



SPRINGS COAST STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, March 9, 2022 – 2:00 PM
2379 BROAD STREET, BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA 34604

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

John Mitten, SWFWMD
Scott Carnahan, Citrus County
Alys Brockway, Hernando County (Alternate)*
Kathy Bryant, Marion County*
Jason Mickel, Pasco County (Alternate)
Kevin Coin, FDEP (Alternate)*
Mindy Workman, FWC (Alternate)
Chris Pettit, FDACS*

Staff Members

Jennette Seachrist
Vivianna Bendixson
Randy Emberg
Madison Trowbridge
Randy Smith
John Campbell
Frank Gargano

Committee Administrative Support

Lauren Vossler

FDACS – Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
FDEP – Florida Department of Environmental Protection
SCMC – Springs Coast Management Committee
FGUA – Florida Governmental Utility Authority

FWC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
SWFWMD – Southwest Florida Water Management District
SCSC – Springs Coast Steering Committee

1. Call to Order and Roll

The Springs Coast Steering Committee (SCSC) of the Southwest Florida Water Management District met for its regular meeting at 2:00 p.m., on March 9, 2022.

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

2. Action Item: Minutes Approval from January 26, 2022

A motion was made for approval of January 26, 2022 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

3. Public Input

None

4. Action Item: FY2023 FDEP Springs Funding Final Evaluations and Rankings – Randy Smith, PMP, SWFWMD

Mr. Randy Smith, Natural Systems & Restoration Bureau Chief, provided members with a detailed FY2023 application process, along with FY2022 Springs Coast Management and Steering Committee timeline. He provided the FY2023 Florida Department of Environmental

Protection (FDEP) request summary by Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) and the FDEP Springs funding summary for the SWFWMD region.

Mr. Smith provided the FY2023 Springs funding evaluations. He reviewed the projects sorted by cost effectiveness and project benefit and the FY2023 prioritization matrix. He discussed final evaluation changes to applications #2, #6 and #8. Mr. Smith also reviewed the FY2023 FDEP spreadsheet with the project information in the submittal format.

Mr. Mitten inquired about application #8 not having a local match and if it is typical for this type of application to request the full amount of funding. Mr. Smith explained the project is eligible for funding because the Springs funding does not require a local match..

Mr. Mitten asked how FDEP has looked at the District's past project approvals when they don't have a local match and very little nitrogen removal. Mr. Smith explained he believes FDEP takes the District's recommendation into consideration; however, they have their own process when final decisions are made.

A motion was made to approve the project final evaluations and FDEP spreadsheet for projects recommended to be forwarded to FDEP for FY2023 Springs Funding consideration. Staff recommended the SCSC forward these projects to the District's Governing Board for approval to send to FDEP for funding consideration. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

5. Action Item: Crystal River/Kings Bay Quantifiable Objective Refinements – Dr. Madison Trowbridge, SWFWMD

Dr. Madison Trowbridge, Springs Scientist, provided members with a summary on the quantifiable object refinement. She discussed redefining the water clarity to Hunter Cove and Kings Bay Proper, redefining water clarity and chlorophyll as indicators, and updating Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) as adopted.

Dr. Trowbridge provided the refinements that were discussed at the Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting. She explained the TWG felt the average from 2006 to 2020 period of record was appropriate to use as thresholds due to capturing many variations within the springs systems.

Mr. Mickel asked if chlorophyll targets are seasonal or annual. Dr. Trowbridge explained the chlorophyll targets are set as an annual average.

Mr. Mitten asked if the chlorophyll measurements taken throughout the year are monthly or quarterly. Dr. Trowbridge explained the chlorophyll measurements are taken quarterly and submerged aquatic vegetation is taken on a different time scale.

A motion was made to approve refinements to the quantifiable objectives as recommended by District staff.

- ***Update minimum flows target as adopted.***
- ***Redefine water clarity and chlorophyll as an indicator.***
- ***Define water clarity evaluated as Hunters Cove and Kings Bay Proper.***

Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

6. Presentation: Springs Coast Seagrass Mapping - Dr. Chris Anastasiou, SWFWMD

Dr. Chris Anastasiou, Chief Water Quality Scientist, discussed the results from the most recent Springs Coast Seagrass Mapping. Dr. Anastasiou stated that the District maps seagrasses from Waccasassa Bay south to Charlotte Harbor covering 1,270 square miles. He discussed the three major phases of how the District produces the maps including: acquisition, photointerpretation, and field verification. He showed areas of the District maps and segmented both inshore and offshore and their percentages of change from 2016-2020.

Dr. Anastasiou showed three specific segments, Waccasassa Bay, Aripeka, and Withlacoochee and discussed how the seagrass habitat is shifting within those classification systems. In conclusion, there was little change in acreage between 2016 and 2020. Anclote offshore and Waccasassa Bay had the largest percent increase in seagrass acreage. Aripeka offshore and Crystal Bay had the largest acreage gains of 4,709 acres and 2,108 acres, respectively. Waccasassa Bay, Withlacoochee, and Aripeka offshore saw a significant shift from continuous seagrass to composite colonized seagrass habitat.

Mr. Scott Carnahan asked what contributes to the Charlotte Harbor seagrass reduction. Dr. Anastasiou explained there are a few variables effecting the area; however, red tide is a large contributing factor.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

8. Next Meeting: July 27, 2022, 2:00 p.m.