



**AGRICULTURAL AND GREEN INDUSTRY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2025 – 10:00 AM**

MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Brianne Reichenbach, City of Tampa Parks & Recreation (alt)
Michael Matteson, FL Citrus Mutual
Curt Williams, FL Farm Bureau Federation
John Vogel, FL Forestry Association
Gail Huff, FL Irrigation Society
Kenneth Parker, FL Strawberry Growers Assoc. (alt)
David Boozer, FL Tropical Fish Farms Assoc.
Simon Bollin, Hillsborough County Extension Service
Joe Walsh, Hillsborough Soil & Water Conservation Dist.
Betsy McGill, Turfgrass Producers of FL (alt)
Don Rainey, University of Florida/IFAS

Interested Parties

Vanessa Bauzo, FL Dept. Agriculture

Governing Board Liaison

Dustin Rowland

Staff Members

Brian Szenay
Carole Estes
Dayton Buxton
Jay Hoecker
Jeremy McKay
Jerry Harding
Kaitlyn Maze
Ken Griner
Michelle Hopkins
Michelle Weaver
Robyn Felix
Ryan Pearson
Steve DeSmith
Tamera McBride

Board Administrative Support

Virginia Singer
Barbara Matrone

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The Agricultural and Green Industry Advisory Committee (AGIAC) of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) met for its regular meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 9, 2025.

Vice Chair Simon Bollin called the meeting to order, and attendance was called.

Governing Board Liaison Dustin Rowland welcomed the committee.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

None.

3. Approval of the June 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2025 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments

None.

5. Elections of Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Alan Jones was nominated to serve another term as Chair and Mr. Simon Bollin was nominated to serve another term as Vice Chair. A motion was made and passed by the committee.

6. Hydrologic Conditions Update

Ms. Tamera McBride, Hydrologic Data Manager, provided a hydrologic conditions update. September is the last month of the four-month wet season. This wet season has been relatively dry with July and August rainfall below average. The District averaged 7.3 inches in July, but the historic average is 8.2 inches, which was a 0.9-inch deficit for this year.

The 12-month rainfall distribution from July 2024 through June 2025 averaged 55.9 inches, which is a 3.2-inch surplus from the historic 52.7-inch average. A graph of the 12-month rainfall departure from average showed multiple 12-month periods of surplus or deficit rainfall since 1998. The 12-month period ending July 2025 showed a 3.2-inch surplus. Prior to that in July 2024, the District had a 5.1-inch deficit. Looking at provisional data for the month of August, the District received less than average rainfall. The historic average is 8.2 inches, but this year only reached 7.6 inches, which was a 0.6-inch rainfall deficit.

Ms. McBride then discussed recent groundwater levels in the northern, central and southern counties, as well as surface water levels in the Northern Lakes, Tampa Bay Lakes, Polk Upland Lakes and Lake Wales Ridge Lakes regions. She showed another set of graphs and discussed the eight-week mean discharge of the Withlacoochee, Hillsborough, Alafia and Peace rivers. She also discussed public supply volumes for the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply.

Ms. McBride then discussed the Near-Term Climate Forecast and showed seasonal outlooks for temperature and precipitation for September 2025 to November 2025. The Climate Prediction Center is predicting a 50 – 60 percent chance of above normal temperatures and 40 – 50 percent chance of above normal precipitation for the three-month period. For the extended climate forecast, they are also predicting above normal rainfall Districtwide through December of this year.

Ms. McBride concluded by discussing the tropical storm origins and the seven-day tropical outlook and stated that there is no tropical cyclone activity in the Gulf, and none is expected in the next seven days.

Mr. Joe Walsh commented that last year's hurricane season was very impactful and asked if it had fallen into more customary practice to only show the last 15 years of a record period or if it was possible to present a deeper picture and highlight the more impactful events for each of the different areas. Ms. McBride responded that when she shows rainfall totals, she actually compares them to a longer historic average, and that the rainfall period of record goes back to 1915.

7. Agricultural Quantities and Crop Changes

Mr. Jerry Harding, Water Use Evaluation and Compliance Manager, gave a brief presentation on agricultural quantities and crop changes. There are two types of agricultural permit modifications: crop changes and land use changes. Crop changes can either be a more or less water-intensive crop type depending on how it is being used. The most common changes in land use would be going from agricultural to residential development, solar farms or mining.

When more water is needed for a crop change, they are subject to water use permit rules in place at the time of their modification and the location of the permit. Several water use caution areas throughout the District have rules in place for obtaining additional water for crops. Water resources, environmental features or existing legal users cannot be adversely impacted anywhere within the District. The District does this through groundwater modeling and by looking at potential impacts to wetlands.

When land use changes, there is often less water needed. Residential development decreases both the irrigated area and the application rates. Solar farms typically have no irrigated area, but some farms do keep quantities for livestock to graze so that there is less mowing involved. If land use goes to mining for previous agricultural sites, it is typically for sand and shell purposes. Such quantities are calculated by the amount of water entrained in the product. When agricultural land is mined and then returned to agriculture, the quantities are not considered new if no additional quantities are needed other than what was previously permitted.

There are several things that can happen to former agricultural quantities within the District.

- A self-relocation process in the Southern Water Use Cauton Area (SWUCA) is where the permitted quantities can be relocated to another site of the same use type under the same ownership and control. That relocation may not cause additional impacts in the area of interest.
- Net benefit is a process in the SWUCA where a permittee may use historically used quantities to offset new impacts due to new quantities at the same site or elsewhere. This process must show a 10% improvement to the resource.
- Permit offsets is a process where permitted quantities are retired to offset additional impacts due to new quantities elsewhere.
- Land use transitions are a process in the Central Florida Water Initiative area where permitted quantities may be retired to offset impacts due to additional public supply demand.
- Permanent retirement is where quantities are removed from the permit and are not relocated elsewhere, and retirement is not used to offset any other impacts.

Vice Chair Bollin asked what happens where water quantities will increase such as agricultural land being transitioned into more intensive uses from either a pasture or a wooded area to strawberry fields. Mr. Harding responded that it would depend on what area of the District they were in. If it is an area where upper Floridan aquifer quantities are heavily restricted like the most impacted area of the SWUCA, they may need to see if there is another agricultural permit that is willing to give up quantities to do a self-relocation benefit.

Mr. Walsh asked about the approach used to find another permittee that is not using their permitted usage and if there is a water exchange where people can go and look for more water somewhere else. Mr. Harding responded that the District is not involved in search and it would be up to the permittee to see if there is something available and if they are in a restricted area.

8. Development of Agenda Topics

None.

9. Announcements and Other Business

None.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.