



**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program**  
**Policy Committee**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**March 19, 2007**  
Punta Gorda, Florida

**Members Present:**

Don Caillouette	City of Venice
Adam Cummings	Charlotte County BOCC
Wayne Daltry	Lee County Smart Growth (alt. for Ray Judah, Lee County BOCC)
Robert Ferreira	City of Bonita Springs
Rhonda Haag	SFWMD
Jon Iglehart	FDEP – South District
Rufus Lazzell	SFWMD
Jon Thaxton	Sarasota County BOCC
Charles Wallace	City of Punta Gorda
Frank Weikel	SWFRPC Gubernatorial Appointee
Tom Welborn	USEPA, Region 4

**Also Present:**

Lisa Beever	CHNEP
Catherine Corbett	CHNEP
Liz Donley	CHNEP
Maran Hilgendorf	CHNEP
Jaime Boswell	CHNEP
Nichole Gwinnett	SWFRPC
Judy Ott	FDEP/Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves
Stuart Stauss	Pine Island Sound/CHNEP CAC
Phil Flood	SFWMD
Kate Spinner	Sarasota Herald-Tribune

**Agenda Item #1 - Call to Order and Introductions**

Chairman Welborn called the meeting to order at 9:32 am and then introductions were made.

**Agenda Item #2 – Agenda Additions or Deletions – Tom Welborn, Co-Chair**

Dr. Beever noted that there was a walk-on item entitled 2007 Legislative Session by Liz Donley.

**Agenda Item #3 – Public Comment**

No public comments were made at this time.



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**Agenda Item #4 – Policy Committee Minutes – Tom Welborn, Co-Chair**

**MR. LAZZELL MOVED AND COMMISSIONER THAXTON SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 20, 2006 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item #5 – Florida Sunshine Law Discussion – Liz Donley**

On November 20, 2006, the Policy Committee discussed the TAC and the Florida Sunshine Law. The Policy Committee directed staff to draft a request for an advisory opinion from the Florida Attorney General.

Staff presented to the TAC, CAC and Management Committee the scope of the Sunshine Law, including the limited exception for fact-finding advisory boards. Staff also discussed alternate management conference structure with CHNEP partners that would ensure that CHNEP conducts its work in the Sunshine.

The Management Committee requested that staff present to the Policy Committee the discussion that transpired at its March 2, 2007 meeting. The attached diagrams represent 3 different management conference structures; the Management Committee and the CAC prefer Proposal No. 2, the TAC conducted its most recent meeting in compliance with the management conference structure depicted in Proposal No. 2.

Ms. Corbett explained that at the last TAC meeting the discussion of the Sunshine Law was tabled due to Ms. Donley was unable to attend at that time.

Mr. Lazzell expressed his concerns with changing the ways things are currently done and if it is changed to where both committees are subject to the Sunshine Law then he feels that there will be problems with getting participation on both the TAC and CAC committees.

Ms. Donley asked for input from both the TAC and CAC representatives on how they think it would affect the membership of the two committees.

Ms. Ott explained that the TAC members share information with both the members from the CAC and Management Committees, so if the TAC becomes subject to the Sunshine Law then that link of communication would have to be stopped.

Mr. Stauss explained that at the last CAC meeting there was a discussion regarding the Sunshine Law and the committee members expressed concern that within the last 18 months there has been a decrease in the membership and if they are required to follow the Sunshine Law then they feel that the citizens would not want to participate on the committee. So in turn, at the last meeting the CAC decided to take the role as an advisory committee and make no



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recommendations or take action on any of the items, they chose to state that they support such issues.

Ms. Ott noted that the TAC had basically the same discussion as the CAC regarding the Sunshine Law.

Mr. Daltry stated that he was always under the impression and then the committee concurred that both the TAC and CAC committees were subject to the Sunshine Law. He then suggested that while the CCMP is being updated that it is time to review the Management Committee's structure to see if that committee is really needed. He stated that as proposed under Proposal #2 both the TAC and CAC become lesser entities and will probably meet on an as needed basis and the ones who will make the recommendations and the signatures at the bottom of the page will be from staff and not from either a CAC or TAC Chairman and that is pretty much a straightforward emphasis and he doesn't have a problem with it at a regional level because that is the way the SWFRPC was structured.

Mr. Stauss noted that the members of the CAC are not appointed but volunteers.

Chairman Welborn noted that the CAC members of the Tamp Bay NEP are appointed.

Ms. Ott explained that the TAC membership have a very high technical representation.

Ms. Hilgendorf explained that those members of the CAC who are appointed to not show up to the meetings.

Mr. Caillouette asked if there are criteria of who can become a member of the CAC. Dr. Beaver replied yes, they have to attend three meetings to become a voting member.

Ms. Hilgendorf explained that the CAC membership is open ended, but 20 members have voting status.

Mr. Caillouette suggested having staff compile criteria for both the TAC and CAC.

Mr. Stauss explained that the goal from the CAC is to have adequate representation throughout the watershed.

Ms. Hilgendorf stated that there has been discussion to have a CAC meeting dedicated to membership issues.

Commissioner Cummings stated that it has been very distinctive between the TAC and CAC and then suggested that Proposal #1 be approved and have the CAC follow under the Sunshine Law.



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Mr. Daltry stated that the Management Committee is basically the TAC and the CAC are the auditors for the Policy Committee, so they should follow the Sunshine Law.

Ms. Ott stated that the same topics are discussed in various ways between the CAC, TAC, and Management Committees and the link between the CAC, TAC to the Management Committee is very critical.

Commissioner Thaxton stated that if the CAC is not under the Sunshine Law then they are “not doing their job” and recommends the approval of Proposal #1.

Mr. Lazzell suggested that under Proposal #1 to consider eliminating the Management Committee and then asked why staff is illustrated within the various proposals, when they don't have chain of command and are involved with all of the committees. Ms. Donley explained that staff was placed within the proposals only to show the information flow and to also show that the TAC is not reporting directly up through the management structure.

Ms. Corbett explained that without staff being used as a pass-through, then both the TAC and CAC would have to follow the Sunshine Law and if the membership of those committees becomes appointed, she feels that participation within both committees will drop off.

**COMMISSIONER THAXTON MOVED AND COMMISSIONER CUMMINGS  
SECONDED TO APPROVE CHNEP MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE  
STRUCTURE PROPOSAL NO. 1 AND TO ALSO AMEND IT BY ADDING  
“CHNEP” TO STAFF AS CLARIFICATION.**

Commissioner Cummings noted that both the TAC and CAC Chairs attend the Policy Committee meetings and they provide reports to the Policy Committee so he feels that by approving Proposal No. 1 it will address the issue accordingly.

Mr. Daltry suggested that an update of both the TAC and CAC functions per the management conference be presented to the Policy Committee at its May meeting for review.

Mr. Iglehart asked for clarification that by approving the motion the CAC will need to follow the regulations of the Sunshine Law and the TAC will not. The answer was yes.

**THE MOTION CARRIED WITH MR. LAZZELL OPPOSED.**

Ms. Donley asked if she was to still send the letter to the Attorney General's Office asking for their input. Commissioner Thaxton explained that the letter still needs to be sent asking for clarification by the Policy Committee approving Proposal No. 1 is it correct that the TAC will not fall under the regulations of the Sunshine Law.



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Ms. Donley explained that at the last Policy meeting she was directed to research to see if the Policy Committee has Directors and Officers (DO) Insurance. She stated that according to their insurance broker the CHNEP Policy Committee is not covered under their DO insurance but if they chose to obtain a policy it would cost approximately \$10,000 for DO rider. She also was told that the Policy Committee members should be covered under their organization's insurance.

**Agenda Item #6 – Research and Restoration Partners Grants Projects – Catherine Corbett**

The program office received 9 Research and Restoration Partners Grants applications by the deadline of October 27, 2006. A Review Subcommittee met all day Friday, December 8, 2006 Lemon Bay Park in Englewood, FL to review and prioritize applications. Thanks to the following for their invaluable efforts:

Kristen Kaufman, SWFWMD;  
Jason Hale, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center;  
Gary Raulerson, Sarasota Bay EP;  
Stuart Strauss, CAC; and  
Ken Heatherington, SWFRPC and Management Committee Co-Chair.

The subcommittee first discussed the meeting agenda and then issues for consideration in their funding recommendations, most of which are included in the evaluation matrix within the Request for Proposals. The subcommittee then discussed each project proposal individually along with their questions or concerns with each. Next, each of the applicants was allotted 5 minutes to give a description of their project before then answering questions from the review subcommittee for another 10 minutes. Finally, each review subcommittee member completed an evaluation matrix for each project proposal, circling either "high," "medium," "low" or "do not fund." Program staff then multiplied each "high" vote by 3; each "medium" vote by 2; each "low" vote by 1; and each "do not fund" vote by 0. The median and mean values for each proposal were then determined, giving the group's prioritization. This prioritization is then listed in order of preference on a Summary sheet included within this packet. The project proposals are available electronically from the CHNEP website at: [http://www.chnep.org/grants/R&R\\_fy07proposals/r&r\\_fy07proposals.htm](http://www.chnep.org/grants/R&R_fy07proposals/r&r_fy07proposals.htm). If you have questions or would like further information about these proposals or the recommendations, please contact the program office at [ccorbett@swfrpc.org](mailto:ccorbett@swfrpc.org) or (239) 338-2556 ext. 241. The Review Subcommittee had a very difficult time with prioritization this year, as they wished to fund almost every application. The TAC reviewed and discussed the Review Subcommittee's rankings as well as several project applications at the February 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. The committee



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found the Review Subcommittee's prioritization technically sound and appropriate and requested that staff convey to the Management Committee that they wished to fund more R&RP applications than the \$45,000 within the FY07 Workplan allows. The CAC concurred.

Management Committee recommends funding the top 3 projects would equal \$52,277. The additional \$7,277 is available from unspent FY07 salaries.

Commissioner Thaxton referred to Project A and asked if there is any overlap within the two scopes. Ms. Corbett explained that it has already been completed within Charlotte County and will now be expanding into Lee County and it will also include the mangrove shoreline survey.

**MR. DALTRY MOVED AND COMMISSIONER THAXTON SECONDED APPROVE RANKING OF RESEARCH AND RESTORATION PARTNERS GRANTS. FUND PROJECTS B, C, & F.**

Mr. Daltry expressed his concern over the fact that Project H did not get funded due to the lack of funds. He stated that there needs to be more consideration taken with land management and water management coordination.

Ms. Corbett explained that all of the applications that were submitted this year were really good projects; however, Project H didn't get recommended for funding by the Review Subcommittee primarily due to the lack of specifics within the application and also a member from the CFRPC also recommended that the project not get chosen. She then stated that the project be resubmitted next year.

Mr. Daltry stated that there needs to be more focus on reintegrating land and water planning. Chairman Welborn stated that he agrees with Mr. Daltry's comments.

**THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Commissioner Thaxton asked how Mr. Daltry's concerns are going to be addressed regarding Project H. Dr. Beever explained that staff has contacted CFRPC and they are working on a re-submittal of the application. Ms. Donley explained that she also has given the applicant names of other grant funding opportunities. Commissioner Thaxton stated that it is a critical step and suggested incorporating it into the CCMP policies and/or appendices.

**Agenda Item #7 – 2007 Research/Monitoring Needs and Environmental Indicator Gaps Project Survey**

In order to prioritize our research needs and projects to fill our indicators gaps, staff has prepared the following survey. Research needs are rendered from our 2004 Research Needs Inventory, the 2005 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) Survey results, and the Draft CCMP currently undergoing review.



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The survey is presented by priority problem area: Fish and Wildlife Habitat Loss, Hydrologic Alterations, and Water Quality. For each priority problem, two lists have been prepared. The first list is of research needs. Each comprehensive list of research needs is sorted by draft CCMP action. If the research need is synonymous with one of the CCMP priority actions, the title is in bold font. The second list includes projects that are displayed in our draft environmental indicators report update. A copy of this report is also attached for your reference. Each project is directly linked to either a draft CCMP action or a draft Environmental Indicator gap, using these associations, unique codes have been created to identify each project and are located in the second column. The codes for those projects associated with CCMP actions include the priority problem area and action (upper case letter) code plus a number (e.g., FW-A1, FW-A2). The codes for those projects associated with Environmental Indicators gaps include the priority problem area and indicator code (lower case letter) plus the gap number (e.g., FW-a1, WQ-b1).

The pre-requisite column shows links between projects, and may link Environmental Indicator gaps to CCMP action projects. If the column is marked "no" it neither is nor needs a prerequisite. If the column is marked with an action or indicator number then the project associated with that number needs to be done first. The number points to the prerequisite using the unique project code. If the column is marked "yes," then the project is a prerequisite to some other work. We recommend that anything marked with "yes" be given extra consideration for funding if it is a prerequisite to an important project, study, or action. You may also consider how much you think the prerequisite is needed in order to proceed.

For each list, mark 5-10 you think are most important to accomplish to implement the CCMP and improve the natural resources of the Charlotte Harbor NEP Study Area. Do not consider who might accomplish the project. It would be just most important to do. Finally, for each list, mark 5-10 that you think the Charlotte Harbor NEP should fund through its workplan budget. Basically, staff would work on the top ranked projects under this category to get it implemented as quickly as possible. What is most important and what we should do most quickly are slightly different questions, for example some gaps may need to be filled or projects completed in order to adequately implement other important projects as indicated by the pre-requisite column.

To date, we have received 18 completed surveys and distributed surveys at the most recent CAC and Management Committee meeting. **Complete the questionnaire by noon on March 8, 2007 and send to [ccorbett@swfrpc.org](mailto:ccorbett@swfrpc.org), for presentation to the Policy Committee on March 19, 2007.** Surveys completed after this date will be accepted.

Mr. Lazzell noted that some of the projects have already been initiated by SWFWMD. Dr. Beever explained that staff is aware that some of the projects have already been initiated.

Mr. Lazzell asked what the deadline for the survey submittal is. Dr. Beever replied 30 days.



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**Agenda Item #8 – Shoreline Mapping Project – Catherine Corbett & Jamie Boswell**

In the Research Section of the Fiscal Year 2007 Workplan, the Management Conference approved concentrating on the following projects, amongst others:

1. Project(s) to address knowledge or monitoring gaps of Environmental Indicators and/or new CCMP Objectives and Actions
2. Developing and refining water quality targets for chlorophyll *a* and dissolved and suspended matter based on seagrass light requirements
3. Charlotte Harbor Estuaries Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network support
4. Technical Intern position

To determine specific projects for the first 2 items, program staff are surveying Management Conference members to prioritize projects included within the CCMP Priority Actions, Environmental Indicators knowledge gaps and Research Needs Inventory. As of the TAC meeting, only 7 completed surveys had been received; thus, the process is still on-going.

In the interim, the program is kicking off a volunteer based program to classify shoreline type (e.g. mangroves, hedged mangroves, hurricane damaged mangroves, hardened shoreline, and exotics) throughout the coastal program study area. The goal of the program is to collect the data needed for the development of a GIS map. The map will be used for assessing the Quantifiable Objective FW-1c (extent and quality of mangrove habitat) and can be used to assess FW-3 (managing exotic invasive plants). This project would also directly implement Strategy 2 of Priority Action FW-F (Map shoreline treatments including hedged mangrove, windowed mangrove, uplifted mangrove, vertical seawall, riprap revetment, lawn, herbaceous wetlands, etc.) and provide the data for Strategy 1 of FW-F (Compile data and study the cumulative impacts of boat docks and hardened shorelines on SAV, oyster bar, intertidal, unvegetated and other habitats). Aside from addressing these key Quantifiable Objectives and Strategies, the map would be available for public use and may aid in modeling fish habitat, hurricane effects and effects of sea-level rise. Contractual help with these tasks would allow NEP staff to expand the project into Lee County from the initial on-going Charlotte County pilot project. To expand this project into Lee County and complete the project in a timely manner, the program will need to contract for aid in GIS data management. Funding would go towards data input, validation/photointerpretation of field data in relation to recent aerial photography, and development of the final GIS map product. It is this project that program staff recommends for support to address item #1 above. Attached is a draft scope of work for your review before the meeting.

The TAC, CAC, and Management Committee reviewed and discussed this project and the draft scope of work. Several committee members recommended that projects addressing #2 above (numeric water quality targets) should be a priority for program funding, and staff suggested developing a draft scope of work for the next TAC meeting for this item. The committee then recommended to staff that in the interim the staff recommendation of the Shoreline Survey project be supported through the FY07 Workplan to address #1



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above. The committee also found the methods within the draft scope of work for technically sound and appropriate for advertisement with several minor modifications.

Commissioner Thaxton asked what are the questions for the volunteers and how are they selected. Ms. Boswell explained that she is currently working with the steering committee on the methods and it was decided to hire a contractor to conduct the GIS methodology. She also explained that photographs will be taken to compare light, moderate, and severe changes.

Mr. Lazzell asked if the projects are prioritized. Dr. Beever explained that this is more of baseline information.

**MR. LAZZELL MOVED AND COMMISSIONER THAXTON SECONDED TO APPROVE SHORELINE SURVEY PROJECT FOR FY 07 FUNDING SUPPORT. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item #9 – Draft FY 07/08 Workplan – Lisa Beever**

CHNEP staff has prepared a draft of the FY 08 Workplan, due to be adopted by the Policy Committee on May 21, 2007. Staff has improved the version by adding the following:

A Close-out of the previous completed year (FY06) to show precisely where we are at financially at a point in time, including continuing project commitments and funding.

An amendment for the current year (FY07) to show previous amendments and make staff time adjustments based on better information than could be predicted the previous year.

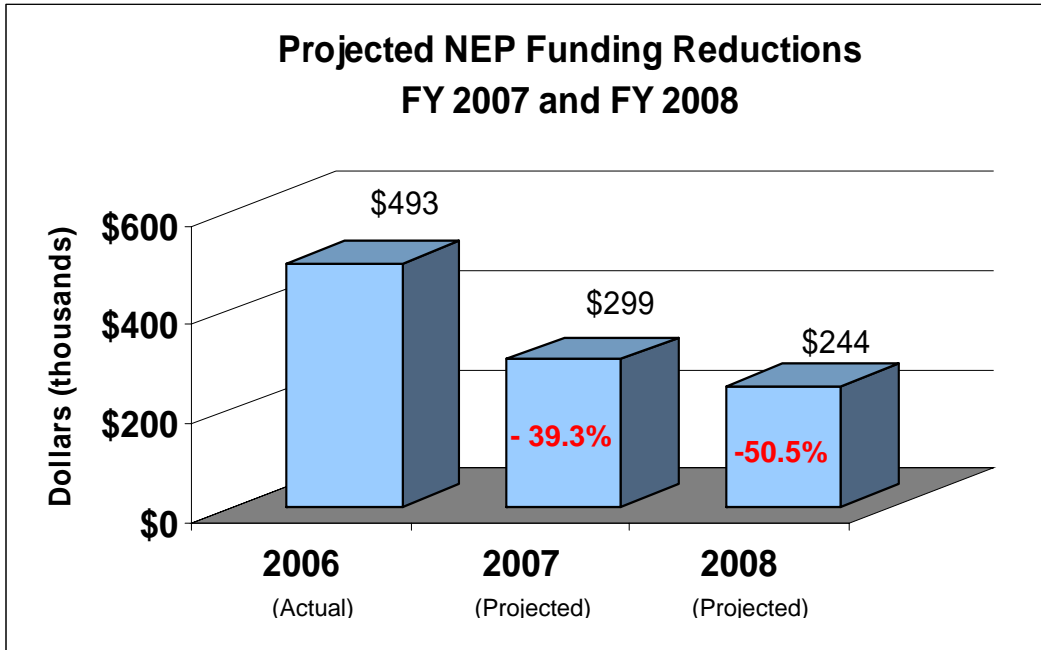
A graph that shows the history of cash receivables to the program.

A list of projects (by fiscal year) including on-going projects from previous years, the current year, and the new year (FY08) at the end of the workplan.

Since 2004, the National Estuary Programs have annually received an average of \$500,000 for CCMP implementation. The Administration's 2007 and 2008 budget projections for the National Estuary Program, if enacted, will reduce funding for CCMP and NEP community-sponsored projects by over 50%, seriously impacting our ability to fund future lagoon protection and restoration efforts. The 28 NEPs are working with our delegations to ensure continued funding at the \$500,000 level.



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Mr. Lazzell asked what the comment submittal deadline is. Dr. Beever replied the second week of May, but recommends that they be to staff for their review by April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Weikel asked if the committees on page 74 will be changed. Dr. Beever replied yes.

Mr. Daltry referred to the FY 07/08 federal reduction. Dr. Beever explained that the 50% reduction is the result of the 07 EPA funds becoming the 08 EPA funds and also the EPA Administrator had drafted a big reduction to all NEPs.

Mr. Daltry asked where Tasks 1-5 go under. Dr. Beever replied “restoration.”

Commissioner Cummings gave a brief overview of what the legislature is proposing to do with local government’s funding allocations.

**Agenda Item #10 – Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Protection Act – Lisa Beever**

Last year, the Florida Legislature created the Caloosahatchee/St. Lucie Rivers Corridor Advisory Committee. The committee recommended amendment to the Lake Okeechobee Protection Act to include an additional focus on estuaries to which Lake Okeechobee has been artificially connected. This amendment is entitled the “Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Protection Act.” State Representative Trudi Williams introduced the proposed amendment as House Bill 535, the Lake Okeechobee Protection Program. The amendment includes a focus on improving water quality and estuarine habitat within the Caloosahatchee estuary. The



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committee is to determine if House Bill 535 helps to implement Charlotte Harbor NEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

The CAC and TAC discussed the Act at their meeting and found that NEP support of the Act is appropriate and would help implement the CCMP objectives and actions.

Commissioner Thaxton asked if the committee should object to the amendments. Mr. Iglehart replied that no one knows what the amendments are at this time.

**MR. DALTRY MOVED AND MR. CALLIOUETTE SECONDED TO APPROVE THE LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE LAKE OKEECHOBEE AND ESTUARY PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENTS, HOUSE BILL 535.**

Mr. Stauss suggested sending a copy of the letter to Commissioner Tammy Hall at the Lee County BOCC.

Commissioner Thaxton suggested also sending a copy of the letter to the legislative delegation.

Mr. Flood stated that one of the proposed amendments is to rename it to the "Northern Everglades and Estuaries Act."

**THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item #10.5 – 2007 Legislative Session – Liz Donley**

The Florida Legislature convened its annual session on March 6, 2007. Staff has reviewed bills submitted by the legislators representing the CHNEP study area and identified the following three bills as proposing State actions that implement the CCMP.

**1. Amend the 1985 Myakka River Wild and Scenic Designation and Preservation Act**

Senate Bill 2346/House Bill 1281

This bill expands the Wild and Scenic River designation of the Myakka River to its entire length, currently only the portion of the river within Sarasota is so designated. The designation provides additional protection to special waters recognized for their ecological significance, by providing the highest degree of protection under the State of Florida permitting policies.

**2. Protection of Seagrasses – Enforcement, Restoration and Education**



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Senate Bill 0548/House Bill 1069

The bill authorizes the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to enforce protection of seagrass beds in designated aquatic preserves. It establishes certain actions in aquatic preserves as civil infractions, establishes penalties, and provides for the disposition of collected fines. The bill creates definitions for the terms “propeller scarring” and “seagrasses”.

The bill authorizes the assessment of fines for the careless operation of a vessel outside lawfully marked channels that causes propeller scarring within an aquatic preserve. Fines will be used for restoration activities and boater education.

**3. Restoration of Seagrass Beds – Pilot Programs in Lee, Manatee, Pinellas and Brevard Counties**

Senate Bill 2178/No Identical/Similar House Bill

This bill creates pilot program for restoration of seagrass beds and related natural resources within Lee, Manatee, Brevard, Monroe and Pinellas counties. The bill establishes a funding source for restoration by requiring damages recovered for injury to and destruction of seagrass beds and related natural resources be deposited into Ecosystem Management and Restoration Trust Fund. DEP is required to expend funds for restoration, assessment, or rehabilitation of seagrass beds and natural resources, etc. Amends 403.1651, FS.

Commissioner Cummings asked why Charlotte County was included with the restoration of sea grass beds. Ms. Donley stated that Senator Bennett was the sponsor of that bill.

**MR. LAZZELL MOVED AND MR. CALLIOUETTE SECONDED TO DIRECT STAFF TO FORWARD LETTERS OF SUPPORT TO CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL AND TRANSMISSION TO APPROPRIATE LEGISLATORS AND COMMITTEES.**

Mr. Daltry suggested that within the letter to advise adding Charlotte County to SB 2178 addressing restoration of seagrass beds. The committee agreed.

Commissioner Thaxton asked that copies of the letters be sent to the legislative delegation.

Mr. Iglehart asked if the bill includes the FF&WC recommendation of a \$50 ticket be issued to those that are running through the sea grass beds. Ms. Donley replied that she is not aware of it.

Dr. Beever explained that a map will also be added showing the prop scar areas.



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Commissioner Cummings noted that the wildlife scenic designation is scheduled to come before the Charlotte County BOCC for discussion and consideration.

Mr. Iglehart explained that the \$50 fine does not preclude restoration costs for the loss of sea grasses.

**THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AS AMENDED.**

**Agenda Item #11 – Peace River Cumulative Impact Study Update – Lisa Beever**

The Peace River Cumulative Impact Study was funded through an Act of the Florida Legislature in 2003. Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in coordination with the Southwest Florida Water Management District, contracted with PBS&J to conduct the study. The final report, without appendices, is 383 pages and 368 megs in size. The program office will be happy to provide a CD with the final report to any committee member who requests it.

The recommendations are centered around:

- General Issues
- Stopping Wetland and Stream Losses
- Protecting and Enhancing Public Water Supply
- Phosphate Industry Regulation and Reclamation
- Restoring Wetlands to Increase Low Flows
- Floodplain Protection
- Additional Studies that are needed.

The report was issued January 2007. It will for the basis of a Watershed Management Plan being currently developed. Website for the project is at:

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/mines/prcis.htm>.

The report is quite readable and graphic. The call-outs are useful. Maps and tables should have used the same color codes and better represented intensity of use. Most of the recommendations from the study will serve to implement the CCMP. Of particular merit are:

FDEP, in coordination with SWFWMD, should audit wetland losses since 1979 to understand how more than 4,000 acres of wetlands were lost to urban development, and over 13,000 acres were lost each to mining and agriculture and should also audit losses in stream channels to understand the dynamics that have allowed 343 miles of loss during a period of increasing regulation.

Develop land planning options to combine mine permits with post-mining land use approvals.



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Identify Nonmandatory parcels within the Integrated Habitat Network (IHN), and develop a plan for the strategic acquisition of critical parcels.

Acquire flowage easements and fund restoration of wetland hydrology on private lands.

Identify and prioritize opportunities to restore hydrology (reverse drainage) and reconnect wetlands to the Peace River.

Acquire flowage easements and fund restoration of wetland hydrology on private lands.

Develop criteria for the protection of uplands within the 100-year floodplain based on the size of the stream protected, the width of wetlands adjacent to the stream, the cover type of the uplands, and the land use context.

Work with Florida Forever program to apply severance tax funds to floodplain acquisition.

The committees have requested that the Peace River Management Plan, sent to the legislature, be considered by the Management Conference for the next cycle.

Mr. Lazzell briefly reviewed the Charlotte Sun and Sarasota Herald Tribune news articles.

Commissioner Cummings explained that with the working groups it was noted by staff that they were taking zero consideration for estuarine needs.

**Agenda Item #12 – SFWMD Water Quality Model (CDM Report) – Lisa Beever**

South Florida Water Management District contracted with CDM to develop a Nutrient Load Assessment for Estero Bay and Caloosahatchee River Watersheds. The report presents valuable information that was collected to develop the watershed model, including estimated septic coverage, estimated WWTP service areas, and estimated impervious coverage. For example, existing Tidal Caloosahatchee and Estero Bay impervious percentage is 16% and by 2050 it is predicted to be 28%. These data are presented by waterbody ID area.

Based on the evaluations, a combination of the following BMPs and actions will be necessary to manage and improve water quality in the Estero Bay-Caloosahatchee River Watershed.

Enhanced stormwater criteria and LID practices, including:

- higher efficiency BMPs,
- retention where practicable,
- increased stormwater recycling, and
- LID practices such as reduced directly connected (also called “effective”) imperviousness.

Retrofit BMP projects and strategies;

Consideration of potential water quality benefits from the C-43 Reservoir; and



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Eventual re-direction of treated flows from Lake Okeechobee to the Everglades as CERP projects are implemented with

The full assessment report is 168 megs in size and is available at:

[https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PG\\_GRP\\_SFWMD\\_WATERSHED/PORTLET%20-%20STORMWATER%20MANAGEMENT/TAB8996095/WMM%20FINAL%20REPORT.PDF](https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PG_GRP_SFWMD_WATERSHED/PORTLET%20-%20STORMWATER%20MANAGEMENT/TAB8996095/WMM%20FINAL%20REPORT.PDF).

The Program office will be happy to provide any committee member a CD of the report.

Mr. Daltry thanked the SFWMD for the report.

Mr. Flood gave a brief overview of the Northern Everglades Restoration Program.

**Agenda Item #13 – CDOM Workshop Status Report – Catherine Corbett**

On September 13, 2006, the TAC recommended approval of a workshop on colored dissolved organic matter as a first step in implementation of the numeric water quality targets. Dissolved organic matter (or DOM) is the largest reservoir of organic carbon in the aquatic environment. Colored DOM (or CDOM) contributes to light absorption, and may also fuel bacterial respiration while carrying large quantities of carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorous to estuaries, which may contribute to eutrophication. In a recent article in *Estuaries and Coasts*, a study found that in one Danish estuary, land use was found to have significant impacts on the quality and quantity of dissolved organic matter loadings to receiving waters. Forested subbasins of the watershed contributed significant dissolved organic matter throughout the year, but especially during the rainy season. Areas characterized by agricultural land use contributed a smaller, more constant flow of dissolved organic matter to the estuary throughout the year. The study found also that while forested lands provide more dissolved organic matter than agriculture, the nutrients bound in this material may be less bio-available than those from agricultural lands. Results of the study suggest that reducing the agricultural area of the watershed to about 50% of the watershed's total area could lead to a substantial decrease in eutrophication risk to the receiving waterbodies.

In Charlotte Harbor, Florida, CDOM can account for 13-66% of light attenuation in the water column. Recent analyses by PBS&J for FDEP on the Peace River Cumulative Impact Assessment found that landuse changes and different mining practices in the Peace River have changed colored dissolved organic matter concentrations in the Peace River since water quality monitoring began. Also, analyses by SFWMD staff have found significant trends in color concentrations in the Caloosahatchee River in recent years. Thus, it is apparent that landuse changes as well as other factors may be changing color concentrations within the Charlotte Harbor watershed. Therefore, understanding the sources, sinks, and processes that affect CDOM is important for aquatic resource management. An approach for setting numeric water quality targets for chlorophyll *a*, turbidity and CDOM was



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recently established for the Lemon Bay, Charlotte Harbor and Estero Bay region. This workshop on colored dissolved organic matter is an imperative first step in the implementation of these water quality targets.

The workshop is scheduled to be held May 29-31, 2007 at Isles Yacht Club in Punta Gorda, FL. Staff is organizing the workshop with a steering committee of interested TAC members and others. The total costs of the workshop include staff time, travel for invited speakers and staff, venue and food. Staff estimates costs of approximately \$25,000, and sponsors are beginning to commit funding for the workshop. A draft agenda and sponsor letter is enclosed.

Ms. Corbett noted that sponsors are needed.

Ms. Hilgendorf announced that information on the forum is located on the CHNEP's website.

**Agenda Item #14 – Keeping the Peace October 5, 2006 Conference Report – Maran Hilgendorf**

Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program sponsored the conference “Keeping the Peace: Translating Management Plans into Action” that was held October 5, 2006 in Bartow. Additional details about the conference are included in the report itself.

**MR. WEIKEL MOVED AND MR. CALLIOUETTE SECONDED TO ACCEPT APPROVE THE DRAFT REPORT.**

Mr. Daltry asked if the report on included Polk County's part of the Peace River. Ms. Hilgendorf explained that it depends on who you speak with; however, most of the people and contacts that were involved were from the Polk County area.

Mr. Daltry referred to the conclusions on page 12 regarding flows from the Peace River. Dr. Beaver stated that it should be clarified as the “upper” Peace River.

Commissioner Thaxton noted that he is skeptical of the process and then suggested amending the motion to read “accept” instead of “approve” the report.

Ms. Hilgendorf thanked Sarasota County staff for their support.

**THE MOTION CARRIED AS AMENDED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Agenda Item #15 – TAC Report – Judy Ott, Chair**



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Ms. Ott gave the TAC Report and stated that the next TAC meeting is scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup> at the offices of the SWFRPC.

**Agenda Item #16 – CAC Report – Stuart Stauss, Chair**

Mr. Stauss gave the CAC Report and the next CAC meeting is scheduled for March 21<sup>st</sup> at Lemon Bay. He announced that he will be moving out of the area and will be resigning from the CAC.

Dr. Beever congratulated Mr. Stauss for his participation both as a CAC member and its Chairman.

**Agenda Item #17 – ABM Report – Lisa Beever**

Dr. Beever gave the ABM Report.

**Agenda Item #18 – NEP Program Report – NEP Staff**

Dr. Beever reviewed the following issues:

- CCMP Update
- CAC work on the vision statement for the CCMP
- Staff working on the layout of the CCMP
- Final Draft to be published in August
- Deliverables as included within the packet

Ms. Hilgendorf reviewed the following issues:

- First full color newsletter (Harbor Happenings) – approximately 9,000 copies made, 6,500 copies sent out; have increased 4 times distribution each year and she encourages submittal of articles.
- Professional development opportunities (NOAA presentation in June 2008)
- CAC April meeting will be a growth management workshop
- Florida Friendly Yards Program
- Radio series within the next two months.
- \$15,000 Grant from EPA
- FL Friendly Landscaping Workshops which includes 4 rounds of full-day workshops, next round is scheduled for September.
- Proclamations of support approved at the next Policy Meeting
- November 3<sup>rd</sup> Nature Festival

Ms. Corbett reviewed the Emerging Sensor Monitoring Program.



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Ms. Boswell reviewed the following:

- FL American Fisheries Association Presentation
- Proposal for mangrove restoration within Charlotte County

Ms. Donley reviewed the following:

- ANEP Conference in Washington DC and discussions with lobbyists
- Governor Christ's office in DC has the CHNEP Osprey picture displayed in the conference room.

**Agenda Item #19 – Member Comments**

Commissioner Cummings encouraged everyone to pay special attention to the master water supply plan submitted by the water authority, especially the 57 million gallons of surface water withdrawals from Charlotte Harbor.

Mr. Weikel asked if there is a conflict of interest issue accepting sponsorships from developers. Ms. Donley replied no, because in the past it goes to a specific event.

Dr. Beever announced that sponsors for CDOM are welcome.

Mr. Daltry announced that Lee County will be taking action on the final comprehensive plan amendments on April 11<sup>th</sup> along with the county's master mitigation plan and stormwater improvement plan.

Councilman Ferreira reviewed the following issues with the City of Bonita Springs:

- Lower speed limits for boats between Hickory Boulevard and Blind Pass for boater's safety.
- Fertilizer issues and how they are working on trying to reduce fertilizer levels.
- BMPs included within the city's comprehensive plan.

Mr. Daltry gave a brief overview of the SWFRPC's efforts by forming the Lower West Coast Watersheds Subcommittee to address the various water quality issues throughout the Southwest Florida Region.

Mr. Stauss reviewed the recent fertilizer ordinance passed by the City of Sanibel.

**Agenda Item #20 – Public Comments**

No public comments were made at this time.



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**Agenda Item #21 – Next Meeting’s Topics, Location and Date**

The next Policy Committee meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 21, 2007 at a location within the City of Venice. Topics for discussion include: FY08 Workplan, Water Quality Status and Trends Project by Janicki Environmental, Inc., CCMP Update, and 2008 Management Conference Meeting Schedule.

**Agenda Item #22 – Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.

Prepared by Nicole Gwinnett