



**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Management Committee
Approved Minutes
October 31, 2008
Venice, Florida**

Members Present:

Greg Blanchard	Manatee Co. Natural Resource Dept./CHNEP TAC
Melynda Brown	Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve
Alton Cheatham	Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center
Lizanne Garcia	SWFWMD, Resource Management Dept.
TM Gurr	CFRPC
Ken Heatherington	SWFRPC
John Ryan	Sarasota Co. Water Resources/CHNEP TAC
Betty Staugler	FL Sea Grant – Charlotte Co. Extension
Andy Stevens	Charlotte County Environmental & Extension Services
Sam Stone	Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority

Also Present:

Lisa Beever	CHNEP
Liz Donley	CHNEP
Maran Hilgendorf	CHNEP
Judy Ott	CHNEP

Agenda Item #1 - Call to Order and Introductions – Meeting was called to order by Ken Heatherington, Co-Chairman at 10:11 a.m. Introductions were made.

Agenda Item #2. Agenda Additions or Deletions – Ken Heatherington, Co-Chairman

THE AGENDA WAS APPROVED AS PRESENTED BY GENERAL CONSENT.

Agenda Item #3 – Public Comments on Agenda Items – Ken Heatherington, Co-Chairman

No public comments were made at this time.

Agenda Item #4 – Management Committee August 1, 2008 Minutes

THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 1, 2008 WERE APPROVED BY GENERAL CONSENT.

Agenda Item #5 – Charlotte Harbor Tidal Shoreline Survey Project Final Deliverables – Ian Watson, PhotoScience

CHNEP contracted with PhotoScience to conduct the Charlotte Harbor Tidal Shoreline Survey Project. PhotoScience's task created a geodatabase (MS Access) of the tidal shoreline conditions throughout the CHNEP study area. The data sources are a



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combination of aerial photography and field acquired data. PhotoScience conducted photo interpretation of shoreline type and created tables of habitat quality data obtained in the field by volunteers. The field data was linked to County land parcel information. The data is compiled by shoreline condition and quality feature classes into the ArcGIS personal geodatabase. The photo interpretation was conducted using the most recent existing aerial photographs with of at least 1-meter resolution. Volunteers assisted in the field data collection of habitat quality field data, including mangrove trimming height, hurricane damage, and percentage of exotic vegetation, as well as field verification of photo interpretation.

Deliverables include the geodatabase, summary tables by subbasin, final report, and metadata. All deliverables are posted on the CHNEP ftp site at: <ftp://ftp.swfrcp.org>. User name: CHNEP Password: CHNEPAccess.

The final deliverables were reviewed by the CHNEP program scientist and found to be complete, thorough, concise, easily understood and readily useable to support implementation of the CCMP.

**MR. RYAN MOVED AND MS. STAUGLER SECONDED TO
RECOMMEND POLICY COMMITTEE APPROVE PHOTOSCIENCE
CHARLOTTE HARBOR TIDAL SHORELINE SURVEY MAPPING
PROJECT FINAL DELIVERABLES.**

Ms. Meadows asked if the CHNEP has any plans on doing this project again. Ms. Donley explained that there is a volunteer program scheduled for 2009-2010.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #6. Do Coastal Land Alterations Impact Estuarine Food Webs? Final Report – Judy Ott

Aaron Adams provided the CHNEP Program Office with the final report for the “Do Coastal Land Alterations Impact Estuarine Food Webs?” project. The project is an FY07 Research and Restoration Partners grant.

The background information from the project Scope of Work is provided here: The purpose of the project is to provide information on the impacts of coastal habitat alterations on mangrove associated fishes. Effects of freshwater flow alterations on trophic ecology of juvenile common snook (*Centropomus undecimalis*) were examined in four mangrove creeks with different freshwater flow regimes along the east side of Charlotte Harbor. The need for the project was motivated by the recognition that despite increasing development and habitat loss in coastal and near-coastal habitats within the CHNEP study area, development, conservation, restoration and mitigation projects are being conducted using inadequate data about the ecological effects of



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habitat alterations on estuarine ecology. Previous research shows that upland habitat alterations reduce the number of fish species and fish abundance in mangrove creeks. This project demonstrates the extent that changes in fish community cause changes in the trophic web within mangrove creeks. Since juvenile snook (*Centropomus undecimalis*), an economically and ecologically important species, rely on these creeks in their early years, changes in available prey can have far reaching impacts on adult snook populations and estuarine ecology. Changes in trophic structure within nursery habitats can influence growth rate and survival, and can cause emigration from poor habitats. If upland habitat alterations are causing trophic shifts, the implications are estuary wide.

The final report was reviewed by the CHNEP program scientist and found to be complete, consistent with the project Scope of Work and useful to support implementation of the CCMP and fill environmental indicator gaps.

Ms. Hilgendorf stated that the projects are posted on the CHNEP's website.

Ms. Garcia stated that from the management perspective the project review team recommendations were not included in the report and she is concerned with that.

Ms. Ott explained the reasoning for picking juvenile snook and the hydrology for the project.

Ms. Garcia explained the SWFWMD perspective from the minimum flows and levels and what is the minimum flow required for fish habitat.

Mr. Ryan stated that there needs to be definitive statements.

Mr. Blanchard stated that the management recommendations need to be reviewed separately from the science.

MS. GARCIA MOVED AND MR. BLANCHARD SECONDED TO RECOMMEND POLICY COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE FINAL MOTE "DO COASTAL LAND ALTERATIONS IMPACT ESTUARINE FOOD WEBS? REPORT WITH THE CAVEAT OF A CONCLUSION SECTION.

Mr. Cheatham asked what direction the snook travels. Ms. Ott explained that due to the restrictions of the creek most of the snook stayed in the upper creek.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #7. Research and Restoration Partner Program FY09 Proposal Review Results – Judy Ott

The program office received 13 Research and Restoration Partners Grant proposals by the deadline of September 25, 2008. A Review Subcommittee met all day Friday, October



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10, 2008 in Port Charlotte to review and prioritize the proposals for the full TAC. Thank you to the following reviewers for their invaluable efforts:

Lizanne Garcia, SWFWMD;
Amanda Dominguez, Sarasota County;
Ernesto Lasso de la Vega, LCHCD;
Peter Doering, SWFWMD;
Bob Day, Indian River Lagoon NEP;

The review subcommittee reviewed the meeting agenda and discussed issues for consideration in their funding recommendations, including the evaluation matrix given in 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 15 minutes to discuss their project and answer questions from the review subcommittee. Finally, each review subcommittee member completed an evaluation matrix for each project proposal, indicating 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 mean and median values for each proposal were then determined, resulting in the Review Subcommittee's prioritization.

The project abstracts and Review Subcommittee rankings are attached. The project proposals are available on the CHNEP ftp site at: <ftp://ftp.swrfpc.org>, username: [chnep](#), password: [chnepaccess](#). Please review each of the project proposals and the Review Committee FY09 Proposal Ranking before the TAC meeting.

The FY09 workplan includes \$60,000 for the Research and Restoration Partners Grant Program. Staff recommends following the Review Subcommittee rankings to fund in order of priority: Projects L, M and K.

The RRPP FY09 Proposal rankings will be included on the Management Conference agendas for the October and November 2008 meetings. The Management Conference members will review the proposals and subcommittee rankings for consistency with the RFP and CHNEP objectives for these grants. The RRPP FY09 awards will be announced November 18, 2008 and projects will commence in January 2009, to be completed by September 30, 2010.

**MR. RYAN MOVED AND MR. STONE SECONDED TO RECOMMEND
POLICY COMMITTEE APPROVE THE RESEARCH AND
RESTORATION PARTNER PROGRAM PROPOSAL RANKING AND
FUND PROJECTS ACCORDING TO RANKING. THE MOTION
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**



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Agenda Item #8. Public Outreach Grant Guidance Document for FY10 – Maran Hilgendorf

The FY10 Public Outreach Grant application guidance document has been prepared and is provided for Management Conference review. Members of the CAC Grants Committee provided thoughtful comments and improvements to the Guidance Document.

This guidance document is very similar to the documents prepared for FY09 and FY08 funding. Because the FY10 workplan is not yet approved, the budget for public outreach grants as stated in this guidance document is that it is “anticipated to be \$30,000.”

<u>Action Items</u>	<u>FY09 Schedule</u>
Approve grant guidance document	October-November 2008
Post guidance, announce in <i>FL Administrative Weekly</i> , promote grants	December 2008
Deadline for draft applications for staff review	September 2, 2009
Deadline for final applications for committee members’ review	September 14, 2009
Grant Committee meeting	by October 6, 2009
CAC meeting	October 21, 2009

Public Outreach Grant applications are reviewed by the CAC Grants Committee, followed by the CAC and approved by the Program Director. Projects may begin once a contract is signed and notarized by both the applicant and SWFRPC, the CHNEP’s host agency.

A summary of Public Outreach applications and Technical proposals received and supported each year to date is provided on the next page.

MS. GARCIA MOVED AND MR. STEVENS SECONDED TO RECOMMEND POLICY COMMITTEE APPROVE FY10 PUBLIC OUTREACH GRANT GUIDANCE DOCUMENT. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #9. Lemon Bay Fisheries Independent Monitoring Project – Judy Ott

The purpose of the Lemon Bay Fisheries Independent Monitoring Project is to provide the CHNEP with fishery species and size class information for Lemon Bay, which has not been available to date. The data will assist the CHNEP with implementing the CCMP, especially Priority Action FW-F to restore and protect a balance of native animal communities and Environmental Indicator Gap FW-d fish community composition for Lemon Bay. The project will expand the FWRI Fisheries Independent Monitoring



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Program into Lemon Bay, consistent with the other coastal areas of the CHNEP study area.

The cost of the monitoring project depends on the frequency of sampling and type of gear used, which determines the quality, quantity and usability of data collected. Expansion of the statewide Fisheries Independent Monitoring methods into Lemon Bay would require monthly sampling using 2 net styles and would provide data on species type, distribution, seasonality, habitat affinities and response to changes in freshwater inflow. The cost would be \$84,000 per year. Reducing the frequency of the large seines to quarterly would provide similar species information, except data on large fishes would be reduced to quarterly and the project cost would be reduced to \$76,000 per year. Using all gear, but reducing the sampling frequency to bi-monthly would provide some basic species information, but may not be sufficient to develop species distributions, seasonality, population trends or responses to freshwater inflows. The cost of bi-monthly sampling would be \$42,000 per year. All six major tributaries leading into Lemon Bay are in this budget. River/creek mouths are typically important habitats for juvenile fishes.

FWRI would also include a comprehensive annual report that summarizes data from the FIM study area. The report will include a summary of overall sampling effort, species composition, and abundance from the study area and more detailed data summaries (e.g., catch rates, size distribution, and spatial and temporal distribution) for more abundant species and species of economic importance. The report will also include comparisons of catch rates, species composition, and fish abundances within and among various FIM program study areas, and it will provide summarized FIM data for use by researchers within FWRI as well as those working for outside agencies

A draft Scope of Work for the Lemon Bay Fisheries Independent Monitoring Project is attached. The FY08 budget includes \$35,000 available for research and monitoring relating to filling environmental indicators gaps. Sarasota County has verbally committed to contributing the remaining \$7,000 to implement the project in order to supplement data needed for their report card. SWFWMD will need to approve the project in order to utilize funds committed to CHNEP.

Ms. Donley stated on page 84 of 90 under the Final Report the month should be changed to "Month 13."

Mr. Cheatham asked if there is an adequate water quality monitoring program. Ms. Ott responded.

**MR. STONE MOVED AND MS. STAUGLER SECONDED TO
RECOMMEND POLICY COMMITTEE APPROVE SCOPE OF WORK
AND CONTRACT WITH FWRI FIM TO CONDUCT LEMON BAY
FISHERIES INDEPENDENT MONITORING PROJECT AS A SOLE**



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**SOURCE CONTRACTOR. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH MS.
GARCIA ABSTAINING.**

Agenda Item #10. Reservoir Workshop Planning Update – Judy Ott

The FY09 workplan includes \$24,000 for a technical 2-3 day Reservoir Workshop and \$3,000 for a 1-day public workshop.

The workshops further the goals of the CCMP, especially Priority Action HA-K which states the need to identify the hydrologic and environmental impacts of surface water reservoirs on estuaries within the watershed. The workshops will focus on the cumulative impacts of multiple reservoirs relating to public water supply, storm water management, mining and recreation, emphasizing the different needs in different areas of the watershed. It is anticipated that the findings of the technical workshop will be peer reviewed.

Members of the CAC and TAC have been solicited for participation in the TAC's Reservoir Workshop subcommittee. The Reservoir Workshop Subcommittee meeting will be held late 2008 to finalize objectives, formats and topics for the technical workshop and identify potential speakers. Draft agendas will receive final approval from the Policy Committee at their March 2009 committee meeting.

Agenda Item #11. TAC Report

Mr. Ryan gave the TAC Report which contained the Caloosahatchee Plan, the Reservoir Workshop and the NPDES Permits.

Ms. Donley explained that she understands that the NPDES Permit is already a rule, but it hasn't been enforced in this way.

Ms. Garcia stated that the Tampa Bay NEP will be discussing the NPDES issue next Monday since they have a big ambient monitoring program.

Mr. Blanchard explained that as of two weeks ago FDEP accepts ambient monitoring.

Agenda Item #12. CAC Report

Ms. Hilgendorf gave the CAC Report:

- The CAC decided to hold quarterly meetings w/special meetings on an as needed basis.
- CCMP is at the printers.
- Micro-grants need to be completed within the year of funding (fiscal year).



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- Release Date of the CHNEP 2009 Calendar.
- Public Outreach Grants.

Agenda Item #13. ABM Report

Dr. Beever gave the ABM Report.

Agenda Item #14. NEP Program Report – NEP Staff

Ms. Hilgendorf reviewed the following:

- Sustainable Communities Conference
- Professional Development Workshop Scheduled for December 12th
- 2nd Edition of the Children's Book
- Harbor Happenings November 15th Deadline
- Poster Centerfold
- 9th Annual Festival Scheduled for November
- National Estuaries Days

Dr. Beever reviewed the following:

- Caloosahatchee River Watershed Plan Letter
- Statewide Land Area Management Map
- Restoration Projects in the Watershed Since 2000

Ms. Donley reviewed the following:

- Legislative Subcommittee
- Meeting with Representative Trudi Williams on November 10th
- FDEP South District Federal Earmark Funding

Ms. Ott reviewed the following:

- Florida Scientist Publication
- Lemon Bay Watershed
- HDR Contract for the Peace River

Agenda Item #15. Member Comments – Members announce upcoming events or current issues

Ms. Garcia announced that the SWFWMD Cooperative Funding process closes on December 1st.

Ms. Staugler stated that she is excited about the Lemon Bay project.



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Mr. Stevens announced that Conservation Charlotte had purchased 1,603 acres for preservation.

Agenda Item #16. Public Comments

None.

Agenda Item #17. Next Meeting's Topics, Location and Date

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 27, 2009 in Wauchula and topics of discussion are: RRPP Project Selection and Shoreline Mapping Deliverables.

Agenda Item #18. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:27 p.m.