

MEETING NOTES

Northern Tampa Bay Phase II Local Technical Peer Review Group Wetlands Subcommittee

Cypress Creek Wellfield
July 29, 2004 - 9:00AM

WAP Issues for discussion

1. Professional survey requirements

The group agreed with the proposal to take good notes on all elevation work and prepare a long-term plan to have everything surveyed by a professional surveyor. Warren Hogg suggested the District and TBW coordinate their efforts and somehow incorporate the project to convert everything to NAVD 88. John Emery volunteered to be the person to get the interested parties (Granville Kinsman and Tom Walsh from the District and John Trout from TBW) together to discuss this long-term plan. Diane Willis and John Emery suggested that all new instrumentation be surveyed to some internal temporary benchmark by the consultant, and then be re-surveyed by a professional surveyor as part of the long-term project.

The working plan will be to use non-professional surveyors with leveling skills to determine elevations related to wetlands monitoring, starting from a benchmark that has been set by a professional surveyor. Detailed notes will be kept on all work, and a database will be established. All elevations will be confirmed by a professional surveyor as part of a long-term plan.

Suggestion for next meeting

Ask John Emery for an update on the proposed meeting.

2. Setting of normal pool

It was agreed that the District technical memo was reasonable support for the proposed methodology for establishing historic normal pool. However, it was also agreed that more research is needed on the use of saw palmetto for normal pool determination in non-flatwoods environments. It was decided that TBW would create a list identifying the details of how the normal pool was determined for each of their wetland monitoring sites within two months. This list would include a priority for what may need to be re-done, what needs to be done from scratch, and what is believed to be correct. The District will do the same. It was suggested the District supply a spreadsheet with the necessary information for the normal pool

database so that all data is submitted consistently, and the District agreed to provide such a spreadsheet.

Suggestion for next meeting

Discuss the spreadsheet provided for use as a normal pool database, and discuss progress on data base.

3. Setting wetland edge

Everyone agreed to set the wetland edge and normal pool as per the biological indicator memo and WAP manual, but noted that there would be some exceptions. Mike Hancock suggested everyone submit a list of sites for which they believe the methodologies were not appropriate. These sites can be dealt with case-by-case.

Everyone should submit their list of sites that they believe are in a non-flatwoods environment, and need to be handled on a case by case basis. This list should be completed at the same time as the normal pool data base.

Suggestion for next meeting

Brief update on progress.

4. NP-6 and NP-12, or other zone divisions (this discussion is dependent on method discussions – see below)

General agreement on NP-6 and NP-12 if new methodology was going to include the concept of using the new "Plant Affinity" system and zones, at least for testing purposes.

Suggestion for next meeting

Discuss as needed.

5. Soil monitoring procedures

It was agreed that the section requiring soil monitoring by a soils scientist should be removed from the WAP methodology, and be further explored as a potential cooperatively funded project in FY2006. This study would likely include a subset of monitored wetlands, rather than all of them. Questions to be answered by the study should be clear.

The District has already begun to collect hydric soil data. The District will take the lead on assessing the data already collected, and proposing further research.

6. Monitoring time – how many times a year and when?

The group agreed that monitoring will be once per year in the May/June time frame. Tampa Bay Water's consultants visit the wetlands twice a month (as part of water level collection efforts), and will supplement the

annual WAPs with monthly observational data, as needed. The District will consider a similar plan for its monitoring.

Suggestion for next meeting

We will reconsider this decision if anyone has thought of a reason why once-a-year monitoring will compromise our data collection efforts.

7. What do we do in the fall of 2004?

The group agreed that we will continue to use the old methodology to finish out the 2004 water year.

8. Do we need to do WAPs on every wetland?

- a. Borrow pits and ditches. The group agreed that WAPs should not be done for these types of systems, but there are very few currently done. These types of wetlands should be identified as part of the normal pool data base effort.
- b. Flow systems (rivers, streams) – Although the group agreed that a WAP method is needed for these types of systems, the currently proposed method does not fit well with floodplain and channel systems. However, the group agreed that some form of biologic monitoring be performed.

The District will take the lead to propose an interim biologic monitoring methodology for flow systems. The methodology will be a variation of the proposed WAP. All flow systems should be identified by Tampa Bay Water as part of the normal pool database effort.

- c. Do we need so many wetlands with WAPs? The group agreed that we should continue to perform WAPs on all monitored wetlands (with the exceptions discussed in a and b above). However, this discussion will be continued as part of a future discussion on potentially reducing the number of wetlands monitored, and increasing efficiency with District and Tampa Bay Water monitoring in general.

9. Plant "affinity" system versus new proposed zone approach

- a. New system – make sense?
- b. Creation of new list with new "zone status" (upland, adaptive, etc.)
- c. Customized list of species

The group agreed that the new system was worth pursuing, although some felt that the Zone Designation should be a range and not a single zone. Diane Willis suggested using the B&H database as a starting point to create the plant list. Chris Shea volunteered to prepare a proposal for a

short-term structured study on the depth of water at which plants will tolerate along a strip transect. He will choose from unimpacted sites. Tampa Bay Water will ask each of its consultants to provide suggested study sites, and the District will do the same. By the next meeting (August 20th), Chris will have an outline of his study design for review, and District and Tampa Bay Water staff will coordinate an effort to conduct the study.

Patty Fesmire noted that Tricia Dooris had developed a new methodology for wetland monitoring, which included a single strip transect which would take about 0.5 hour. Plants would be identified every meter along a one meter wide strip transect through the wetland. Shirley Denton suggested that it may not be ideal for monitoring the entire wetland, but may be a good approach to Chris's study on the Plant Affinity list.

Suggestion for next meeting

We will discuss the proposed study.

It was decided that this sub-committee will meet on the third Friday of each month so that progress continues. The next meeting will be August 20, 2004. The September meeting will be likely be changed from the third Friday of the month due to conflicts. Tampa Bay Water will offer alternative dates.