

**APPROVED
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Environmental Advisory Committee
Southwest Florida Water Management District
December 7, 2009**

The Environmental Advisory Committee of the Southwest Florida Water Management District convened for a regular meeting at 1:05 p.m., December 7, 2009, at the Tampa Service Office, 7601 Highway 301 North, Tampa, Florida.

Committee Members Present

Gregory Nowaski, Chair, Control Growth Now, Inc.
Mark Alderson, Sarasota Bay NEP
Dwayne Carlton, Ocala/Marion County COC
Eileen Hart, Keystone Civic Association
Dave Kandz, St. Petersburg Audubon Society
Carl Keeler, Izaak Walton League
Betsy Roberts, Env. Confederation of SW FL
Alan Grubman, Save the Homosassa River Alliance
Julie Byrne, Sarasota Audubon Society

Staff Members Present

Lou Kavouras, Facilitator
David Rathke
Lois Sorensen
Gordon McClung
Don Ellison
Will Miller

Recording Secretary

Joanne McClellan

Committee Members Absent

Dana West, Greater Sarasota COC
Sharon Terrill-Elfers, Sierra Club Tampa Bay
Holly Greening, Tampa Bay Estuary Program
Keith Renish, Heartland Environmental
Mike Burton, Manatee Chamber of Commerce
Bob Upcavage, Suncoast Native Plant Society
Alton Cheatham, Charlotte County COC
Mitch Almon, Florida Trail Assoc. Suncoast

Governing Board Member

None

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

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

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Greg Nowaski called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. He welcomed members, staff, and interested persons.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

Lou Kavouras, Deputy Executive Director, Outreach, Planning and Board Services, stated that Item #4, City of Tampa Reclaimed Water Master Plan presentation, was deleted from the agenda. Ms. Kavouras welcomed Housh Ghovaei, Pinellas-Anclote River Basin Board, as an observer to the EAC meeting.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Summary

A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 14, 2009 meeting summary as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. City of Tampa Reclaimed Water Master Plan

Item deleted.

5. Rulemaking Update

Lou Kavouras informed the Committee of the following items:

- The District is in the process of updating a second phase of the Northern Tampa Bay Recovery Strategy rules and staff will request Governing Board approval at their December meeting. The Partnership Agreement between Tampa Bay Water and the District was phase one of the strategy and it will expire at the end of 2010. Phase two will replace Phase one. The goal was to reduce pumping from the 11 consolidated wellfields down to a moving 12-month average of 90 mgd or less. The second phase rule

will keep the 90 mgd cap to allow the District more time to test whether that number is what is needed to see environmental recovery continue. The rule would also continue to use the Operations Plan to help manage the 11 consolidated wellfields, to allow more data collection and analysis, to implement some of the recovery strategy for the impacts that are not relieved and implement aggressive water conservation activities.

- The Enhanced Water Conservation Requirements rules were approved by the Governing Board and will become effective in January. These rules extend the Southern Water Use Caution Area (SWUCA) Recovery Strategy rules to the entire District. The rules apply to public supply, recreation and aesthetic water uses district wide. There is a 150-gallon per day maximum per capita. The utilities in the northern region have some time to get down to that number. The rules minimize the irrigation of common areas, require reclaimed water and conservation reporting and the phasing out of irrigation of golf course roughs.
- Staff will be requesting final adoption of the MFLs for the Estuarine Segment of the (lower) Peace River by the Governing Board in January 2010.
- Staff is in the process of refining the Water Shortage Plan Rules and may have draft rules available in early 2010.

6. Hydrologic Conditions/Drought Update and Water Shortage Restriction

Lois Sorensen, Demand Management Coordinator, reviewed hydrologic conditions. Much of the region is still dealing with impacts from the long-term rainfall deficit. Rainfall data continues to indicate some areas experiencing declines since last month. Groundwater levels in the northern region are at the low end of the normal range of fluctuation. Lakes never did get back to normal this rainy season. River flows have responded to recent rainfall, but the flows are not sustained. Public supply storage is in good condition going into the dry season. The rainfall forecast shows a wetter than usual winter. Ms. Sorensen described the decision making process for water shortage orders—staff monitors and analyzes drought indicators and other factors, a recommendation is made to the Governing Board for their consideration and the Board then makes the final decision as to the declaration of a water shortage. Key provisions of the current Water Shortage Orders, Modified Phase II and Modified Phase III restrictions were discussed. Two motions were presented. **First, Al Grubman made a motion asking the Governing Board to retain Phase III water shortage restrictions in the Tampa Bay area until all resources are showing recovery (their concern is that lake levels and river flows are still low). The motion was seconded by Eileen Hart and passed unanimously. Second, Al Grubman took the issue a step further and made a motion in support of one-day-per-week irrigation as the standard when we are not in a water shortage. Eileen Hart seconded the motion and it passed 6 to 3. Dwayne Carlton, Mark Alderson, and Carl Keeler voted against the motion.**

At this point, Lou Kavouras introduced and welcomed Julie Byrne as the new primary committee member representing Sarasota Audubon Society and announced that Jeanne Dubi is her alternate.

7. FEMA Map Modernization

Gordon McClung, Engineering & Watershed Management Project Director, explained that staff has been working for several years to modernize mapping used for floodplain management at a Federal and District level. A history of flood control was provided. Mr. McClung stated that in 1968 the U.S. Congress established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to establish floodplain regulations for communities participating in the program and to allow local governments to adopt floodplain ordinances modeled after land use and zoning. These maps were completed in 1980, then in 2000 the Federal government funded the Map Modernization Program, and currently staff is working on Risk Mapping Assessment Planning (Risk Map). Flood mapping is used in the District's Regulatory process, local governments use it to determine flood risk, and insurance companies use it to determine the amount of liability, and the general public can obtain information that will help to determine if they need flood insurance. The Watershed Management Program is a continuing cycle of update and maintenance to risk maps and floodplain determination. The District faces challenges with local governments; unidentified complications with soils, modeling methods, and accuracy in parcel levels; providing better Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) to understand risks; and managing the reaction to the identified risks. Examples of modernized maps were shown that illustrated the amount of detail that is now provided.

8. ASR Update/Arsenic Issue

Don Ellison, Senior Professional Geologist/Engineer, explained the ASR process of injecting treated water into the aquifer for storage and recovery in the dry season. Mr. Ellison said utilities met the standard for

arsenic when it was 50 ug/l, but with the lowered standard to 10 ug/l required as of January 2006, there is a challenge to meet those standards and has resulted in ASR well sites to be abandoned, canceled, or put on hold. An overview of the ASR projects in the District was provided. Arsenic naturally occurs in the aquifer and is associated with pyrite, which is a very common mineral in our aquifers. A status of the ASR Recharge Water De-gassing Pilot Study at Bradenton was discussed and the results indicate an acceptable level of performance. The District and FDEP continue to work with the EPA and ASR experts in an effort to move ASR forward to provide a safe alternative water source.

9. Legislative Preview

David Rathke, Community and Legislative Affairs Director, explained that guiding principles are followed by staff during the legislative session. At the Federal level, the District supports data collection and analysis, monitors regulatory reforms, and advocates for funding and the priorities are FEMA, national estuaries, USGS, and WRAP. The District is active in the following Federal legislation: private activity bonds, tax credit bonds, and new authorizations in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). At the State level, the District pursues gains in efficiency, supports regulatory incentives, and advocates for funding and the proposed State legislative initiatives are Basin Board clean-up, conservation, electronic notification, on-line permitting, and the Peace Creek as well as other State water issues, such as delegation of permits, local sources, SERCs, springs, statewide water board, and stormwater. The State budget may not be funding Florida Forever. Every trust fund that the water management district benefits from is dependent on Doc Stamp Revenues and there is not enough funding for priority programs, such as Florida Forever, Water Management Lands Trust Fund, Water Protection & Sustainability Trust Fund, and WRAP. The District is not anticipating new funding and there is potential for further tax reform that could negatively impact the District's budget as well.

10. Get Outside! Campaign

Will Miller, Land Use & Protection Manager, informed the committee about the ongoing campaign that started in September. The purpose is to build support for District land programs by getting the public onto the lands. The campaign is multi-media that includes press kits, presentations, interviews and special public events to improve the knowledge of the District. The goal of the campaign is to promote the value of eco-system preservation/conservation through the recreational experience. The campaign also seeks to increase diversity in the use of the lands. Mr. Miller discussed the new Recreation Guide and distributed a guide to each committee member. This campaign is an initiative important to the water management district to increase access to the public on District-owned lands and to dispel the perception that these lands do not allow access. The campaign also encourages volunteer opportunities as a way to learn new skills, enjoy Florida's natural areas, and give back to your community. Information on two upcoming community events was provided: Green Swamp Wilderness Preserve—Hampton Tract in Polk County on February 27, 2010 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Deep Creek Preserve in DeSoto County on April 10, 2010 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

11. Development of Agenda Topics for the March 8, 2010 Meeting

- Significance of the Green Swamp (Lou Kavouras suggested an off-site EAC meeting in March at Green Swamp West)
- Legislative Updates to be provided by email
- Hydrologic Conditions – Lois Sorensen
- Rulemaking – Lou Kavouras
- Election of Chair and Vice Chair
- Exotic Plant Control – Brian Nelson

12. Announcements and Other Business

- a. Get Outside! Event at Hampton Track (Polk County), February 27, 2010
- b. Get Outside! Event at Deep Creek (DeSoto County), April 10, 2010
- c. Future meetings: March 8, 2010 at 1 p.m., Tampa Service Office; June 16, 2010 at 1 p.m., Sarasota Service Office; and September 13, 2010 at 1 p.m., Tampa Service Office

16. Adjournment

There being no further discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.