



SPRINGS COAST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2025 – 1:30 PM
VIA TEAMS
MINUTES

Committee Members Present

Jennette Seachrist, SWFWMD
Audra Curts, City of Crystal River
Ken Cheek, Citrus County
Alys Brockway, Hernando County
Cisco Pavez, Pasco County
Gerrit Van Lent, Pasco County
Moirá Homann, FDEP
Michelle Sempstrott, FWC
Vanessa Bauzo, FDACS
Raulie Raulerson, Agriculture
Suzy Folsom, Public Supply
Alana Todd, Regional Planning Council
Dr. Patricia Spellman, Academia
Rick Owen, State Parks

Staff Members

Vivianna Bendixson
Madison Trowbridge
Virginia Singer
Randy Smith
Carrieann Adkins
Robin Speidel
Taylor Greenan
Tammy Plazak
Joe Quinn
Devon Villareal
Catherine Wolden
John Clark

Presenters

Ron Patel, Hernando County
Gerrit Van Lent, Pasco County

Technical and Administrative Support

Jeremy McKay
Candice Harris

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 Management Committee (SCMC) of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) met for its regular meeting at 1:30 p.m., on January 8, 2025, via Microsoft Teams.

Ms. Jennette Seachrist, Resource Management Director, called the meeting to order. Roll was called and a quorum was noted.

2. Additions or deletions to the agenda

There were no additions or deletions.

3. Action Item: Minutes Approval from December 4, 2024

A motion was made for approval of the December 4, 2024 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

4. Public Input

None

5. Presentation: Presentation by Applicants

Dr. Madison Trowbridge, Springs Scientist, provided details about the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 application process and advised APP01 has been withdrawn since the previous meeting and the remaining five (5) applications will be presented to the Committee. As information, APP03 will be presented first.

b) Hernando County – APP03 – Septic-to-Sewer District A Sewer Shed 5

Mr. Ron Patel with Hernando County Utilities Department (HCUD) presented the Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Project for District A/Sewer Shed 5. The project consists of design and construction of a sanitary sewer collection system, which will remove from service a minimum of 281 residential septic tanks. Hernando County has experienced significant population growth over the last few years, and an increase is expected to continue. With a growth rate of more than 25,000 in the last decade, the county grapples with housing, water, sanitary sewer, environmental concurrency and other resources to accommodate the increasing population. Hernando County conducted a Septic-to-Sewer Conversion Study in 2016 to determine the septic system impact to Weeki Wachee Springs. The study prioritized based on the level of impact and determined that septic tanks contributed almost 30% of pollutants in the priority focus areas. Mr. Patel stated the project is a multi-year project and will be conducted in two phases with a total cost of \$19.5 million. The anticipated project start date is January 2027 and scheduled to be completed December 2029. Approval of the project would eliminate an estimated 2650 lbs. of total nitrogen per year.

a) Hernando County – APP02 – Private Package Connections

Mr. Patel presented the Private Package Connections. The project is a continuation of the county's effort to provide wastewater services to existing private package plants adjacent to Weeki Wachee Springs. The project will connect four private wastewater package plants with a total of 664 lots. Mr. Patel stated the project will improve water quality, availability of additional reclaimed water, aquifer recharge and reduce nutrient loading. The anticipated project start date is January 2027 and scheduled to be completed December 2029.

Cisco Pavez, Pasco County, inquired if there would be a need for additional land to be purchased for the projects. Mr. Patel stated at this time the need for additional land is unknown; however, it might be needed for pump stations.

Mr. Patel thanked the Committee for allowing Hernando County the time to present the projects.

c) Pasco County – APP04 – Weeki Wachee Septic-to-Sewer

Gerrit Van Lent, Pasco County, presented the Weeki Wachee Septic-to-Sewer project, which aims to decommission septic tanks and connect the neighborhood to county sewer. The neighborhood contains 267 parcels that would transition to county sewer. The project has multi-year funding requests and a total of \$14.2 million is being requested for design and construction. Mr. Van Lent stated benefits of the project include an estimated 2,310 lbs. per year in nitrogen reduction for the deactivated septic systems and more reclaimed water would be generated.

Ms. Alys Brockway, Hernando County, asked where the closest wastewater treatment plant is located in reference to the project. Mr. Van Lent stated he believes the wastewater would go to Hernando County Airport.

d) Pasco County – APP05 – Wesley Chapel Center WWTP Expansion Phase 1

Mr. Van Lent presented the Wesley Chapel Center WWTP Expansion Phase 1 project and stated following the latest flow projections of February 2024, it has been determined that the facility should be expanded to increase its capacity to meet future demands. The facility will be expanded from 9.0 million gallons per day, to 13.5 million gallons per day. The expansion will incorporate advanced wastewater treatment to comply with the DEP requirement of total nitrogen concentration below 3mg/L at the effluent. Mr. Van Lent stated that a total of \$7 million, with a \$2 million match, is being requested. Project benefits include an estimated 27,648 lbs. per year in total nitrogen reduction. Total nitrogen is currently around 8.5 mg/L and expansion would reduce it to 3 mg/L. The project would meet projected demands for the next 20 years and provide more reclaimed water, saving potable water resources.

e) Pasco County – APP06 – Aripeka Septic-to-Sewer

Mr. Van Lent presented the Aripeka Septic-to-Sewer project stating Aripeka is currently serviced by Pasco County Utilities Water Services. Parcels within the unincorporated community are owned by the county and can be utilized for sewer infrastructure. Aripeka has a high poverty rate and is very vulnerable to storm-related events. Mr. Van Lent stated although it is not an area with much springs recharge, there is a package plant that would serve the BMAP goals if removed and a total of \$14.7 million is being requested for design and construction. Aripeka Mobile Home Park contains a DDEP facility/site that would be taken off-line by the project.

Mr. Van Lent thanked the Committee for allowing Pasco County the time to present the projects.

Dr. Trowbridge provided further overview of the application process and requested any further questions or comments; however, none were received.

6. Open Discussion

None.

7. Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for February 19, 2025 via Teams.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.