

**Northern Tampa Bay Phase II Local Technical Peer Review Group (LTPRG)
SWFWMD Tampa Service Office, Hwy 301N, Tampa**

**Meeting 39
October 3, 2007 - 9:30AM**

Summary

The following were in attendance: Chris Shea, Tampa Bay Water; Patty Fesmire, Tampa Bay Water; Doug Keesecker, Tampa Bay Water; Mario Cabana, Hillsborough County; Stuart Dawson, Pinellas County Utilities; **Annemarie Hammond**, Pasco County; Kim Haag, USGS; Terrie Lee, USGS; Patty Metz, USGS; Diane Willis, GPI Southeast, Inc.; John Walkinshaw, GPI Southeast, Inc.; Deborah Daigle, HDR Engineering, Inc; Scott Emery, EHI/Hillsborough County; **Michael Hancock**, SWFWMD; Maya Burke, SWFWMD; John Emery, SWFWMD; David Carr, SWFWMD; Ken Weber, SWFWMD; and **Doug Leeper**, SWFWMD. Names in bold are designated representatives for the LTPRG.

Doug Leeper provided an update on the status of minimum flows and levels development for currently identified priority water bodies in the northern Tampa Bay area. He noted that staff presented a proposed 2008 Minimum Flows and Levels Priority List and Schedule to the Board at their September 2007 meeting, and expects to return to the Board in October 2007 to ask for finalization of the list and schedule prior to submission of the document to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. He noted that staff will be hosting a total of four public workshops in October to solicit input on the proposed list and schedule and that interested parties should contact District staff regarding inclusion of water bodies on the list. The first workshop was held at the District Bartow Service Office on October 1, 2007 and subsequent workshops are planned for October 3 (Brooksville Headquarters), October 8 (Tampa Service Office) and October 10 (Sarasota Service Office).

With regard to minimum flows for river systems in the Tampa Bay area, Mr. Leeper noted that at their August 2007 meeting, the Governing Board approved staff-recommended minimum levels for the lower Hillsborough River, Sulphur Springs and the Tampa Bypass Canal, as well as a recovery strategy for the lower Hillsborough River. Rules associated with these minimum flows were published in the Florida Administrative Weekly on September 21, 2007, and in the absence of timely requests for a public or administrative hearing will be incorporated into District rules (Chapters 40D-8 and 40D-80, Florida Administrative Code). Mr. Leeper noted that peer-review findings for the proposed minimum flows for the upper Hillsborough River/Crystal Springs system and the Braden River were presented to the Governing Board at their September meeting. He also indicated that the District hosted a rule development public workshop on proposed minimum flows for the upper Hillsborough River/Crystal Springs system at the Tampa Service Office on October 2, 2007 and planned to host a workshop for the proposed Braden River minimum flows on October 12 at the District's Sarasota Service Office. Mr. Leeper also noted that staff responses to the peer-review panel findings for the upper Hillsborough River/Crystal Springs and Braden River would be presented to the Board in October and that proposed rules concerning minimum

flows for the water bodies would probably be presented to the Governing Board for adoption at the December Board meeting. Mr. Leeper noted that a draft report for proposed minimum flows for the Alafia River estuary was presented to the Governing Board at their August 2007 meeting and that the report was currently being peer-reviewed. Staff expects that the peer-review findings may be available by the end of December 2007 or early in 2008.

With regard to the development of minimum and guidance levels for lakes in the northern Tampa Bay area, Mr. Leeper noted that at the September 2007 Governing Board meeting, the Board approved continuation of a public hearing on proposed rule amendments concerning minimum and guidance levels for Crews Lake and other priority Pasco County lakes until the October Board meeting. Mr. Leeper indicated that staff may recommend continuation of the public hearing until the November Board meeting. Mr. Leeper further noted that at the October 2007 Governing Board meeting, staff plan to recommend Board approval to remove Ten Year Flood Guidance Levels (and references to the levels) from Chapter 40D-8, Florida Administrative Code. He also noted that a rule development public workshop on proposed minimum and guidance levels for three Pasco County lakes (King Lake, King Lake (East) and Lake Linda) was scheduled for November 14, 2007 in Land O' Lakes, and that staff anticipates seeking Board approval of levels for the lakes at the November or December Governing Board meeting.

In response to a question from Mr. Emery, Mr. Leeper noted that the District-funded project involving analysis of the effects of drainage alterations on water levels in Lakes Raleigh, Rogers and Starvation in Hillsborough County was behind schedule. He indicated that the project was not expected to be completed until sometime in 2008.

Finally, Mr. Leeper indicated that printed copies of a document (see information below) that was developed as a result of District-funded study of lake augmentation was available for distribution to meeting participants.

Document Information:

Brenner, M., Smoak, J.M., Leeper, D.A., Streubert, M. and Baker, S.M. 2007. Radium-226 accumulation in Florida freshwater mussels. *Limnology and Oceanography* 32: 1614-1623.

Kim Haag and Patty Metz gave a presentation on a USGS study that is just getting underway entitled "Factors influencing hydrologic recovery of wetlands in the Northern Tampa Bay Area." The goal of the study is to determine the factors influencing water levels in selected impaired wetlands in the Northern Tampa Bay (NTB) area that have not responded to ground-water withdrawal decreases as expected, or sites that evidence suggests may not respond as expected to future decreases. The study will include data collection at 5 to 10 wetlands. Factors that may be investigated include karst activity, soil loss, drainage changes, and structural changes.

All sites selected for the study will have available monitoring data collected by Tampa Bay Water and the District, such as daily stage data, rainfall data, water level data in nearby Floridan aquifer and surficial aquifer monitor wells. Wetland perimeters will be

delineated, and wetland bathymetry will be surveyed. Bathymetric data will be used to describe relationships between wetland stage, area, and volume. A short USGS scientific investigative report (SIR) will be prepared to describe the factors influencing water levels in selected impaired wetlands.

Several potential sites already identified for the study were shared with the group. Ms. Haag and Ms. Metz asked the group if they could identify other potential study sites. Several sites were discussed, and the group agreed to forward additional sites as they are identified.

Michael Hancock led a brief follow-up discussion on the original methods used to predict recovery in the late-1990s, and reminded the group that many assumptions had to be made at the time. Mr. Hancock presented hydrographs from several wetlands in various parts of the Northern Tampa Bay area, demonstrating evidence of hydrologic reaction to the reductions in ground-water withdrawals since 2003. Mr. Hancock explained that such information will help explain the magnitude of the benefits of ground-water withdrawal reductions, regardless of whether or not MFLs are achieved at individual lakes and wetlands. He also argued for the importance of information to be derived from the previously discussed USGS study, so that a complete picture of the factors influencing lake and wetland hydrology can be explained, and sound decisions on further recovery efforts can be determined.

The next regular LTPRG meeting is scheduled for 9:30 AM on December 12, 2007 at SWFWMD's Tampa Service Office.

AGENDA

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1. August meeting follow-up
2. Miscellaneous updates
 - Lake MFL Update
3. Factors Influencing Water Levels in Wetlands in the Northern Tampa Bay area (Patty Metz, Terrie Lee, USGS)
4. Relating NTB II projects to Recovery – discussion.
5. Issues for next Meeting – December 12, 2007