



Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program  
Management Committee  
Approved Minutes May 1, 2009  
Port Charlotte, Florida

**Members Present:**

Eric DeHaven	SWFWMD
Renee Duffy (for Jennifer Nelson)	FDEP
Joy Hazell	Florida Sea Grant – Lee County
David Hutchinson	SWFRPC
Keith Kibbey (for Roland Ottolini)	Lee County
Mike Kirby	Bonita Springs Community Development
Jack Merriam	Sarasota County
Heather Stafford	Estero Bay Buddies
Andy Stevens	Charlotte County Environmental & Extension Service
Sam Stone	Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority
Charles Vavrina	Florida Extension South Central Region
Elizabeth Wong	City of North Port
Lisa Beever	CHNEP
Liz Donley	CHNEP
Maran Hilgendorf	CHNEP
Deborah Kooi	SWFRPC
Judy Ott	CHNEP

**Agenda Item #1 - Call to Order and Introductions** – Meeting was called to order by Dave Hutchinson, Co-Chairman at 9:31 a.m. Introductions were made.

**Agenda Item #2. Agenda Additions or Deletions** – David Hutchinson, Co-Chairman

**THE AGENDA WAS APPROVED AS PRESENTED BY GENERAL CONSENT.**

**Agenda Item #3 – Public Comments on Agenda Items** – David Hutchinson, Co-Chairman

No public comments were made at this time.

**Agenda Item #4 – Management Committee May 1, 2009 Minutes**

**MR. KIRBY MOVED AND MR. KIBBEY SECONDED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 1, 2009. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **Agenda Item #5 – FY 10 Workplan Discussion**

The FY10 Workplan (October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010) and amendment of the FY 09 Workplan is included in this packet for the Management Conference to consider. Once approved by the Management Conference, it will modify the budget for the balance of FY 09, likely as of July 1, 2009 and FY 10 to conclude September 30, 2010.

Management Recommendations from the Report:

- Motion to recommend Policy Committee approve the FY 10 Workplan

Dr. Beever presented this agenda item. She stated that there had been significant trim to the budget as some of the CHNEP's local partners had not been able to carry on with the funding (Polk County and the City of Venice).

Mr. DeHaven of the SWFWMD said that after the Water Management District funds are used, there should be \$15,000 for other research and projects available.

Dr. Beever said that the CHEC website cost might be more than \$30,000 for retooling. The NEP will be demanding more of CHEC than the NEP has in the past and that by next March there will be an estimate available of the ongoing costs. This year will be more of an investment in the website.

Ms. Wong of the City of North, Mr. Stone of the Peace River Manasota Water Supply Authority and Mr. DeHaven of the SWFWMD arrived.

Dr. Beever asked the members that had recently arrived to introduce themselves.

Mr. Kirby asked about the role of the Management Committee.

Ms. Beever explained the CHNEP Management Conference is made up of the Citizen Advisory Committee; Technical Advisory Committee which consists of scientists and planners; Management Committee which consists of resource managers which actually manage the land and define what they want the CHNEP to do in terms of budget issues; The Policy Committee consists of elected officials and top agency heads whom make decisions based on recommendations from the TAC, scientists and resource managers. The CAC and TAC recommended approval of budget.

**MOTION TO APPROVE BUDGET BY MR. DEHAVEN AND SECONDED BY MR. MERRIAM TO APPROVE THE WORKPLAN. MS. RENEE DUFFY ABSTAINED. MOTION CARRIED.**

## **Agenda Item #6 – FY 07 RRPP “Fate and Transport of Caloosahatchee ETM Sediment” Presentation of Results – David Fugate, FGCU**

Dr. Beever said that Ms. Ott would be presenting this item. Dr. David Fugate provided the CHNEP Program Office with the final report for the “Fate and Transport of Caloosahatchee ETM Sediment” project funded by the CHNEP as a FY07 Research and Restoration Partners grant.

Estuaries trap sediment in high concentrations at localized regions called estuarine turbidity maximums (ETMs) which change location relative to river flows. ETMs provide habitat for planktonic and larval fish and affect dissolved oxygen, mixing and stratification. The Caloosahatchee River has a well developed ETM which migrates many kilometers, flushing into San Carlos Bay during heavy river discharges. The purpose of this project was to investigate the fate and transport of ETM associated suspended sediment in the Caloosahatchee Estuary during heavy freshwater flow. Project objectives were (1) determine at what freshwater flow ETM is flushed out of the Caloosahatchee River; (2) monitor salinity, temperature, stratification and suspended sediment levels over a tidal cycle in San Carlos Bay during high flow and (3) estimate the settling velocity of suspended particles in the water column.

TAC received the report on April 8 and discussed management recommendations. Suggestions included:

- Identify areas of special protection such as significant nursery zones, benthic invertebrate hot spots and nick points where ETMs tend to occur (e.g. at Beautiful Island)
- Manage flows and episodic pulses to support high productivity locations including phytoplankton production
- Manage flows and episodic pulses to reduce detrimental sediment concentrations
- Determine at what flow maximum productivity is generated at appropriate locations and set MFLs and other flows related to the productivity of the nursery zone

In fulfillment of SG-K: Present scientific information in a form readily understood by the majority of people, CHNEP staff has begun developing a conceptual diagram to present ETM causes, effects and processes.

The complete report is available on the CHNEP website ([www.CHNEP.org](http://www.CHNEP.org)) and the CHNEP ftp site. To access the FTP site, go to the Internet the way you usually open it. Type in <ftp://ftp.swfrcp.org> as the address (Don't use http://) The user name is chnep and the password is chnepaccess.

Management recommendations from the report:

- Motion to recommend Policy Committee accept FY 07 RRPP Project “Fate and Transport of Caloosahatchee ETM Sediment” final report.

Ms. Ott presented this item.

Discussion ensued on expansion of sewage treatment and maintenance.

Ms. Wong asked about dissolved solids and where they were found. Ms. Ott said that the dissolved solids were found upriver of Shell Point. Salinity monitoring data suggested that the flow of 150 to 250 parts per second should be strong enough to flush estuarine turbidity maximum, but it was found that

greater flow was needed to accomplish this.

In conclusion, Ms. Ott stated that the organic component of physical sediment was pretty high. At times of lower tide, the ETM is stronger closer to mouth of river. During higher velocity, there was a pool of sediment at Sanibel Causeway and at the mouth of river. Suspended sediments at mouth were not of high concentration and that they settled pretty rapidly once in San Carlos Bay. Freshwater goes downstream and meets the saltwater. There is a relationship between oxygen levels and estuary turbidity.

Mr. Hutchinson asked why additional studies had not been done.

Ms. Ott said that they wanted more information on the relationship of ETM to productivity and light attenuation in San Carlos Bay and seagrasses and they could not determine that information from this study as sediment settled rapidly.

Mr. Hutchinson said that the organic content might have relationship to calcium carbonate.

Ms. Ott said that one of the reasons is that the sediment was lightweight material with high organic compound and high calcium carbonate.

Dr. Beever said that in the CCMP update there are quantifiable objectives and information would be presented in a more understandable way. Dr. Beever reviewed the Estuarine Turbidity Maximum conceptual diagram that she had created and explained it for the benefit of the committee members. She stated that she could animate the diagram if the committee desired so.

Mr. Sam Stone expressed caution and to remember the function of duration – there is interaction occurring in peaks in Charlotte Harbor and when August and September arrive, freshwater slides of the top of saltwater and goes out to Boca Grande. He stated that he has heard people say that high flow is good and kills various species that can't move and it becomes food source later when fish come back up. He said that we should be careful of the conclusion and don't forget duration.

Ms. Ott said that maintaining natural duration depends on natural flow of freshwater while it allows productivity area.

Mr. Kibbey said that casts up and down the channel of the Caloosahatchee are not representative of the whole width of the river.

Ms. Ott said the report said that the most stratification is in shallows near the shore and more mixing is in the depths.

Dr. Beever said that the Management Committee had asked for recommendations from the studies. The TAC had discussion on management recommendations and identified areas of significant nursery zones, hot spots (i.e. Beautiful Island), phytoplankton reduction and managed flows and episodic pulses to reduce detrimental sediment concentrations.

Mr. Kibbey said he would be interested to see a study done in a couple of months regarding quality of

water between wet and dry seasons.

Mr. Hutchinson read the recommended action which was to accept this report.

Ms. Duffy asked if it would include slide/synopsis of managed system.

Dr. Beever said that she could work with her on the conceptual diagram and that she had given the diagram to Dr. Fugate and Dr. Peebles for their refinement and that it would also be sent to the Management Committee for their input as well.

Mr. Vavrina asked who the CHNEP was trying to reach with respect to outreach.

Ms. Hilgendorf said that she would include this in article in the next issue of Harbor Happenings and reference the report on the CHNEP website.

Dr. Beever said that the motion should be for acceptance of report so that Dr. Fugate could be paid.

**MOTION BY MR. KIBBEY AND SECONDED BY MR. MERRIAM TO ACCEPT REPORT. MR. DEHAVEN ABSTAINED.**

Ms. Hilgendorf asked them to reference the CHNEP correctly.

Ms. Donley said that standard language needs to be included.

**MOTION MAKER AND SECONDER AGREED TO ADDING “WITH COMPLIANCE TO CONTRACT AND STANDARD LANGUAGE ADDED” TO THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item #7 – Reservoir Workshop Update – Judy Ott**

The CHNEP hosted a 2-3 day technical workshop to discuss and gain a better understanding of the benefits and impacts of reservoirs within the greater Charlotte Harbor watershed. The workshop was held April 13-15 in Punta Gorda at the Charlotte County Event and Conference Center. The purpose of the Reservoir Workshop was to provide 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 in the CHNEP watershed. The workshop implements the CHNEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) 2008 Update Priority Action;

- HA-K: Identify the hydrologic and environmental benefits and impacts of surface waters on estuaries within the CHNEP watershed.

Workshop Goals included:

- Clarify understanding of what reservoirs are and how they are designed and managed
- Compile locations of existing and proposed reservoirs throughout the watershed

- Exchange technical information on the potential benefits and impacts of reservoirs
- Exchange technical information on alternative reservoir management and designs
- Summarize existing policy, planning and regulatory considerations of reservoirs
- Discuss options to enhance consistency of reservoirs with CHNEP CCMP.

Workshop Format included: background materials to review before attending the workshop, a pre-workshop survey, technical presentations and posters, and a variety of facilitated, interactive activities to allow for exchange of information, ideas, questions and answers between the workshop participants. Expected Workshop Outcomes and Proceedings include:

- Background materials in PDF format is available via the CHNEP website and CD
- Presentations and posters in PDF format will be available via the CHNEP website and CD
- Workshop Document, including summaries of discussions and recommendations for research, monitoring and/or management projects and programs, will be available via the CHNEP website and CD.

The Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium will prepare a summary of the workshop events for review and refinement by the Management Conference.

- Recommendation: None requested

Ms. Ott presented this item and reported that 130 people attended on April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in Punta Gorda. There were 24 presentations and 6 sessions. The six sessions were based on original questions the CAC and Planning Committee had wanted answers to. There were three peer reviewers and the keynote speaker was Cynthia Barnett who wrote “Mirage – Florida, the Vanishing Water”. This workshop gave citizens a new perspective on how there may be other ways to solve our water supply problems collectively. There will be a draft of the final report hopefully available by the end of May.

Ms. Hilgendorf thanked the sponsors and IFAS.

Mr. DeHaven asked what the Citizens’ Advisory Committee’s reactions were to the reservoir workshop.

Dr. Beever said that they wanted to take on the next step. She stated that they have been told that we are developing summary of the workshop and points by reviewers and audience. The CAC has asked for a map of funded reservoirs.

Mr. DeHaven suggested that any maps be peer reviewed through this group and the technical group.

Mr. Kibbey said that the CAC has a huge desire to be more educated and asked if there are other programs to bring the CAC up to speed or other avenues of education.

Dr. Beever said that in conjunction with the CAC, the CHNEP offers field trips and presentations if time allows at the CAC meetings. There have also been invited to the science forum. The CAC rarely gets full presentations of scientific information at regular meetings.

## **Agenda Item #8 – Climate Change projects presentation – Lisa Beever**

In response to CCMP Action SG-Q: Build capacity for communities and their local leadership to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change through joint efforts, EPA has funded two studies through CHNEP, The Regional EPA office in Atlanta funded a Vulnerability Assessment for the area shared by CHNEP and the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC). To build on the work EPA headquarters chose DCHNEP as one of its 6 Climate Ready Estuaries program pilots. This work is to complete an Adaptation Plan for the City of Punta Gorda. SWFRPC staff is doing the bulk of the work in support of the two projects.

In addition, CHNEP staff completed an assessment of the Southwest Florida Feasibility Study (SWFFS) for presentation at the Greater Everglades Ecosystem Restoration conference on behalf of the Southwest Florida Regional Restoration Coordination Team.

As a Climate Ready Estuaries pilot, CHNEP has received much attention both statewide and nationwide. List Beever will present a summary of these efforts.

- Recommendation: No Motion Requested.

Dr. Beever presented this agenda item.

Dr. Beever said that the CHNEP was first to incorporate a climate change element to the CCMP. The CHNEP had received a \$30,000 grant from EPA to address and assess vulnerability in our study area. EPA headquarters offered a pilot program for climate ready estuary. The CHNEP was one of the six pilots and received a lot of attention statewide and nationwide. She stated that she had presented some of the CHNEP's work to the 15<sup>th</sup> Environmental Conference hosted by U of F Law School and had been requested to speak at the Capitol Hills Ocean Week in Washington, D.C. by the National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation.

Dr. Beever reported that the CHNEP is involved with the SWF Feasibility Study and that the CHNEP had done an analysis for the Greater Everglades Ecosystem Conference. The Vulnerability Assessment identifies the three county area basically of our coastal area of CHNEP and Punta Gorda is in the middle of it. Sea level rise is a contentious issue. Least case scenario is 5 inches; moderate case scenario is 9.4 inches and worst case scenarios is 16 inches. The CHNEP has the source material cited in database and the various literature sources used.

The SWFRPC has a long history of disaster planning. Dr. Beever reviewed the storm surge level map which guides decisions in Southwest Florida. The most vulnerable populations are the substandard broad platted lots. Dr. Beever also reviewed the effects on Southwest Florida from Hurricane Charley in 2004, some of which still remains.

Red tide severity is highly correlated with freshwater flows and was a great concern which had been higher than ever before. Mangroves killed on Charlotte Harbor couldn't hold sediment any longer and lot of saltwater turbidity coming off of the mangroves after they were killed and a lot of anoxic bacteria was also growing.

The habitat structure of the Southwest Florida map and regeneration of branching of the mangroves and freshwater wetland systems was discussed by Dr. Beever. Punta Gorda Isles is higher than the historic city using lidar topography. This topography is considered superior. The land level of Punta Gorda looks lower because of averaging.

Discussion of essential adaptation measures ensued. The key measure is the disaster planning, climate change and sea level rise. Discussion ensued on reducing climate stressors.

### **Agenda Item #9 – TAC Report – Greg Blanchard, John Ryan or Elizabeth Staugler, Co-Chairs**

Greg Blanchard, John Ryan or Elizabeth Staugler, TAC Co-Chairs, will present the TAC report.

- Recommendation: No Motion Requested.

Ms. Ott presented this item. The TAC met on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Details of the Reservoir Workshop and the report of the Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve about two water quality monitoring programs for seagrass data. As the document was so comprehensive, the TAC voted for a subcommittee to review this. The subcommittee provided Ms. Ott their comments. She stated that she would provide those to Ray Leary and then he would have a chance to review the comments.

The TAC was provided more technical details of the report of Dr. Fugate and provided an update of the technical project of refining water quality and seagrass based water quality targets. Janicki Environmental is assisting in this review with the help of a subcommittee. Dr. Beever provided an update on the waterways in Charlotte Harbor. The ETM was discussed in more technical terms and the next meeting date will be July 8<sup>th</sup> in Arcadia.

There will be a Science Forum held on June 10<sup>th</sup> in Polk County which will include a tour of the restoration project. The TAC agenda packet is on the website.

### **Agenda Item #10 – CAC Report**

Wilma Katz, Kayton Nedza or Bobbi Rodgers, CAC Co-Chairs, will present the CAC Report.

- Recommendation: No Motion Requested

Ms. Hilgendorf gave the CAC report. The CAC meeting was held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and during that meeting they were given the opportunity to talk about Reservoir Workshop.

In May 2007, of the 32 people appointed to the CAC, six had to resign because of moving out of the area, changes in their employment, etc. We had three new people being nominated. Our next meeting will be July 15<sup>th</sup> at SFCC in Arcadia.

The next meeting in September will have the calendar as the main topic.

Mr. Stone asked if the agricultural community was represented in this group.

Ms. Hilgendorf said that Barbara from Peace River Growers Association was involved up until about a year ago. Currently, there is no one on this board.

Mr. Stone asked if there was anything the CHNEP was doing or could do to get people on this board to be more active.

Mr. Hilgendorf said that the best way was through other people asking them.

Mr. Hutchinson asked if anyone had specific people in mind to serve to let Ms. Hilgendorf know.

Dr. Beever suggested asking Mr. Pierce of the Peace River Growers Association representative.

Mr. Stone suggested asking Barbara or Andy Neuhofer if they knew of someone.

Ms. Hilgendorf stated that she had already asked them.

### **Agenda Item #11 – ABM – Lisa Beever**

Dr. Beever will present the ABM Report and they meet monthly and part of the signing agreement with FGCU and review advocacy positions and things happening with respect to the watershed.

- On March 9, Ms. Mary Gibbs provided an update with respect to rock and earth mining in the DRGR. A moratorium in Lee County was in effect for one year which expired this past September. Prior to the expiration of the moratorium, Lee County was working on a plan as to what would happen with respect to mining in the DRGR. The consulting firm, Dover-Kohl, was hired to work on changes. Lee County staff is presently working on a water model, water budget, etc.
- On April 20, Jim Beever delivered a presentation on the Southwest Florida/Charlotte Harbor Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment funded by EPA through the CHNEP.

- Recommendation: No Motion Requested

Dr. Beever gave the ABM report.

Ms. Gibbs of Lee County Community Development provided update on what permits were moving through the system. On April 20<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Beever gave a presentation on the SW Florida/Charlotte Harbor Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment funded by EPA.

Mr. Hutchinson addressed the issue of resources available to support the Estero Bay Agency for Bay Management which has been done by the SWFRPC with dedicated funding. Some of the funding sources that we have relied on are not what they used to be. This could become an issue in the future with respect to resources available for ABM.

## **Agenda Item #12 – CHNEP Program Report – CHNEP Staff**

Dr. Beever said that the deliverables of between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> are in the packet.

Ms. Ott stated that the CHNEP has been involved with several activities: 1) the Lemon Bay Watershed Management Plan meeting in Englewood on what to do with spreader waterways; 2) Participated in the Ecosystem Watershed Agreement; 3) Reservoir Workshop; 4) Regional Ambient Monitoring Program which is a group of field and lab scientists helping with the monitoring program and 5) The CHNEP is working with Tampa Bay and Sarasota on seagrass targets. Ms. Ott reported that in the next couple of months she would be conducting field audits for the Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network Lemon Bay independent monitoring, beginning fishery sampling and redo of shoreline survey volunteer work in the late summer/fall.

Dr. Beever said that padfolios had been distributed to members of the conference and distributed them to the Management Committee members who wanted one.

Ms. Hilgendorf asked if anyone wanted a copy of the CCMP. She said that a children's book had been created which was able to be distributed through a grant from the Family Foundation. If anyone knows of companies that would be willing to handle books, they should contact Ms. Hilgendorf.

She stated that one of the biggest changes this year was that a story was written to incorporate fire into the book. There is a Spanish translation on the website and detailed maps as well. All of the money went to distribute the books through the school district. We have had several inquiries from the public and have forwarded them to the agencies distributing them. Ms. Hilgendorf stated that the CHNEP was hoping to repeat this experience next year. It has been really positive and we have established a much better relationship with the school district.

Ms. Hilgendorf stated that the only requirement for the 2009 calendar is that the pictures show the natural environment. Ms. Hilgendorf said that this year all of the images are not going to be on the website. If it is mostly exotic or has a message that the CHNEP does not support, it will not be included. The CHNEP asked for donations last year and this year. This year we are exploring different ways for donations.

Ms. Hilgendorf reviewed the last issue of the Harbor Happenings newsletter. The deadline is May 15<sup>th</sup> for newsletter articles for the September issue. She stated that she was always looking for ideas to be added to the newsletter. This issue was expanded to 16 pages with a poster which has been very well received.

The Peace River Environmental Education Network had their last meeting at the Science Forum location. The CHNEP is also a member of the My Florida Management Coordinating Council. At the last meeting, the Council members asked NEP to look at the Management Plan. Next year we will develop plan of attack for this.

Ms. Ott stated that the Science Forum will be held on June 10<sup>th</sup> from 10 to 2 at the Circle B Bar Preserve with restoration project presentations in the morning.

Dr. Beever asked that this be forwarded to the Management & Policy Committees and requested that it be and to send it to her and she would forward it to the members

Ms. Donley spoke about the stimulus package. Joy Hazell and Karen Bickford put together a tool kit which was submitted back at the end of March and expressed her hope that something would be heard soon. They worked with community of Lehigh Acres on the environmental challenges and hazards in their community as to what they feel is the most important. The CHNEP applied to EPA Headquarters for technical assistance and that it looked like we are in line to get technical assistance.

We have heard some positive feedback on the proposal to NOAA for habitat restoration asking for \$8.5 million, but at this point so many are requesting funding. Staff has written up and are awaiting to submit to Dept. of Commerce a proposal to do some additional Climate Ready Estuary work on conceptual models that can assist in identifying infrastructure needs through capital improvement projects. The CHNEP is also working on the Wetlands Program Development Grant.

She also talked about Wet Weather Infrastructure Workshop on July 1-2 hosted by the NEP and RPC held at FGCU. Ms. Donley stated that she hoped to have an agenda within next two weeks with registration online. RPC staff is working on getting sponsorships for refreshments and continuing education credits.

Staff was working on getting traditional grants and grants from the Dept. of Energy at the end of July in which the CHNEP could be partnering with the RPC.

We have received approval of the FY 09 budget last month. Congress has already approved FY 10 budget. Discussion ensued on NEP flat funding and earmarks. Congressman Mack's staff said that he might be a little more open with respect to funding for one of the larger projects.

### **Agenda Item #13 – Member Comments**

Ms. Heather Stafford provided an update on the projects. These projects will be funded with the public interest funding.

Mr. Merriam stated that that Low Impact Development Manual training with folks from other jurisdictions have been coming and we have two more training sessions that could be used for engineers and landscape architects. We have been doing a brown bag luncheon on Mondays with folks offering products and projects for research for anyone that would be interested.

Mr. Kirby said that the newest nature center opens tomorrow in Bonita Springs at 11:00 a.m. on Kent Road and encouraged everyone to spread the word to their friends and acquaintances.

Mr. Stone said that on May 15 from 9 to 1 there is a dedication of completion of an all stream reservoir, facility expansion and with a homestyle barbeque also included.

Ms. Wong asked about the fertilizer workshop in Charlotte County and the blackout periods from June to September and if it was good or bad for the environment.

Discussion ensued on the fertilizer workshop in Charlotte County

Discussion ensued on support of statewide ordinance.

Ms. Wong said that there will be a training session on gopher tortoises on Monday.

Mr. Merriam said that the Tampa Bay Estuary Program had been working with them on possibly sponsoring research. IFAS and the Stormwater Academy have also been invited.

**Agenda Item #14 – Public Comments**

None.

**Agenda Item #15 – Next Meeting’s Topics, Location and Date – Arcadia, 2009**

- **FDEP CHEVWQMN Optical Model Final Report**
- **Water Quality Targets Refinement Segmentation Scheme**
- **Lower Peace River/Shell Creek MFL**

**Agenda Item #16 – Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.