

**APPROVED
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Environmental Advisory Committee
Southwest Florida Water Management District
September 13, 2010**

The Environmental Advisory Committee of the Southwest Florida Water Management District convened for a regular meeting at 1:03 p.m., September 13, 2010, at the District's Tampa Service Office, 7601 Highway 301 North.

Committee Members Present

Dwayne Carlton, Chair, Ocala/Marion County COC
Mark Alderson, Vice Chair, Sarasota Bay NEP
Mitch Almon, Florida Trail Assoc. Suncoast
Holly Greening, Tampa Bay Estuary Program
Alan Grubman, Save the Homosassa River Alliance
Eileen Hart, Keystone Civic Association
Dave Kandz, St. Petersburg Audubon Society
Carl Keeler, Izaak Walton League
Greg Nowaski, Chair, Control Growth Now, Inc
Sam Stone, Charlotte County COC
Sharon Terrill-Elfers, Sierra Club Tampa Bay
Bob Upcavage, Suncoast Native Plant Society

Committee Members Absent

Lisa Beever, Charlotte Harbor NEP
Mike Burton, Manatee Chamber of Commerce
Julie Byrne, Sarasota Audubon Society
Betsy Roberts, Env. Confederation of SW FL
Dana West, Greater Sarasota COC

Staff Members Present

Lou Kavouras, Facilitator
Jill Hood
Dr. Marty Kelly
Lisann Morris
Lois Sorensen

Governing Board Member

None

Recording Secretary

Teri Hudson

Approved summary from previous meetings can be found on the District's Web site at (www.WaterMatters.org).

The numbers preceding the items below correspond to the order of presentation.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Dwayne Carlton called the meeting to order. He welcomed members, staff, and interested persons and asked for member introductions.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

No additions or deletions to the agenda.

3. Approval of the June 16, 2010 Meeting Summary

A motion was made by Greg Nowaski and seconded by Carl Keeler to approve the June 16, 2010 meeting summary as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Hydrologic Conditions and Water Shortage Plan Update

Lois Sorensen, Demand Management Program Manager, stated the Governing Board accepted the recommendation to allow the last of the water shortage orders to expire as long as the local governments were allowed to remain stricter when appropriate. In regards to rainfall, the District is in the normal to above normal range with a few pockets of below normal conditions. All three groundwater regions of the District are within the normal range of fluctuation. There are some improvements with the lakes in the Tampa Bay area. River flows, especially the Withlacoochee, are not as well as some of the others. Alafia is within the normal range of fluctuation. The reservoirs are looking good. Public Supply water use remains low not only due to favorable weather conditions, but also the current economic conditions. The extended forecast for rainfall is drier than normal conditions in the winter through the spring months. The District will continue to monitor this throughout the region along with groundwater and surface water levels so that appropriate action can be taken if necessary.

Rulemaking to update the Water Shortage Plan is ongoing. With a great deal of input from a second public workshop and recommendations from the special joint meeting of the Green Industry and Agricultural Advisory committee members, staff has created a fourth draft that will be presented to the Governing Board in September for approval. Major improvements to the amendments are: incorporate plain language throughout; modify drought indicators; clarify local government roles; enhance reporting and enforcement; streamline and update restrictions; and once-per-week watering schedule in Phase III. Recent changes include reconsidering new plant establishment (keep "30, 30" exemption in Phase III; keep "15, 30, 15" exemption in Phase IV; and further clarify separate low-volume exemption); clarify restrictions for interactive fountains; limit (not prohibit) lawn hot spot treatment; and consider burden vs. benefit to small utilities. Amendments are posted on the District's website.

5. Rulemaking Update

Lou Kavouras provided the following information:

- The Water Shortage Plan is going to the Governing Board in September.
- Regarding the 2010 January Frost-Freeze event in the Dover/Plant City area, the Governing Board is working on rule changes that would set a cap to the frost-freeze quantities in that area, establish a minimum level for the aquifer in that area, and develop a recovery strategy to bring that area back to where it should be.
- Staff will be requesting the Governing Board to initiate rulemaking to make tweaks to the Year Round Conservation Rule and procedural rule related to the form used for variances. This is due to errors or omissions that were discovered.
- Tampa Bay Water Consolidated Water Use Permit will be before the Governing Board in September. The main elements are to keep that permit capped at 90mgd a day.
- The committee will be updated on Tampa Bay Water reservoir repairs as information becomes available.

Committee members were interested in how the District figured the proposed water use cap in the Plant City/Dover area and specifically the details in the rule language. Ms. Kavouras will get back with the committee members with the details and provide updated information at their next scheduled meeting.

6. Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) Update

Dr. Marty Kelly, Minimum Flows & Levels Program Director, explained the District is legislatively mandated in Florida Statutes, section 373,042 to do Minimum Flows and Levels. The District is currently working on the statutory required MFL Priority List. The Governing Board will be presented with staff recommendation at their September meeting. Public workshops are scheduled in early October to obtain input to present to the Governing Board for final approval. The list is required to be submitted to DEP by November 15, 2010. The list will project out five years. The schedule was sent to committee members prior to this meeting. Dr. Kelly reviewed with the committee what the District has done in the last 12 months. All MFL findings reports are listed on the District's website at www.watmatters.org. Ms. Eileen Hart expressed concern regarding Tampa Bay Water's consolidated water use permit and the fact that the MFL's have not been set yet for Starvation, Rogers and Raleigh Lakes. Ms. Holly Greening commended District staff for their professionalism when working with the Estuary Program in the Tampa Bay area, and their staff appreciates being a part of the peer review process.

7. SWUCA Recovery Strategy

Ms. Jill A. Hood, P.G., Senior Professional Geologist, provided an update and status of the District's efforts to monitor the recovery of water levels and flows in the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA). The purpose of the SWUCA Recovery Strategy is to provide a plan for reducing the rate of saltwater intrusion and restore low flows to the upper Peace River and lake levels by 2025, while ensuring sufficient water supplies and protecting the investments of existing water use permittees. The strategy has six basic elements: conservation, alternative water supply development, resource recovery projects, land use transitions, permitting, and monitoring and reporting. The success of the SWUCA Recovery Strategy will be determined through continued monitoring of the resource. The District uses an extensive monitoring network to assess actual versus anticipated trends in water levels, flows and saltwater intrusion. Additionally, the District conducts an assessment of the cumulative impacts of the factors affecting recovery.

8. Myakka River Watershed Initiative

Lisann Morris, Senior Professional Engineer, updated the Committee on the progress of the Myakka River Watershed Initiative (MRWI) with emphasis on hydrologic restoration alternatives developed for the District's Flatford Swamp property which is located in the upper reaches of the watershed. Ms. Morris discussed alternative methods for removing excess water from the swamp which include: piping excess flows from the central storage point to Mosaic property east of the Wingate mine, where it would be utilized in their mining operations instead of pumping groundwater; conveying the flow to Manatee County for possible use to mitigate a MFL, or direct injection into the Floridan Aquifer. The Myakka River Watershed encompasses about 600 square miles and includes lands in Manatee, Sarasota, and Charlotte counties with small portions in Hardee and Desoto counties. The objective of this initiative is to restore water quality, natural systems, and floodplain impacts in the watershed in ways that provide a benefit to water supplies in the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA). Mr. Mark Alderson offered a suggestion to look at the possibility to taking some land in that area, put the water in the wetland, let it drawn to the Manatee River and put it in the reservoir as polished high quality water.

9. Development of Agenda Topics for the December 6, 2010 Meeting

- Rulemaking Update
- Hydrologic Conditions Update
- Fruitville Initiative
- Sinkhole formation/Ground water withdrawals / Explain karst system
- SWIM Program Update
- EPA Nutrient Criteria
- Frost Freeze Cap
- Land Acquisition priorities
- MFL Update (March 2011)

10. Announcements and Other Business

Marion County will be celebrating their Springs Festival. Activities and events are posted on their website. Three Sisters Springs will be hosting an open house. Lou Kavouras will email the date to Committee members.

11. Adjournment

There being no further discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.