Lance LeFleur on Earth Day

For the third year in a row, the ADEM School Recycling Challenge was a huge success.

In an effort to raise awareness and provide an educational experience for the merits of recycling, the Department invited four area schools to participate in the “School Recycling Challenge.”

The event was designed to motivate students to do their part to increase recycling in Alabama. The program had three steps: sign up to earn cash for your school; challenge each student, teacher, and neighborhood to join your cause; and report on your total recycling effort.

ADEM’s recycling trailer was parked outside each school for two weeks.

The children gathered materials that were

taken to a local processing center. A total of more than 8,000 pounds of materials were recycled during this year’s challenge.

Eclectic Middle School won the recycling challenge with more than 3,500 pounds of material collected. On Earth Day, ADEM Director Lance LeFleur presented school officials with a check for \$535.50. The other schools that participated in the event were Airport Road Intermediate School (\$270.80), Wetumpka Middle School (\$209.50), and Wetumpka Elementary School (\$120.75).

“This is not only a tremendous educational outreach,” said LeFleur. “The students, teachers, and administrators of the participating schools are really excited about the prospect of winning this competition, and certainly appreciate the extra funds.”

Through activities like this, ADEM is successfully working to increase the diversion of recyclable commodities from the old solid waste stream, and to help Alabama realize the environmental and economic benefits of recycling.

New Commissioner Joins EMC

On March 31, Governor Robert Bentley appointed Dr. Elliott Craig Martin to the chemist/veterinarian position on the Alabama Environmental Management Commission.

The position was vacated earlier in March with the death of Dr. Robert L. Carson.

Dr. Martin, who served at his first commission meeting on April 17, will serve the previous term that expires on September 30, 2018.

“Appointing you to this position comes with great responsibility,” wrote Gov. Bentley in his appointment letter to Dr. Martin. “You will be making important decisions that affect the citizens of Alabama.”

Dr. Martin is a native of the Birmingham area. In June of 1991, he graduated from Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine. After graduation, he worked at the Pinson and Martin Animal Hospitals. In March 2002, he helped start the Liberty Animal Hospital, where he still serves.

He is a member of both the American Veterinary Medical Association and Alabama Veterinary Medical Association. Dr. Martin and his wife, Bess, have four children: Elle, Kennedy, George, and Mae.



Dr. Elliott Craig Martin

ADEM Hosts Two Large Earth Day Events

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management celebrated Earth Day 2015 by hosting a special event for more than 180 middle school students from the River Region.

On April 22, students from area schools visited the ADEM central office on Coliseum Boulevard to learn about environmental programs that are being implemented on a daily basis to safeguard and preserve Alabama's valuable natural resources.

The visiting students received guided tours and hands-on demonstrations from ADEM staff related to a wide-range of environmental programs including water quality sampling, fish tissue monitoring, air monitoring, recycling, solid waste disposal, and efforts that ensure Alabamians are provided with clean, safe drinking water. Students also learned about career opportunities at ADEM and were encouraged to pursue careers in science-related fields.

The first organized "Earth Day" was held in 1970, with more than 20 million Americans demonstrating in various cities. Now, it is an annual event on which activities are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. While many people celebrate Earth Day one day each year, every day is Earth Day at ADEM as the staff works to protect and preserve Alabama's air, land, and water resources.



Over 180 middle school students attended ADEM's Earth Day Event in Montgomery



On April 30, ADEM held an Earth Day Event in Selma

On April 30, ADEM took the Earth Day event "on the road." The Department held a special event in Selma for more than 120 middle school students at the School of Discovery in Downtown Selma, not far from the historic Edmund Pettus Bridge. The students were able to engage in a number of activities with ADEM staff to learn about how some of the things they do can affect the environment. The event was designed to promote the children's interest in learning about science and the world around them.

The School of Discovery's approach to learning is to assist each student in reaching their full potential academically and socially. The students are also exposed to programs in addition to core academic subjects to give them an enjoyable and rewarding learning experience, and the Earth Day event served to illustrate the importance of hands-on learning, and math and science-related subjects.

Asthma Awareness Highlights May Activities at ADEM

Asthma is one of the most common lifelong chronic diseases. One in 14 Americans lives with asthma, a disease affecting the lungs, causing repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing. During the past month, ADEM promoted National Asthma Awareness Month with an educational booth in the main lobby of the Central Office, links on the ADEM website to asthma-related sites, and a booth at the Health Fair.

On May 8, the Department also held a "Break-to-Educate" program in the main hearing room to increase awareness of asthma. Geoff Healan of the Air Division gave a short presentation on ADEM's Air Quality Forecasting that gives out alerts to help people with asthma.

Brenda Basnight with "Camp WheezeAway" was the featured speaker at the program. She said that although asthma cannot be cured, it is possible to manage asthma successfully to reduce and prevent attacks.



ADEM promoted Asthma Awareness Month in May with a "Break to Educate" program

ADEM UPDATE Available Online

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management publishes the *ADEM UPDATE* quarterly to inform Alabamians on the latest news and activities of the Department. As a cost-savings measure, the *ADEM UPDATE* is no longer printed. It is distributed electronically and available online through the publications link on the ADEM website at adem.alabama.gov.



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