

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**Springs Coast Steering Committee**  
Brooksville, Florida      November 13, 2019

The Springs Coast Steering Committee convened at 2:00 p.m., November 13, 2019 at the Southwest Florida Water Management District Governing Board Room, 2379 Broad Street, Brooksville, Florida.

**Members Present**

Robert Holmes, City of Crystal River  
Kelly Rice, SWFWMD, Chair  
Jason Mickel, Pasco County (alternate)  
Wayne Dukes, Hernando County  
Scott Carnahan, Citrus County (via phone)  
Shannon Wright, FFWCC  
Angela Chellette, FDACS (alternate) (via phone)

**Members Absent**

Kathy Bryant, Marion County  
Tom Frick, FDEP

**SWFWMD Staff**

Jennette Seachrist  
Frank Gargano  
Claire Stapley  
Meagan Finneran  
Randy Smith  
Lizanne Garcia  
Tara Harter

**Recording Secretary**

Lauren Vossler

**Others Present**

Ken Frink, City of Crystal River  
Alan Garri, Kimley-Horn  
Gordon Onderdonk, Hernando Utilities

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SWFWMD – Southwest Florida Water Management District  
FDACS – Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

FDEP – Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
FWC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

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A list of others present who signed the attendance sheet is filed in the permanent files of the Springs Coast Steering Committee.

**1. Call to Order and Roll**

Committee Chair Rice called the meeting to order. Ms. Lauren Vossler called the roll and confirmed a quorum.

**2. Action Item: Minutes Approval from 08/28/2019**

*The committee unanimously approved the August 28, 2019 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.*

**3. Public Input**

*There were no public comments presented.*

Mr. Wayne Dukes expressed concerns about Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) selection process for the spring's applications.

**4. Presentation: Springs Funding Applications Received FY2021 – Vivianna Bendixson, SWFWMD**

Ms. Vivianna Bendixson, SWIM supervisor, provided members with a brief summary of the Fiscal year 2021 funding application process. This year the applicants requested 51.3 million from FDEP Springs funding. Ms. Bendixson explained the projected amount of funding awarded for FY2019-

FY2020 will be 19.8 million. Ms. Bendixson explained 14 applications were submitted for FY2021 and three of those applications are also requesting funding from the District's Cooperative Funding Initiative. Ms. Bendixson gave an overview of general project location by Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) and a detailed FY2021 timeline of Springs Steering and Management Committee events. Ms. Bendixson briefly reviewed the applications submitted for the FY2021 Springs Funding cycle including eight new applications and six from the previous cycle that were not projected to be funded.

Ms. Shannon Wright inquired if a request for matched funds from local entities provided any added value. Ms. Bendixson explained according to the 2017 guidance document from the FDEP, a match is not required, however, if there is one, this is taken into consideration when selecting the projects for funding.

**5. Presentation: Rainbow Springs SWIM Plan Quantifiable Objectives Update – Dr. Chris Anastasiou, SWFWMD:**

Dr. Chris Anastasiou, lead water quality scientist, presented the Rainbow River SWIM Plan Quantifiable Objectives Update, which entailed, the quantifiable objectives being broken into three focus areas: water quality, water quantity, and natural systems. These objectives are part of the Surface Water Improvement Management (SWIM) plan used to address the quality of the Rainbow River. Dr. Anastasiou provided an overview of the District's water quality monitoring of the Rainbow River's groundwater, springs, and surface waters. Of the District's five first-magnitude spring-fed waterbodies, Rainbow River is best known for its water clarity. Dr. Anastasiou touched based on the Rainbow Springs nitrate concentrations which is currently at 2.6 milligrams per liter. The minimum flow for the Rainbow River is greater than 95% of natural flow, as of 2018 the District is achieving about 98% of that flow. Dr. Anastasiou discussed the natural systems and the coverage of desirable submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) as greater than 65% and the coverage of invasive SAV as less than 10% in the specific sampling locations. As of August 2018, the District is attaining 57% of desirable SAV and 32% of invasive SAV.

Mr. Wayne Dukes inquired about who to contact requiring pesticides and fertilizers being dropped into the Weeki Wachee River and water ways. Ms. Jennette Seachrist responded that FDEP has a model ordinance for fertilizer use, each local government has the ability to use the model ordinance or adopt more stringent standards. Ms. Seachrist suggested to have FDEP provide an update on fertilizer ordinances at a future meeting.

Mr. Robert Holmes inquired about having any maps that correlate water quality improvement to septic to sewer programs. Ms. Seachrist responded that District does not have those types of map she does not believe that FDEP does either. Over time there will be more data to support those correlations and improvements in the rivers and springs.

Mr. Holmes asked if there is any planting of the SAV or do the scientists try and let it naturally grow, also if the District offers any clean out programs where they remove the Lyngbya. Dr. Anastasiou responded that the Rainbow Springs State Park has volunteers that have been removing filamentous algae for several years in the headsprings area and have successfully minimized its spread in and around the swimming area.

Mr. Rice asked if the District is seeing a difference in coverage of eel grass in the Rainbow River versus the other springs. Dr. Anastasiou explained that Rainbow river is dominated by Sagittaria, however, he is not seeing any major overriding trends in vegetation data and the majority of the river

has stable vegetation from the last 20-30 years of monitoring. Most of the issues he sees are related mostly to the lower part of the Rainbow River where Hydrilla and filamentous algae are more common.

**6. Members Comments**

*There were no member comments presented.*

**7. Adjournment**

Committee Chair Rice adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.