

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program**  
**Technical Advisory Committee**  
**February 14, 2007**  
**South Florida Community College, Arcadia, FL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Philip Stevens	FWC-Fish and Wildlife Research Institute-FIM
Kristen Kaufman	Southwest Florida Water Management District-SWIM
Lizanne Garcia	Southwest Florida Water Management District-SWIM
Peter Doering	South Florida Water Management District
Judy Ott	Department of Environmental Protection-CHAP
Stacia Hetrick	FDEP- Myakka Wild and Scenic
Ford Walton	Department of Environmental Protection
Keith Kibbey	Lee County
Wayne Daltry	Lee County
Mike Jones	Sarasota County
Bill Byle	Charlotte County
Greg Blanchard	Manatee County
Connie Jarvis	Cape Coral
Kim Cressman	Cape Coral
Mike Gurr	Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Sam Stone	PRMRWSA
David Ceilley	FGCU

**ALSO PRESENT**

Catherine Corbett	Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Jaime Boswell	Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Kris Delaney	Citizen

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**—Judy Ott called the meeting to order at 9:12 A.M.
2. **Agenda Additions or Deletions**—Judy Ott  
No additions or deletions were requested.
3. **TAC Minutes**—Judy Ott  
**MOTION TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 25, 2006 MEETING MINUTES BY KEITH KIBBEY. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MIKE GURR. MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**
4. **Florida Sunshine Law Discussion**—Catherine Corbett  
On November 20, 2006, the Policy Committee discussed the TAC and CAC and their compliance with the Florida Sunshine Law. The purpose of the Florida Sunshine Law is to give citizens access to government meetings and records. The law is equally applicable to elected and appointed boards and has been applied to any gathering of two or more members of the same board to discuss

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some matter which will foreseeably come before that board for action. There are three basic requirements of s. 286.011, F.S.:

- (1) meetings of public boards or commissions must be open to the public;
- (2) reasonable notice of such meetings must be given; and
- (3) minutes of the meetings must be taken.

Under the Florida Sunshine Law there is an exemption from the Sunshine Law requirements for “fact finding” advisory committees. The TACs of the Sarasota and Tampa Bay Estuary Programs operate within the above exemption. That is, because the Sarasota Bay and Tampa Bay Estuary Programs’ TACs conduct only fact-finding and information gathering activities, the TAC members are not restricted from discussing potential meeting topics outside TAC meetings. Based on discussions with Sarasota and Tampa Bay Estuary Programs’ staff, it appears that the CHNEP TAC can function within the exemption. Under this exemption, the TAC does not make recommendations to the Management Committee; rather the TAC makes determinations based on facts, and transmits the results of fact-finding activities to the Management Committee.

This item was tabled to the next meeting because Mrs. Donley was unable to attend the meeting. The committee decided to refrain from formal motions until the discussion was held.

**5. 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 for the full TAC. 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

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“high” vote by 3; each “medium” vote by 2; each “low” vote by 1; and each “do not fund” vote by 0. The mean and median 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).

The committee discussed several projects and agreed that the ranking from the Review Subcommittee was technically sound and consistent with filling data gaps in the CCMP and Environmental Indicators. They agreed that if program budget permitted to fund the 1<sup>st</sup> four projects in the ranking and fund more if possible, following the Review Subcommittee ranking.

**6. FY07 Workplan Projects** —Catherine Corbett and Jaime 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 surveyed TAC members to prioritize projects included within the CCMP Priority Actions, Environmental Indicators knowledge gaps and Research Needs Inventory. There were only 7 responses to the results as of February 13, 2007; thus results were not presented.

The Charlotte Harbor NEP staff 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

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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 in the agenda packet was a draft scope of work for review and discussion.

The committee agreed that this project was the priority project for the FY07 Workplan to address Environmental Indicators knowledge gaps and that the project scope was appropriate and sufficient with some modifications. Members suggested modifications to the draft project scope, and program staff agreed to work with members to incorporate their input to the Request for Proposals.

**7. CCMP Update—Catherine Corbett**

The updated CCMP will be on the website. Program staff hope Management Conference will review it and recommend changes as needed over the next several months so the plan can be finalized.

**8. TAC Subcommittees—Jaime Boswell**

On February 1, 2007, the subcommittees motioned for staff to composite subcommittee distribution lists, to hold joint HCS/HAS/WQQOS subcommittee meetings (instead of the current separate WQQOS meetings) and maintain 3 chairs (1 for each committee). Specific meetings geared to one of the subcommittees may be held in the future if needed. Staff and subcommittee members discussed that combining meetings will alleviate some of the burden associated with meeting attendance and receipt of emails. Also, the decrease in number of meetings should allow participants to attend more regularly.

**9. Lake Okeechobee and Estuary Protection Act—Catherine Corbett**

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

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The committee discussed the legislation and agreed that correspondence supporting it was consistent with the CCMP and appropriate for the program.

**10. 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 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 costs of the workshop include staff time, travel for invited speakers and staff, venue and food. Staff

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estimates costs of approximately \$25,000, depending if support from sponsors can be found. A draft agenda and sponsor letter is enclosed.

11. **TAC Co-Chair Nominating Committee**—Catherine Corbett  
The TAC in the past has held annual TAC Co-Chair elections. A Co-Chair nominating committee is an optional method for creating a list of potential co-chairs. Please consider volunteering to serve on the nominating committee as well as a TAC Co-Chair.

Greg Blanchard, Peter Doering, Mike Gurr and Dave Ceilley volunteered to serve on the nominating committee.

11 ½ **Historic Hydrologic Subbasins Project Update**—Mike Gurr  
Mike presented the data compiled to date for the project and asked if members knew of other datasets they had missed.

12. **Estero Bay ABM Report**—John Cassani or Church Roberts  
This item was tabled because neither attended the meeting.

13. **Program Report**—Catherine Corbett and Jaime Boswell  
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>. 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

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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.

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.

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/P  
ORTLET%20-  
20STORMWATER%20MANAGEMENT/TAB8996095/WMM%20FINAL%20REP  
ORT.PDF](https://my.sfwmd.gov/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PG_GRP_SFWMD_WATERSHED/P<br/>ORTLET%20-<br/>20STORMWATER%20MANAGEMENT/TAB8996095/WMM%20FINAL%20REP<br/>ORT.PDF). The Program office will be happy to provide any committee member  
a CD of the report.

14. **Member Comments**—TAC Members
15. **Public Comments**
16. **Next Meeting's Topics and Date**—February 14, 2007
  - Florida Sunshine Law
  - FY08 workplan
  - Deliverables from the Water Quality Status and Trends Report by  
Janicki Environmental, Inc.
  - Results from the 2006 SWFWMD and SFWMD Seagrass maps
  - Results from fisheries research in the Caloosahatchee
17. **Adjourn** –Judy Ott, Co-Chair  
The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.