

**TAC Meeting Summary
Thursday, May 20, 2004
City of Jacksonville Blue Cypress Golf Course
4012 North University Blvd
Jacksonville, FL**

Attendees

Cindy Cosper, FDEP Watershed Mgt.
Jennifer Sagan, Independent Consultant
Alicia Steinmetz, BCI/SJRWMD
Betsy Deurling, City of Jacksonville,
EQD
Alan Obaigbena, FDOT
Kelly Smith, U.N.F.
Pam Livingston, SJRWMD
Gretchen Ehlinger, FWC
Jeremy RiCharde, FDEP
Doris Marlin, COE
Marcy Policastro, CCUA
Stan Stokes, ECT

Dean Campbell, SJRWMD
Dana Morton, City of Jacksonville
Mike Thomas, City of Jacksonville
Richard Gordon, Flagler County
Amy Kennedy, Flagler County
Dean Dobberfuhl, SJRWMD
Kraig McLane, SJRWMD
David Evans, Water and Air Research
Lucy Sonnenberg, MWL-Jacksonville
University
Jeff Martin, FDEP
Tiffany Busby, Independent Consultant
Wayne Magley, FDEP

Welcome and Introductions

Dana Morton welcomed everyone to the meeting. The members introduced themselves.

Presentations

Dean Dobberfuhl gave a presentation entitled, "Estimating Minimum Light Thresholds for Submerged Aquatic Vegetation in the Lower St. Johns River, Florida." Dr. Dobberfuhl answered questions from the audience at the conclusion of the presentation.

Dana Morton gave a presentation on the City of Jacksonville's septic tank phase out program. Mr. Morton answered questions from the members after his presentation.

Legislative Projects Update

Kraig McLane explained that the SJRWMD put together a state legislative request package for fiscal year '05 asking for \$14-\$15 million for the Lower Basin. He distributed a ranked list of projects detailing the request. The State Legislature funded the first eight projects, for a total of \$6 million. The money will be available starting October 1, 2004. It was noted that the Middle Basin did not receive as much funding this year.

Mr. McLane informed the group that at the August TAC meeting, the committee will be discussing next year's priorities, including projects that implement the nutrient TMDL for the Lower Basin.

TAC ByLaws

Kraig McLane distributed a copy of the revised by-laws. He noted that on page 3 of 5 in Section 4, some new text was added that members might like to review over the lunch break.

Lunch Break

After lunch, Mr. McLane reviewed the by-laws with the members. They were reminded that the by-laws were discussed at the February meeting and revisions suggested by the members had been incorporated since that time.

Under “Membership” the entities that should be notified about meetings, including local governments are listed. Mr. McLane informed the committee that since the last meeting, the SJRWMD Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinators (Melinda Granlund and Gene Caputo) for the Lower Basin identified one person from each local government in the basin to be on the TAC distribution list. Tiffany Busby has sent each person a welcome memo with information about the TAC as well as added each person to the electronic distribution list.

In the “Voting” section, the members asked that issues be resolved by consensus as much as possible. Voting procedures are identified if they are needed.

Text was added into Section 4 describing the TAC policy on sharing provisional data presented during the meetings, as Mike Hartman had requested. Dean Campbell drafted the language used in the by-laws.

There was consensus on accepting the by-laws as presented. There were no dissenters. Members asked that the by-laws be made available on the TAC website.

River Alliance Update and River Navigators’ Meeting

Kraig McLane reported that the River Navigators meet annually to have a series of discussions, presentations, and to share tools. This year’s two-day meeting was held in Jacksonville in May. Mr. McLane noted that a video was shown that is being turned into a one-hour PBS special. The video is still rough but is being completed. Another video is being produced by Wes Gridles, funded through private funds, the Water Management District, and FDEP.

A new award has been created called the “John Delaney Award.” The award was presented to State Senator King at the meeting. In addition to the meetings, a tour was given to the attendees, which included a visit to the Tri-County Agricultural area.

The River Alliance Board of Directors held a strategic planning session in May, which will be reconvened in June. They are starting a restoration plan for the river. The citizen advisory meetings are chugging along. Mr. McLane commented that the Lower Basin committee formations are going a little faster than those in the Middle and Upper Basins.

Cindy Cospers asked if the video of the Upper Basin restoration that was shown at the River Navigator's meeting is widely available. Mr. McLane responded that the video is available from the St. Johns River Water Management District.

TMDL Update

Jeremy RiCharde, FDEP, reported that the nutrient TMDL for the Lower St. Johns (main stem) was submitted last fall and finalized in December. The entire TMDL package, along with supporting documentation, has now been submitted to EPA. EPA approved the TMDL and the FDEP is now proceeding with the allocation process. The focus of the TMDL Stakeholders Group an Executive Committee is now on the allocation.

Lucy Sonnenberg asked about the status of the Riverkeeper's suit. Mr. RiCharde responded that the suit was based on the premise that EPA had not responded quickly enough to the TMDL submission. However, the formal TMDL package had not yet been submitted by the State, so the official clock had not yet started. Wayne Magley, FDEP, added that they still may sue EPA for approving the TMDL and have asked for documents through public record requests.

The next TMDL Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for June 22 with a Stakeholders meeting planned shortly before that date.

Army Corps Update

Doris Marlin, Army Corps of Engineers-Jacksonville District, reported that Corps restoration projects have been suspended due to lack of funding in the 206 program and the 1135 program, including the White Shell Bay project. The White Shell Bay project had invoked concerns on several fronts and the environmental benefits were not strong enough to overcome the concerns. The Hogan's Creek project is also on hold.

Chlorophenyl Project

Lucy Sonnenberg, Jacksonville University, detailed that she made a presentation to the Duval County Environmental Protection Board as part of her request for funding. The funding would support research on chlorophenyl contaminants in sediments in the Lower St. Johns. The request was approved for funding and the projects should commence this fall. Dr. Sonnenberg thanked the TAC for their support of her project and funding request.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Update

Gretchen Ehlinger, FWCC, stated that they have finished the third complete year of fish sampling in the Lower St. Johns. The 2003 report should be out towards the end of June. TAC members can contact Ms. Ehlinger when they are interested in using the fish data.

EPA Grant Funding Requests

Pam Livingston reported that the SJRWMD grant request for the controlled release (CR) fertilizer project had not been funded by EPA. The SJRWMD staff, however, are moving ahead with phase 1 of the project, which is the demonstration testing of CR fertilizers in fields, with District funding.

John Hendrickson noted that no word has yet been received on his and Jim Maher's EPA grant request that, in part, would provide funding for model runs for TMDL allocation scenarios.

MARVIN

Dana Morton noted that the MARVIN, an autonomous sampling platform, had been moved to South/Southwest Florida (the Caloosahatchee River). Ryan Pigg had also made a funding request and presentation to the Duval County Environmental Quality Board. They were interested in funding it but wanted another funding partner. The St. Johns River Water Management District was interested in being a funding partner but before the details were worked out, the platform was moved to South Florida. It is currently scheduled to move to Tampa after some time in Southwest Florida.

Reasonable Assurance Plan

Dana Morton reported that the reasonable assurance plan for fecal coliforms in the Lower St. Johns tribs, in lieu of having a TMDL for those tribs, was not accepted by FDEP. JEA, Duval Public Health Dept., FDEP, and COJ-EQD prepared the plan and submitted it in January. FDEP has told the submitter that the plan was well-done and would like be the implementation plan for the TMDL that EPA will write for those tribs.

Next Meeting

Tiffany Busby thanked the hosts, Dana Morton, Betsy Deurling, and Mike Thomas for providing both the meeting space and arranging for lunch to be brought in. ***The next TAC meeting was scheduled for August 19, 2004.*** Wayne Magley and the members encouraged the chairs to invite Dr. Tim Gross to speak at the next meeting. John Abendroth announced that the Group II list of impaired waters would be released shortly.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 PM.

Meeting summary prepared by Tiffany Busby, tlbusby@aug.com or 904/797-2721.