

**Lower St. Johns River TAC  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 12, 2002**

- Dana Morton—Called the meeting to order, asked the members to introduce themselves, and introduced Tiffany Busby.
- Tiffany Busby—Introduced Kraig McLane.
- Kraig McLane—Gave update on River Summit, January 13-14, 2003. Requested all to register online for attendance and lunch (included).
- Tom Fortson—Again emphasized the importance of developing a restoration plan. He distributed his updated plan, which now includes the entire river.
- Tiffany Busby—Expressed the urgency to move ahead with a decision on management structure as Mayor Delaney will leave office in June 2003. A brief discussion of Fortson's plan followed.
- Kraig McLane—Introduced John Abendroth.
- John Abendroth—Discussed House Bill 851 that approved \$30 million (M) for funding water projects statewide. St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) requested \$15 M of that total. A total of \$703 M was requested statewide with \$30 M available.
- Larry Danek—Mentioned that \$360 M for TMDL assistance is available from EPA.
- Dana Morton—Gave the update on Bacteria/Human Health Risk assessment. He discussed \$200K study that is starting in January in conjunction with USF. It consists of three phases of studies/interviews and outreach to inform public. The study will be on the Cedar/Ortega and Julington-Durbin Creeks. The goal is to define the source of fecal coliforms (human or otherwise) using antibiotics as the identifier. Project to finish by January 2004. He said using the ARA method is cheaper and as accurate as Rybotyping. It was suggested that Tiffany Busby invite Aaron Hilliard to give quarterly updates at future TAC meetings on the status of this project.
- Wayne Williams (COJ)—Gave update of septic tank failure inspections. He reviewed the ranking criteria and the highest ranked communities. They are working on the highest six ranked areas. They are inspecting high failure areas and enforcing the regulations that require either repairs or hook-ups to new sewer lines.

Lunch was delayed, so we began the technical updates--

- RiverKeeper—Mike Hollingsworth reported that their primary issue is turbidity/sedimentation, especially construction site discharges. They are monitoring 25 construction sites that are exceeding sediment limits into nearby waterbodies. Many sediment management measures do not work well, especially to control clays. He suggests using polyacrilomite to get fine particles out of water. It is a polymer that settles out sediment. The Riverkeeper is encouraging contractors to try this sediment control method in lieu of paying fines for turbidity violations.
  - Jim Maher asked what happens to the "sludge" or material that falls out.
  - Mike said it stays there. Discussion of the pros and cons of using a polymer followed.
  - Mike announced the next Riverkeeper event, and their new website [www.Stjohnsriverkeeper.org](http://www.Stjohnsriverkeeper.org).
- Dana Morton—(Felicia Boyd couldn't make it, so Dana summarized) The Annual Water Education Festival will be held at the Museum of Science and History (MOSH), February 8, 2003, free lunch (for exhibitors) and exhibits. Free admission to the public.

--Lunch Break: Pizza & drinks were brought in by Dana, Betsy, and Mike.

- Dean Dobberfuhl—Gave the harmful algal blooms update. No current funding for the Harmful Algal Blooms Task Force and no hope for funding in the near future, so the group is not very active.
  - Most current work is on pfiesteria, but is tapering off.
  - Cyanobacteria studies are increasing; EPA has added cyanobacteria to the federal contaminant list.
  - Dean summarized a few worldwide programs—Australia has adopted a public health standard for cyanobacteria.
  - Red tide studies are decreasing and moving toward cyanotoxins.
  - There is a pending legal action in Oklahoma with a suit involving cattle and dog losses caused by a toxic algal bloom. The legal result could be precedent setting for stormwater and stormwater treatment standards.
  
- Alicia McKinney Steinmetz (SJRWMD)—Gave her presentation “Preliminary Investigation of Light Attenuation and SAV Response in LSJR.”
  - She discussed SAV and water quality sampling programs.
  - She described Ground Truthing and Permanent Monitoring programs.
  - She compared Kd (light extinction coefficient) with bed length and percent cover—there appears to be a 1-year lag, in some locations, for SAV to respond to increased or decreased light; also salinity intrusion appears to cause SAV variations.
  - For permanent monitoring no lag time was noticed in salinity-affected areas.
    - Conclusions:
      - ✓ Color influences light attenuations more than chlorophyll
      - ✓ Sometimes appears to be 1-year lag.
      - ✓ Cannot predict a minimum Kd needed.
    - Future Work:
      - ✓ Reevaluate optical model.
      - ✓ Continue SAV monitoring.
      - ✓ Examine light attenuation characteristic.
      - ✓ Develop model for predicting SAV
  
- Dean Campbell and John Hendrickson—TMDL Update.
  - Dean finished a few topics from the river Symposium. He presented an award to Tom Fortson for his volunteer efforts to improve the River.
  - John Hendrickson gave a TMDL status report:
    - 95 percent finished with natural load characterization.
    - 75 percent finished with nutrient assimilation work. He commented there is a 16 percent increase in nitrogen in rainwater shown in the current study.
    - Biological translations—beginning new work at this time.
    - He realized a standard-based TMDL might be difficult to justify with respect to biological improvement.
  
- Tiffany Busby and Jodi Conway—Ended with a plea to register for the summit.
- Tiffany Busby—Announced next meeting dates:
  - January 13-14, *River Summit*, Prime Osborne Center, Jacksonville
  - January 30, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM, *TMDL Executive Committee*
  - January 28, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM, *TMDL Stakeholders*
  - February 8, *Water Education Festival*, MOSH, Jacksonville
  - Tentative TAC Meeting Dates, March 13 and June 12.
  
- The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 PM.