

**Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**
Approved Minutes of the Wednesday, July 15, 2009 Meeting
South Florida Community College ~ Arcadia, Florida

Attendance of Voting Members

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Debra	Highsmith	ECOSWF: Environmental Confederation of South West Florida
Rene A	Janneman	Sarasota County
Stefan	Katzaras	CF Industries
Ernesto	Lasso de la Vega	Lee County Hyacinth Control District
Kaley	Miller	Mosaic Fertilizer
Kayton	Nedza	Hardee County Outdoor Classroom
Ellen	Peterson	Sierra Club and Estero Bay ABM
John G.	Phillips	Florida Master Naturalist Program
Harry	Phillips	Cape Coral ERD
Frances	Reimondo	San Marco Waterways
Kathleen	Rohrer	Lee County resident
George	Ruby	Peace River Audubon Society
Kevyn	Schweim	Coastal Wildlife Club
Thomas	Simmons	DeSoto County resident
Alfred	Yeno	U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Susan	Barton	Hardee High School
Bill	Dixon	
Anita	Forester	DeSoto Schools Outdoor Classroom
Carol	Mahler	

Hardee County Summer Marine Science students in attendance include Brian, Desirae, Lucy, Julian, Dana, Yesenia, Hannah, Josh, Payton, Mary and Magali.

Lisa Beever	Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Maran Hilgendorf	Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program
Judy Ott	Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Nedza called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Ms. Keen welcomed everyone to the SFCC campus and offered the facilities for others to use. She also welcomed the students at Hardee County EcoCamp and encouraged them to explore the environmental and marine biology programs offered by SFCC. Everyone in attendance then introduced themselves.

Ms. Highsmith reported that there is a quorum of appointed members. She presented CHNEP padfolios to Mr. Yeno, Mr. Phillips and Mr. Simmons who are CAC members with voting rights who had not yet received one.

Mr. Nedza announced the sad news that Ms. Joan Bush passed away unexpectedly. Both Joan and Warren Bush have been major contributors to the work of the CAC. Everyone was then given an opportunity to sign a sympathy card that will be mailed to Mr. Bush.

Agenda Item 2: Agenda Review

Ms. Highsmith asked that consent agenda items b, c and d be pulled and wished to add public interest scope of work as 4f.

Ms. Rohrer asked for clarification based on an article in the *Harbor Happenings* on CHNEP intent to review comprehensive plans and environmental impact statements. She asked that it be added to the agenda as 4g.

Agenda Item 3: Consent Agenda

Mr. Rohrer moved, seconded by Ms. Peterson, the approval of consent agenda item a. The motion carried unanimously. Agenda items approved include:

- a. CHNEP Citizens Advisory Committee minutes of the April 22, 2009 meeting.**

Ms. Highsmith reviewed her understanding and concerns that 3b and 3d are updates of previous studies. Item 3c compares water quality data collected by agencies and volunteers with optical models for seagrasses. Ms. Highsmith said that she wasn't able to find a table of contents and got lost in the reports. Ms. Highsmith said that she wants to be sure the information can be translated for the public. Mr. Lasso de la Vega asked that this requirement be incorporated into each contract.

Director Beever said that the TAC will meet again to review the report in more detail. Ms. Ott said the TAC wants to review the report again because it is so comprehensive and needs a very careful review, including the optical models that are based on Ms. Catherine Corbett's work.

Mr. Yeno said he read the entire packet and asked that information be prepared in a different way for the CAC to consider.

Mr. Lasso de la Vega said that it is necessary to have all the information in the meeting package.

Mr. Simmons said that he also doesn't necessary understand everything but when he does need to defend it, he wants to have the information available to him.

Director Beever said that the Program has made a commitment to make all information understandable and meaningful.

Ms. Hilgendorf said that because members of the CAC are often citizens who don't necessarily have fast access to the Internet or wish to incur the expense of printing so much of the packet, the committee opted to provide the agenda packet to each voting member. If members wish, they can request that a copy not be sent to them but can instead review the packet after it is posted on the website.

Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Mr. Yeno , the approval of the consent agenda items b, c and d. The motion carried unanimously. Agenda items approved include:

- b. Water Quality Targets Refinement Seagrass Targets**
Action Item: Recommend acceptance of seagrass targets prepared by Janicki Environmental.
- c. Water Quality and Seagrass Report**
Action Item: Recommend acceptance of report prepared by the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves.
- d. Water Quality Status and Trends Scope of Service**
Action Item: Recommend acceptance of scope of service.

Agenda Item 4a: Special Presentation

Ms. Peterson thanked Ms. Mahler for writing a wonderful children's book that helps readers better understand the natural environment through the story of four native animals. The CHNEP began distributing the book through the seven school districts in the 2007-8 school year. Ms. Mahler was presented with the Diane Pierce osprey print that had been commissioned by CHNEP. The print had been signed, matted and framed.

Agenda Item 4b: Nomination of Members

Mr. Nedza introduced Ms. Sandra Beardsworth (now Simmons) for nomination as a voting member of the CAC.

Ms. Highsmith moved, seconded by Mr. Katarus, the approval of the nomination of Ms. Simmons. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Highsmith reminded members that a blank application is included in the packet. Mr. Katarus asked if there is a need for members. Ms. Peterson said that we need more voting members of the CAC.

Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Mr. Katzarus, the approval of the meeting schedule with the calendar meeting to be held on the September 8, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4c: Interpretation of Bylaws

Ms. Highsmith explained that the bylaws are meant to interpret the time period by months and not to the day or date. Attendance has to be at a regular, official meeting.

Mr. Schweim moved, seconded by Ms. Rohrer, the interpretation of the bylaws. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4d: Reservoir Workshop

Mr. Nedza explained that the CAC expressed concern about reservoirs at the January 2008 meeting

A two-day workshop was held April 13-14, 2009, to address a concern initiated by the CAC. The workshop addresses a priority action in the CHNEP *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) Update 2008*. The priority action (HA-K) identifies the hydrologic and environmental impacts of surface water reservoirs on estuaries within the watershed. The workshop provided a forum for the exchange of technical information between scientists and citizens about the location, design, benefits and impacts of existing and proposed reservoirs on freshwater, estuarine and groundwater water quality, hydrology and habitats within the CHNEP study area.

A Reservoir Workshop Subcommittee helped develop the workshop purposes, structure and agenda. Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium assisted with planning, facilitating and reporting the results of the workshop. Johnson Engineering developed pre-workshop background materials. Three reviewers -- Dr. Ernst Peebles from USF, Mr. Arturo Torres from USGS and Dr. Sam Upchurch from SDI Environmental Services, Inc. -- assisted with interpreting workshop presentations. Ms Cynthia Barnett gave the key note presentation. The Workshop included six sessions, 26 presentations, six facilitated discussions and acceptability ratings of peer reviewer conclusions and participant observations by workshop participants. Approximately 145 people attended the workshop, representing local, state and federal agencies, universities, research institutions, citizens, industries and environmental organizations. The report summarizes the purposes, presentations, facilitated discussions, peer review conclusions and workshop participant observations for each of the six sessions. It also includes workshop participants' ratings of the acceptability of the key points from each session.

Workshop Participants identified the following actions essential to implementing Priority Action HA-K:

- Clarify definitions and complete an inventory of the numbers, types and locations of current, proposed and possible reservoirs and related storage facilities within the CHNEP.

- Coordinate agency efforts from a watershed perspective during siting, assessment and permitting of reservoirs, including cumulative demographic, economic, political, legal, public safety and environmental factors.
- Further explore the “eco-reservoirs” concept.
- Enhance interagency coordination of reservoir management using improved models and more monitoring data, and in some cases conducting special studies to assess performance.
- Give greater consideration to climate change and its effects.
- Assure unbiased technical reviews of findings regarding reservoirs, possibly using a National Research Council Panel approach.
- Agree that reservoirs can provide ecosystem benefits and meet human needs if properly sited, designed and managed.

Mr. Taylor with Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium had been hired by CHNEP to help facilitate the workshop joined the meeting by conference call. He congratulated the members at raising the concern then provided an overview of the report.

Ms. Highsmith said that the CAC discussed the workshop at the April CAC meeting and decided to wait for the final report before recommending next steps. She believes that the report is “spot on,” including the summary of actions needed and we’re ready for next steps. She would like added to the summary:

- Aggressive water conservation programs that was mentioned by Cynthia Barnett.
- Expand the second bullet with the big hit concerns, including watershed-perspective, cost-benefit analysis and economic costs.
- It is imperative to include the USGS in all future actions

Mr. Yeno said he read the report and thought it was fine.

Ms. Ott summarized comments to the report that she summarized. She provided 10 copies that were then distributed.

- Benefits and impacts
- Capture all next steps
- Instead of providing a median of the rankings the actual number of votes will be provided.

It was decided that comments made to the report will be added as an appendix to the report.

Ms. Rohrer said she believes it is important to include a statement that a discussion of reservoirs was the impetus but that there was hope that it would also cover alternatives to reservoirs. She would like the report to state it is a first step and additional actions will follow.

She wants to be sure that care be given in sequencing “next steps” as ordering often influences the consideration given to each element and would like added:

- Perform a study to evaluate the natural storage capacity of the watershed, recognizing it is more cost effective to avoid impacts than to repair them.
- Consider non-mechanical alternative water storage options such as land preservation before electing costly, intrusive methods that require construction activities.
- Expand purpose to include wildlife management when selecting methods for water management.
- Identify primary water users to engage them in conservation discussions.

Ms. Highsmith then provided Ms. Giles comments that was unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Giles asked that “the U.S.G.S. should play a more “hands on” role. The decision to dewater the State of Florida shouldn’t be left solely in the hands of counties, cities or municipalities in the Peace River local.”

Ms. Ott believes one of the next steps might be to engage staff in a discussion involving different levels in the agencies in a discussion to further this idea and would tie together MFL, permits for water use, etc.

Ms. Highsmith said that she believed from the agency presentations that cumulative impact was punted to others and no one wanted to touch it.

Mr. Taylor suggested that bringing the agencies together might be able to be done if there’s a reason, such as permits for a new reservoir.

Mr. Nedza thanked Mr. Taylor for his good work.

Members were then asked to provide any additional comments to CHNEP by Monday, July 20.

Ms. Peterson moved, seconded by Ms. Rohrer, the approval of the report with incorporation of comments made by members. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4f: Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve (CHAP) Public Interest Projects Scope of Work

Ms. Highsmith asked for clarification of this item included in summary notes from the July 8, 2009 TAC meeting. Ms. Highsmith said when an environmental resource permit is granted then damage to resources usually has to be mitigated. When the project occurs in the aquatic preserves, the project must be clearly in the “public interest.” It’s the DEP that decides if a project is in the public interest. She was concerned about the agency regulating and serving to gain by receiving funds. She wants to be sure that there is no conflict. She received an explanation from Ms. Ott and Ms. Donley and is still nervous about this project and doesn’t want CHNEP to be used to funnel funds for projects in the “public interest.”

Director Beever said that this was raised at the last CAC meeting for this project for work on the marina at Best Western in downtown Punta Gorda. DEP proposed that the \$100,000 be used to implement projects that fulfill the CHNEP CCMP. A former DEP staff person would be hired on a contract basis. The work includes quality assurance for water quality monitoring, benefits of land acquisition and evaluate salinity indicators of rivers CHNEP would receive some funds to help implement unfunded projects.

Ms. Peterson questioned whether this is ethical.

Ms. Highsmith asked if this is a precedent setter and Director Beever said that this is the first time. She believes future acceptance would be done on a case-by-case basis.

Director Beever said that it is legal but Ms. Peterson said that it might be legal but it not be morally correct.

Ms. Rohrer said she interprets this as akin to the tobacco industry funding cancer research and she recommends that the CAC recommend a policy be developed and adopted that clarifies conditions for accepting funds for public interest projects stemming from FDEP permits.

Ms. Highsmith said that she would like an opportunity to comment on all such projects and supports Ms. Rohrer's suggestion to develop a policy on the ethics of when and from whom funds are accepted.

Director Beever said that a policy of when to accept funds and conditions will be considered during the next cycle of meetings.

Mr. Nedza asked that staff research how the other NEP programs handle this.

Ms. Rohrer asked that nonprofit response be researched.

Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Ms. Highsmith, to recommend the development and adoption of a policy regarding the acceptance of public interest funding. The motion carried unanimously.

The other committees may also wish to develop suggestions.

Agenda Item 4g: Comprehensive plans (added to agenda)

Ms. Rohrer was thrilled to read the article in *Harbor Happenings* that CHNEP will be involved in comprehensive plans and environmental reports. She then said that Charlotte County is updating its comp plans. While citizens have a say, she believes that CHNEP have more impact since it represents a partnership.

Director Beever said that this is part of the workplan so staff will do this.

Ms. Rohrer moved, seconded by Ms. Highsmith, that CHNEP staff be highly participatory in reviewing Charlotte County comprehensive plan development. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5: Report from Officers

No report was made.

Agenda Item 6: Committee Reports

No additional reports were made.

Agenda Item 7: Program Reports

Director Beever presented items a-d and Ms. Hilgendorf presented items e-j.

- (a) Deliverables from April 1 to June 22, 2009.
- (b) CHNEP sent a letter about the Lower Peace River and Shell Creek Minimum Flows and Levels to SWFWMD. The agency did extend the deadline and will provide a more detailed review of the draft report when ad hoc committee will be created to more carefully review the report.
- (c) Director Beever created an estuarine turbidity maximum illustration. Members can send any comments to her.
- (d) The coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network annual review was conducted by Ms. Ott. Neither SFWMD or Sanibel will be able to continue to financially support this effort.
- (e) CHNEP calendar: The deadline to submit images for consideration in the 2010 calendar is July 14, 2009. The entries will be posted on the website at www.CHNEP.org so the public can help select the entries included in the 2010 calendar.
- (f) CHNEP newsletter *Harbor Happenings*: The 16-page summer 2009 issue was mailed to 7,597 subscribers in late June. An additional 3,000 copies are available for distribution by centers, libraries and at events. The newsletter is translated into Spanish and posted on the website.
- (g) CHNEP website: The CHNEP has had a website for many years now. These statistics are the most popular sites visited in the last three years.

	2009 (as of 5/13/09)	2008	2007	2006
CHNEP	11,487	23624	20405	18942
Grants	4821	14336	13470	11400
Water conservation facts	1721	4014		
Economic fact sheet (PDF)	1610	4212	2028	
Reservoirs	1088			
Materials/request form	1030	2435	6594	3832
CCMP	893	2697	1496	1601
2006 Cape Coral conference report (PDF)	888			1114
NEP	818	2591	2099	2046
Events	694	1916	1274	1316
Benthic study	684	2014		
Grants	661			
Calendar	630	2765	1837	1509

NEP meetings	628	1915	1306	1174
Micro-grants	588	1573		
Study area	570	1539	1567	1878
Management Conference	569	1626	1482	1517
Gopher tortoise activity book (PDF)	563			
Environmental updates	543	1855		
Children's book	537			
Climate ready estuaries	528			
Charlotte Harbor Nature Festival		4239	3048	1199
Harbor Happenings		1919	1509	975
Links to partners		1572	1236	1110
CDOM			1608	
Florida-friendly			1357	
Harbor Happenings Spanish				1319
Maps				1256

(h) CHNEP videos: CHNEP now has copies of DVDs that include *all* the videos CHNEP has produced. The DVD will be given to those featured in the videos, Management Conference members, libraries (to loan) and as requested! The shorter videos are also posted on You Tube. CHNEP videos include:

- *Neighbor-to-Neighbor Florida-Friendly Landscaping*, 27 minutes, 2008
- *Neighbor-to-Neighbor Florida-Friendly Landscaping*, 10 1-minute videos, 2008 (All 10 are in this one file.)
- *Where Rivers Meet the Sea: Estuaries*, 2 minutes, 2006
- *Where Rivers Meet the Sea: Watersheds*, 2 minutes, 2006
- *Where Rivers Meet the Sea: Animals*, 2 minutes, 2006
- *Where Rivers Meet the Sea: Seagrasses*, 2 minutes, 2006
- *Where Rivers Meet the Sea: Mangroves*, 2 minutes, 2006
- *Boating and Seagrasses*, 8 minutes, 2006
- *What's an Estuary? Now you Know*, 7 minutes, 2003 – produced by the Association of National Estuary Programs
- *Network of an Estuary: Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program*, 8 minutes, 2002
- *Network of an Estuary: Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program*, 28 minutes, 2002
- *Keep it Picture Perfect*, 30 seconds, 2002

(i) FY09 Target Audience – Virtual Wading Trip: CHNEP is again partnering with WGCU to produce a “virtual wading trip” video (no more than 30 minutes) and a series of short interstitials (likely at least seven 1- to 2.5-minute spots) for \$20,435 using funds in the workshop approved June 2009 for FY09 funds. This is the same successful format we had for the *Neighbor-to-neighbor Florida-friendly* videos. Because the best time to shoot footage is March-May, these won't be completed until next summer.

(j) FY09 Strategic Communication Plan Implementation: A fourth of all recreational boating activity in the U.S. is in Florida and at least a fifth of the population engage in recreational fishing. Some enjoy the estuaries themselves and others enjoy the bounty created as a result of the estuaries. The next audience CHNEP will “target” are those who most use our estuaries – boaters, recreational and commercial

fishermen, and industries that support these activities. To accomplish this, CHNEP is developing a contract with Charlotte County for Roger DeBruler to further develop partnerships between CHNEP and these organizations. The current workplan includes \$12,000 of FY09 funds dedicated to reach a target audience. This project will include:

- Introduction of CHNEP to the organization and its members.
- Overview of the management plan and the concerns that most directly affect these water users.
- Overview of the projects and products CHNEP has already produced, including *Harbor Happenings*, CHNEP calendars, Seagrasses and boaters video and boaters guides.
- Creation of a database of contacts for CHNEP to include boating clubs, marinas, commercial harvesters, angling clubs, etc.
- Creation of a bibliography of studies and reports that pertain to these audiences or to the CHNEP study area.
- Development of an online survey to further strengthen these vital partnerships and identify common ground and projects that will be mutually beneficial.
- Initiation of select projects identified in the survey.

Agenda Item 8: Member Comments

Mr. Yeno asked for new member membership packets.

Mr. Phillips said that Charlotte County is offering Master Naturalist programs.

Ms. Rohrer said that Science & Environment Council of Sarasota County held the third of a continuing series of workshops started in 2004 which are designed to influence public policy on environmental issues. One outcome of prior workshops was development of the Sarasota County Fertilizer Ordinance. The most recent workshop focused on Low Impact Development. For further information, visit www.secsc.org.

Ms. Reimondo said that she had a panther cross her property in Harbour Heights!

Agenda Item 9: Public Comments

No comments were made.

Agenda Item 10: Upcoming Meetings

In 2009, the CAC will meet September 2 to develop calendar and October 21, both in Fort Myers. Members would like both the tour and presentation at the Six Mile Cypress Slough

Agenda Item 11: Adjourn

Mr. Beever presented the climate ready estuaries vulnerabilities assessment report. The work is supported as a grant from EPA Climate Ready Estuaries effort. The report and presentation are available on the CHNEP website and FTP site. A database was developed by CHNEP and a web-based library is being developed of the material referenced in the report.

Ms. Rohrer said that it would be valuable to make this information available to counties as they develop comprehensive plans and to other agencies engaged in planning activities.

Mr. Janneman asked who funded the project. Mr. Beever said that it was a grant from EPA with match from both CHNEP and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. The project started before stimulus funding was available.

Mr. Beever said that the work is already being used by others and Director Beever said that this is the start of several other projects, including an analysis of salt marshes.

Mr. Ruby moved, seconded by Ms. Reimondo, the acceptance of the report. The motion carried unanimously.

People can submit comments to Mr. Beever.

Agenda Item 12: Adjourn

The meeting concluded at 12:40.

Agenda Item 13: CHNEP strategic communication plan

Members stayed for a post-meeting session scheduled from 1:30 to 3:00 to further the CHNEP strategic communication plan.

The CHNEP is developing a strategic communication plan to accompany the *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)*, the 20-year plan to protect the environment from Venice to Bonita Springs to Winter Haven. The session included an overview of best practices, a brand emotion generating exercise and development of a communication mission with values and expected behaviors. The session will be led by Dr. Chris Wright-Isak who is a professor of marketing at FGCU. However, before she joined the faculty she spent 20 years at BBDO and then Young & Rubicam in New York helping develop brand communications strategies and integrated marketing programs for brands like GE, DuPont, Unilever and Colgate. Her role was to conduct qualitative and quantitative research and then help managers use the findings to develop communications. She has facilitated many executive brainstorming and planning sessions over the years. Her PhD is in sociology where her doctoral research at the University of Chicago investigated how communities from small towns to urban neighborhood thrive and adapt to challenges. Her work with us combines these experiences and will help us build on what we have done to date.

The CHNEP received \$15,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2006 to develop a strategic multi-year communication plan for communicating with, education and engaging the public that accounts for the unique characteristics, structure and goals of the CHNEP. This plan is to supplement the program's *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan*. The Plan will include assessments, inventories and process development to position the CHNEP to be able to evaluate current and future projects to reach identified target audiences using the method and message that best fits each

circumstance. It will incorporate social marketing concepts as research has found that information campaigns may enhance knowledge or alter attitudes but they don't necessarily change behavior. Social marketing involves identifying barriers to sustainable behavior, designing a strategy, piloting the strategy and evaluating the impact once it has been implemented across a community. The plan may include but is not limited to image/branding and materials development, outreach, education, community involvement, media relations, marketing and behavior change endeavors.