

MEETING SUMMARY

Environmental Advisory Committee Southwest Florida Water Management District June 13, 2007

The Environmental Advisory Committee of the Southwest Florida Water Management District met at 2:00 p.m. on June 13, 2007, at the Tampa Service Office. The following individuals were present:

Committee Members Present

Greg Nowaski, Chair
Winnie Schreiber for Michael Long
Tom Blackshear
Dave Kandz
Jennifer Seney
Mariella Smith
Eileen Hart
Al Cheatum
Dwayne Carlton
Betsy Roberts
Keith Renish
Sharon Terrill
Priscilla Watkins

Staff Members Present

Lou Kavouras
Rand Frahm
Marty Kelly
Sid Flannery

Recording Secretary

Joanne McClellan

A list of all present who signed the attendance roster is filed in the permanent files of the District. Compact disks of the audio and copies of materials and handouts, as set forth in full herein, are also filed in the permanent files of the District.

The numbers preceding the items below correspond with the published agenda.

1. **Introductions**

Chair Greg Nowaski called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m., and introductions were made. Lou Kavouras introduced and welcomed the new members to the EAC.

2. **Additions and Deletions to the Agenda**

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

3. **Approval of the March 14, 2007 Meeting Summary**

A motion was moved and seconded to approve the March 14, 2007 Meeting Summary as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Rulemaking Report**

Rand Frahm provided an update of the activities in the northern part of our District from parts of Pasco County to the north. This area is not facing the same existing problems as in the southern part of the District, but there are signs of concern. It is the District's focus to get ahead of these issues. The following items were discussed as follows:

- a. Potential expansion the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area
- b. Potential establishment of a new Water Use Caution Area in Marion and Sumter counties
- c. Expanding our per capita requirements Districtwide which includes population and per capita methodology and reporting requirements

- d. Taking a comprehensive look at all our conservation requirements in our water use permitting rules.

In a response to a request for reports to the Coastal and Withlacoochee Basin Boards regarding the Water Use Caution Area, Lou Kavouras stated that copies of minutes or meeting recordings can be made available.

5. **Central Florida Coordination Area (CFCA)**

Rand Frahm provided an overview of the CFCA area that spans the three water management districts of Southwest Florida, St. Johns River, and South Florida. All districts are starting to see impacts from ground water withdrawals across water management district boundaries and are starting to bump up against the limits of groundwater availability. These issues are coupled with rapid growth in this area. Traditional ground water sources are not sustainable over the long haul so alternative sources must be developed. There is a need to manage the allocation of resources and management of impacts on a regional basis. The three water management districts put together an action plan that was approved by each Governing Board in September of 2007. The plan has three main components: regulatory, planning, and data and modeling and other analytical tools. Staff from each water management district is working together to prevent impacts and to protect the water resource by developing alternative water supplies.

6. **Update of the Lower Hillsborough River/Sulphur Springs/Tampa Bypass Canal MFLs**

Marty Kelly reported results of the Lower Hillsborough River peer review report, principally the river flows should be 20 cfs for most of the year, but in April, May, and June it needs to be 24 cfs to create a low salinity zone to improve habitat down toward Sulphur Springs. Staff is moving forward to have the Governing Board adopt these MFLs by July 2007.

7. **Update of the Minimum Flows Projects on the Lower Alafia and Myakka Rivers and Cowpen Slough/Dona Roberts Bay**

Sid Flannery provided a status of the Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) for three estuarine waters—the Alafia River, the Myakka River, and the Dona/Roberts Bay which corresponds to Cowpen Slough. He explained the scientific approach taken for the estuary water bodies as to how much water can be removed from water supply without damaging the ecology of a river or its receiving estuary. MFLs are a detailed process and are adopted as rule, not just permit conditions. Sid discussed the approach on tidal rivers, which are the brackish parts of the rivers in their lower reaches. He discussed the percent of flow approach which is used for unregulated, free-flowing rivers and is based on the percentage of flow at the time of withdrawal. To make these rivers work for water supply, the key is storing water in the wet season to be used during the dry season.

Staff is finalizing the report of the minimum flows for the Alafia River basin and plan to take it to the July Governing Board to send it out for scientific peer review. The Alafia River flows to Tampa Bay and is currently used for water supply. Water from the Alafia can be diverted to a water treatment plant or put into a large off stream reservoir.

Sid discussed the two habitat components critical in an estuarine system—stationary and dynamic. Staff studied these components that resulted in a predictive model that will note changes to habitat when fresh water flow is removed from the river. Also, complex hydrodynamic computer models have been developed that reflect the actual shape and morphology of the river and simulate, through physics, the salinity distributions of the estuary. Also studied is fish abundance as flow is removed.

Minimum flows have been adopted for the upper reaches of the Myakka River, but in 2007 it is planned to adopt minimum flows for the lower reaches of the river. Sid described the watershed and various studies that have been completed.

Sid described the area and drainage patterns of Dona/Roberts Bay within Cowpen Slough. Flow and water quality monitoring is ongoing and fish studies have been done. The MFL report will be completed in 2007.

8. **Reclaimed Water Task Force Update**

Betsy Roberts stated that the Task Force focused on two issues: 1) reclaimed water being reallocated or priced in a way that some existing users were losing the ability to use it and in some cases were not able to return to ground water and 2) how can the use and efficiency of reclaimed water be increased. Betsy reviewed the 16 recommendations that will be presented to the Governing Board in July 2007. Lou Kavouras suggested that the recommendations be mailed to the EAC members for review.

9. **Development of Agenda Topics for the September 12, 2007 Meeting**

- ERP permit delegation, Duplication of services – Clark Hull (Mariella Smith)
- Followup on Governing Board decisions
- Lower Hillsborough River Rule and Recovery Strategy – Marty Kelly
- Lower Alafia River (September) – Sid Flannery
- Weeki Wachee (September) – Marty Kelly
- MFL Standing Agenda Item – Marty Kelly
- SWFWMD Strategic Plan (September)
- Funding of Land Management and Land Acquisition (Tom Blackshear) (rec guide)
- Water Quality Issue – Anthony Andrade (future)
- Stormwater Quality Issues – (Eric Livingston-key person – new statewide stormwater rules – low impact development stormwater strategies (Jennifer Seney) (Lou stated proposed rule language should be out in September and we can bring this back at a future meeting)

10. **Announcements and Other Business**

There were no announcements or other business to come before the committee.

11. **Adjournment**

There being no other discussions the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.