

Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Reservoir Subcommittee
Notes of the Tuesday, April 29, 2008 Meeting (rev 5/7)
Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council ~ Fort Myers, Florida

The CAC Subcommittee met to consider the motions passed recently by the CAC, TAC and the Management Committee regarding reservoirs on Tuesday, April 29 from 9:10 to 10:45. CAC subcommittee members present include Ellen Peterson, chair, Debra Highsmith, George Ruby and Kathleen Rohrer. Others present from the CAC include Kaley Miller and Stefan Kataras, from the TAC include Bill Byle and Michael Messina and staff include Lisa Beever and Maran Hilgendorf.

Ms. Peterson began the meeting by asking if the CAC wished to hold a workshop to explore the technical concerns or public concerns. Ms. Rohrer offered it was her understanding that the CAC wished that both be considered.

Director Beever said that in all CHNEP actions, we need to go back to the CCMP as a touchstone for decisions that face the conference. In the new CCMP, HA-K is the action that best addresses this issued, especially strategy 1. HA-K reads identify the hydrologic and environmental impacts of surface water reservoirs on estuaries within the watershed. Three resource documents were provided on the reservoir information that she believed contained a great deal of useful information.

Mr. Ruby said he spoke with Mr. Stone after the CAC meeting. Mr. Stone indicated he had a great deal more prepared (2 disks) regarding his experience and research pertaining to reservoirs that would refute some of Dr. Bachhus's claims.

Director Beever said SWFWMD will be updating their water supply plan every five years so timing is good for the CHNEP to provide input. There aren't many models to use for the local reservoirs being considered as part of the water supply plans.

Ms. Rohrer said Mr. Daltry said there are techniques to raise water levels instead of creating reservoirs. We should look at alternatives. She expressed concern that there exists the possibility that all of the reservoirs that are identified for possibly water supply in the SWFWMD water supply plan could be built resulting in unknown deleterious effects to the Charlotte Harbor watershed..

Ms. Hilgendorf said that PR/MRSWA are researching three new locations in the CHNEP study area to store water for public supply.

Ms. Highsmith asked about the cumulative impact of these reservoirs and if it is within scope of CCMP to address this concern. Director Beever said that it is and its one of those problem areas of permitting and that the publication from Georgia looks at cumulative impacts. Ms Highsmith asked if wells can be used in the CHNEP study area to resupply aquifers? The CF Industries reservoir aquifer well is for recovery of the aquifer and not for storage and recovery. Director

Beever said that some of the water then might become available for additional water permits, which in turn would increase even more demand.

Should the workshop be **water storage workshop**, and not limited to reservoirs? It's also a nice segue from the CHNEP water supply workshop held in 2004.

Ms. Highsmith said elements of the workshop could include a public education day with presentations from WMD on large scale plans including feasibility, supply, restoration and other concerns. It was agreed that there is clearly interest from diverse groups and that it is timely and appropriate and of concern across the watershed.

Director Beever suggested a technical conference then a public conference be developed, perhaps a month later, with select presenters. This time would allow conceptual diagrams to be developed and information presented during the technical workshop could be better repackaged. An ad hoc committee of the TAC will be created to develop technical aspects with goals, structure and speakers. Their recommendations would then be reported back to the Management Conference for approval.

Mr. Ruby said that Mr. Stone said EPA has restricted them regarding ground water wells. While arsenic is a problem with local ASRs, it seems the arsenic isn't a long-term problem. Director Beever said that because of the capital investment, water suppliers may not want to pursue.

Director Beever asked, and received consensus, that a **technical workshop regarding water storage, water storage alternatives and cumulative impacts will be developed by a TAC subcommittee identifying goals, speakers, structure, etc. that would then be considered by the Management Conference. The workshop would likely be about two days and would include a peer review component with primary focus on outside experts participating.**

Mr. Byle said that some reservoirs aren't subject to EIS and that one of the reasons the workshop should be more technical in nature and focus on the environmental impacts of reservoirs is because the last few reservoir projects were not required to do an EIS or identify and evaluate environmental impacts. Mr. Byle said that Sam Stone of the Regional Water Authority explained to him that their recent reservoir expansion did not require an EIS because it did not involve federal dollars. I replied that it did however involve federal permitting and therefore the Army Corps should have recognized that there would be adverse impacts (per the Magnuson-Stevens Act definition of 'adverse'), not have written a FONSI (finding of no significant impact), and required an EIS and Essential Fish Habitat Review by National Marine Fisheries. This appears to be what also happened with the CF Industries - 'Aquifer Recharge - Water Resource Development' project

The CAC Reservoir Subcommittee suggested **goals (and sections or topics)** for the technical workshop include:

1. Identify direct and indirect secondary and cumulative impacts of reservoirs. (BB)
2. Evaluate advantages and disadvantages of different water storage methods. (LB)
3. Evaluate generic reservoir designs from local proposed designs. (DH)
4. Present plans of identified proposed reservoirs. (DH)

5. Identify regional differences and learn from others experience. (KR)
6. Public education. (DH)
7. Describe existing plans of WMD and others. (DH)
8. What are the impacts to water flow to the estuaries? (BB)
9. Cutting edge solutions and utilizing existing environmental conditions with little or no alteration. (KR)
10. Artificial lakes created in watershed. (MH)
11. Summarize water budget summary, assumptions made in determining water supply, population growth, and conservation and other efforts that make a difference. (MH)
12. Health impacts of the estuaries and the wildlife and native plants. (EP)
13. Understand the role of freshwater to stream and estuary ecology. (BB)

For **public workshop**, need to see what shakes out from the technical workshop. The CAC will create another subcommittee to further this workshop. This committee will likely meet after the technical workshop agenda is developed.

Ms. Highsmith said when she made the original motion, cumulative impact of multiple reservoirs in the watershed was the concern.

Mr. Byle said that Magnuson Stevens Fisheries Act identifies any impact as significant. Identifying alternatives is responsibility of water management districts so workshop shouldn't spend time justifying creation of reservoirs but provide information on studies that explain why the reservoir does or doesn't impact the environment.

The committee identified while the purpose of these lakes varies, artificial lakes are made by the water management districts, counties, cities, farms (small and on private property), phosphate and rock mining, power plants and by those wishing to provide recreational opportunities.

Mr. Kazaras said presentations need to be science-based and objective, not advocacy.

The committee proposes two workshops for two different audiences:

- 1) Technical workshop with public invited to participate with outcome of recommendations for NEP consideration on peer-reviewed policy and positions related to reservoirs and other water storage options. The later part of January 2009 was identified as the target time to hold this workshop.
- 2) Public workshop for the public to understand concerns and issues identified during the technical workshop and recommend courses of action. The later part of March 2009 was identified as the target time to hold this workshop. (Easter is April 12, 2009.)

Edison College was identified as a good location for both programs because of their past support and their central location. To maximize audience reached, the workshop presentations need to be available in other ways. Staff will explore how the counties broadcast their commissioners' meetings and the Elliminate (www.elluminate.com) program used by University of Florida. This program allows people to participate in meetings without traveling to the meeting location. Videos or PowerPoint can be shown to all, there's a white board feature, everything is recorded so those who can't make the meeting can still see/hear what happened, there can be sidebar typed

discussions, and there isn't a cost for people to call in except headsets with microphones are recommended.

The committee agreed that the title needs to be short and incorporate CHNEP's goals for holding the workshop. Ms. Highsmith suggested, and the committee liked, "Watershed reservoirs: Cumulative impacts and solutions" as a working title. This is only a working title as the workshops will include water storage options other than reservoirs.

These draft notes will be distributed to those who attended the meeting and then will be made available to the entire Management Conference.

Notes prepared by Maran Hilgendorf.