

MEETING NOTES

**Northern Tampa Bay Phase II
Local Technical Peer Review Group
Wetlands Subcommittee
SWFWMD Tampa Service Office
March 1, 2006 - 9:30 AM**

Attendees: Michael Hancock, Warren Hogg, Ted Rochow, Jill Hood, David Carr, Scott Emery, Patty Fesmire, Doug Keesecker, Chris Shea, Debra Segal, Kathleen McKee, Laura Morris

The meeting began with a PowerPoint presentation by Michael Hancock reviewing how cypress dome minimum levels were set in 1997 using a reference set of 36 cypress wetlands. This work led to the existing 40D-8 Rule that the median stage cannot be lowered more than 1.8 feet below Normal Pool if significant harm is to be avoided in cypress dome wetlands. The minimum level procedure for wetlands was reviewed by a peer review panel that made several recommendations. The recommendations have guided District work for the past several years.

The overall network of wetlands being monitored by SWFWMD and Tampa Bay Water in recent years has expanded to 481 with 337 wetlands considered isolated. Mr. Hancock described the Master Wetland list, which contains information on the monitored wetlands.

Environmental information on the isolated wetlands was collected with the Wetland Assessment Procedure (WAP) from approximately 2000-2004 in both spring and fall. A new WAP methodology was used for the first time in spring 2005. SWFWMD and Tampa Bay Water are entering data from the WAPs into databases. There is a need to merge the two databases so that analyses can be performed on the entire dataset. Some possible examples of analyses that could be performed would use hydrologic and biologic data for different time periods. The type of analyses would be limited by confidence in the availability and reliability of the dataset from past years. The need for quality control of WAP data taken in the field and entered into spreadsheets was discussed. The keys to whether information from monitored wetlands will be able to be used in future MFL work include the level of documentation on the data collection, the quality of the data collection, and the accessibility of the data (and supporting information) in organized databases.

Mr. Hancock mentioned that 2006 WAP training is scheduled for April this year and it appears that attendance will be good. Annual training is necessary to refresh knowledge of plant identification and WAP methodology. The current

plant list in the 2005 WAP will remain the same for 2006 WAP monitoring. The District is working with consultants to prepare a field identification guide for all plants used in the WAP. The District is also working with the University of South Florida to improve their plant atlas website to make it more helpful to those performing WAP field assessments.

A more detailed assessment of soils at WAP wetlands is scheduled for this year. This will involve a more extensive surveillance of the wetlands to describe soil conditions. Mr. Hancock asked how wetland histories required by the WAP were going. He mentioned that considerable progress is being made by the District on these histories.

Since there were no additional items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

AGENDA

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1. Introduction
2. WAP and water level database issues
 - a. MFL and Recovery assessments
 - b. Master wetland list
 - c. WAP database coordination
 - d. Water level data
 - e. 2006 Field Sheet
3. Quality control processes with WAP data
4. Spring 2006 WAP training
5. Other issues