

JOINT MEETING OF THE SWF WATERSHED COUNCIL
AND CALOOSAHATCHEE WATERSHED WORKING GROUP
JUNE 29, 2009

Attendees: Tamara Pigott; Greg Rawl; Noel Andress; Jon Cassani; Carolina Cabal; Pierre Vigneron; Minh Thanh Bui; Ed Hardon; John Capece; Rae Ann Wessel; John Fumero; Kurt Harclerode; Kristie Anders; James Evans; Jennifer Thera; Louise Chang; Jennifer Nelson; Charles Dauray; Jessica Stubbs; Mick Denham; Jack Meeker; Marti Daltry; Don Duke; Sharon Arnold; Mike Valiquette; Kate English; Scott Coover; Sally McPherson; Charles Shann; Jennifer Hecker; Tammy Hall; Phil Flood; Stephanie Smith; Nick Batos; Don Eslick; Ali Aldubain

AVAILABLE BY PHONE: Ken Ammon, Chip Merriam, Damon Meiers

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by James Evans. Commissioner Tammy Hall welcomed the group and introduced the SFWMD staff participating via phone conference. Kurt Harclerode and James Evans will moderate.

Ken Ammon made presentation on the following:

C-43-Testing Facility updates: This was a joint 1770 acres acquisition \$10 million Lee County & 27.3 million SFWMD; Environmental Study is complete; Water quality studies began FY09; Development design criteria.

C43 West Reservoir updates: Test cells complete; project final design complete; permits obtained; shovel ready; final chief's report & authorization awaiting change in land valuation & crediting policy from OMB; land value is 50/50 share with state and SFWMD; delay rests with OMB in Washington; there is Washington support for change but no Administration decision yet. PIR has been changed to reflect new policy; July 5th is next meeting to see if the change can get done. If it gets to August it may not make WRDA 2010; Communication with administration, VP office and work the OMB chain may be advantageous (Dr. Peter Orzac new director, Gene Evenor, Chief of Water & Power, Sally Axman (Waxman?). Keep the pressure on your end. Message to convey is land valuation policy local sponsor to get crediting. It would be useful if this group wrote letters to key people. Ken Ammon will get the names of key people and key message emailed to the group by Tuesday 6/30/09.

Water Reservation Rule – A water reservation is legal mechanism to set aside water for protection fish and wild life or public health and safety from consumptive use authority. FS 373.223 (4). Short Q&A followed: SFWMD reviews priority list every year. They are looking to address areas that experience growth; Couple CERP projects close to done so they review list and reprioritize. They are pushing for Caloosahatchee to be pushed up the list after Kissimmee IRL Reservation. Hopefully this will get done late this year/early next year.

Joint meeting – notes
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Lake O Adaptive Protocols: Provide guidelines for determination of specific volumes for regulatory discharges under the WSE schedule; Include procedures for making discharges to protect downstream ecosystems; Occur in a highly transparent process with frequent venues for public input; Process just kicking off. When discharge will be made document to aid and give staff flexibility to when and what zones releasing.

Water availability rule – overview, allocating, permit renews.

River Grass Acquisition – US Sugar deal: 180,000 acres of land; 73,000 for half billion dollars; 33,000 citrus & 40,000 sugar; will acquire 107,000 during next 10 yrs;; bonding mechanism for financing; closing in 2010 within 90 days after court validation of bonds to finance acquisition. Expect resolution in July.

River Grass Phase I planning – brief discussion of boundary, public planning process, where we've been and where we're headed. July/Aug discussion to identify common elements; initial funding; areas of agreement; next steps for phase II.

Economic Transition – brief overview of plan land, infrastructure, roads, economic development.

OTHER: Mick Denham and Jennifer Hecker briefly discussed Basin Rule. Jennifer handed out a copy of letter and asked this group's support to push this through. Governing Board may defer item to August to address Basin Rule middle of the road options.

NEXT MEETING: Kurt and James will coordinate questions the group may have regarding material that was presented today and submit to SFWMD staff. Today's presentation will be posted on Lee County Water Facts <http://www.leewaterfacts.com/cwwg.htm> website. Copies of the presentation will be sent to anyone interested, please let Kurt or James know. The next meeting will be scheduled in August or September. Charles Duray states the Governing Board is reviewing voluminous information in a short amount of time. Important decisions are due in August, therefore it is strongly suggested to meet sooner (August) rather than Sept.

Submitted by Carmen Salomé
June 30, 2009