



**CHNEP Technical Advisory Committee Meeting**  
Thursday December 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am – 2:00 pm  
Centennial Park Recreation Center, Large Multipurpose Room  
1120 Centennial Blvd. Port Charlotte, FL 33953

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order and Introductions — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
2. Agenda Additions or Deletions — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
4. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) August 7th, 2025 Meeting Minutes — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
5. CHNEP Update — Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP
6. Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN) SOP and QAPP Updates — Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP
7. CHNEP Monitoring Strategy Updates — Sarina Barnard, CHNEP
8. Loss of Seagrass in Matlacha Pass and the Distribution and Abundance of Macroalgae — Eric Milbrandt, PhD., Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation
9. Understanding Nutrient Loading in a Hydrologically Sensitive Coastal Watershed. The Peace River Watershed, Florida, USA — Rachel Rotz, PhD., Florida Gulf Coast University
10. Tracking Nutrient Dynamics and Habitat Change: The Role of Participatory Science in Florida's Seagrass Meadows — S. Carter Oleckna, Charlotte County and University of Florida
11. CHNEP Technical Projects Updates — Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP
12. TAC Membership Updates — Facilitated by Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
13. Public Comment — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
14. Future Meeting's Topics, Location and Date — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair
  - Upcoming Dates for 2026: 4/9/26, 8/6/26, 12/3/26
15. Adjourn — Arielle Taylor-Manges, Co-Chair

## DIRECTIONS TO MEETING LOCATION

[Centennial Park Recreation Center, 1120 Centennial Blvd. Port Charlotte, FL 33953](#)



### Coming from the North:

1. Take I-75 S to Sumter Blvd (exit 182) in North Port.
2. Follow Sumter Blvd for 8 miles to US Hwy 41 S, then Turn left onto US Hwy 41 S
3. Follow US Hwy 41 S for 4 miles to Centennial Blvd., then Turn right onto Centennial Blvd.
4. Follow Centennial Blvd. ½ mile down, turn **LEFT** into Centennial Park/Pool Parking Lot.
5. Check in at Front Desk and they will direct you to the Large Multipurpose Room

### Coming from the South:

1. Take I-75 N to Kings Hwy in Charlotte County (exit 170)
2. Use the left 2 lanes to turn left onto Kings Hwy (signs for Port Charlotte/Charlotte Sports Pk)
3. Follow for ½ mile, then Use the right 2 lanes to turn right onto Veterans Blvd.
4. Follow for 7 miles, the Turn right onto US Hwy 41 N
5. Follow for 2 miles, then Turn left onto Centennial Blvd.
6. Follow Centennial Blvd. ½ mile down, turn **LEFT** into Centennial Park/Pool Parking Lot.
7. Check in at Front Desk and they will direct you to the Large Multipurpose Room

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*In-person CHNEP TAC meetings have resumed.*

*If you are unable to attend in person or to arrange for an alternate do so, please email Nicole at [niadevaia@chnep.org](mailto:niadevaia@chnep.org) or call (941) 833-6580.*

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1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

After TAC Co-Chair calls the meeting to order, members will introduce themselves.

2. **AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Each participating member of the public is afforded up to 3 minutes total to speak on agenda topics only at this point in the meeting.

4. **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Recommendation:** Approval of the minutes from previous meeting.

**Attachment:** Draft August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 TAC Meeting Minutes.

5. **CHNEP UPDATE**

The following represents program activity highlights since the beginning of the previous Management Conference cycle to the beginning of this one.

Program Administration

- Planned and executed both the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (8/7), Citizens Advisory Committee meeting (8/20), Management Committee meeting (9/5), and Policy Committee meeting (9/25) including lining up presenters, drafting agenda packet, updating Committee webpage, creating PowerPoints, drafting minutes, etc.
- Sent on-boarding materials to new Policy Committee member/co-chair, Craig Hesterlee, representing the EPA (new Policy Committee member), Commissioner Petrina McCutchen representing the City of Fort Meade (new Policy Committee member), Rebekah Harp representing the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (new Management Committee member), County Manager Paul Carlisle representing Glades County (returning Management Committee), Christina Rimes representing the City of Venice (new Technical Advisory Committee member), Kris Ramon representing Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (new Technical Advisory Committee member), Thomas Behlmer representing South Florida Water Management District (new Technical Advisory Committee member), and Ryan Ellis representing Polk County (new Technical Advisory Committee member).
- Reviewed Draft [Program Evaluation](#) Letter, providing feedback responses as requested, and received [Final Program Evaluation Letter](#) indicating CHNEP is “proficient” and will continue to be eligible to receive federal funding.
- Drafted 2026 Amended Master Work Plan and Budget, 2025 ED Annual Evaluation with combined Policy Committee Responses, CHNEP Legislative Priorities, these were approved by CHNEP Policy Committee at 9/25 meeting.
- Welcomed new team member- Conservation Specialist, Michelle McGill who will lead on planning and representing CHNEP at outreach event. Held HR and CHNEP onboarding meetings on start date of 9/10. CHNEP updated outreach onboarding and resource documents in preparation.
- Completed annual staff appraisals and held appraisal meetings with all CHNEP staff.
- Sent fall FY26 invoice letters to CHNEP member counties and cities with the appropriate project and informational fact sheets relevant to their community.

- As a follow up to the 2025 Resiliency Summit in September, CHNEP shared the Summit [playlist on YouTube](#) and the updated [Southwest Florida Resiliency page](#) which now features resources from all past summits, including agendas, speaker biographies, and videos organized by tags for easier public access.

#### Finance and Grants Management

- Updated the [funding opportunities fact sheet](#) and sent out historic funding opportunities notification to all CHNEP Committees about a number of special large state and federal funding opportunities of interest.
- Prepared and submitted FY25 annual End-of-Year reports for both EPA 320 and EPA IJA grants.
- Did FDEP final report and reimbursement request, closing out FY25 grant and receiving full \$75,000 payment.
- Finalized edits to Amended FY2026 CHNEP Work Plan & Budget, these were approved by CHNEP Policy Committee at 9/25 meeting.
- FY26 Agreement for annual programmatic support funds from Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) received CHNEP's host board approval with partial execution on 10/28/25. It was then sent to SWFWMD for full execution.
- Reviewed and processed CHNEP Water Atlas invoice for Task 9: Waterbody Pages Improvements and Task 12: SCCF RECON Data onto Real-Time Data Mapper.
- Reviewed and sent revised invoice from USF for Q4 Water Atlas deliverables for processing.
- Drafted and sent FY2025 Significant Accomplishments for EPA Grants CE-02D41623- 3 and 4T-02D42123-2.
- Provided Charlotte County grants and finance staff with summary of project expenses remaining for FY2025 annual projects to assist with fiscal year close out.
- Prepared and submitted Q4 Report and deliverables for FY25 Agreement for annual programmatic and project support from Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD).
- Completed staff time billed toward programmatic support funding on the FY2025 CHNEP/SWFWMD annual agreement in preparation for fiscal year close out.
- FY2026 Agreement for annual programmatic support funds from Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection was finalized. It is being prepared to be entered into Charlotte County grants process for board approval and then will be sent back to FDEP for full execution.
- Reviewed and sent invoice from field data contractor (FWC) for Q4 Upper Charlotte Harbor WQ Monitoring (CCHMN) for processing.
- Reviewed and sent Q4 Lower Charlotte Harbor WQ Monitoring (CCHMN) invoice from field data contractor (Lee Co) for processing.
- Reviewed and approved Conservation Grant deliverables for the Environmental Conservancy of North Port, afterward received and processed final invoice.
- Reviewed and approved Conservation Grant deliverables and processed invoice for the Myakka River Management Coordinating Council (MRMCC).
- Reviewed and sent invoice for Polk County Project Task 2: Modeling of Additional Flood Scenarios for processing.



- Letters of acknowledgement provided for the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant opportunity for Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, Polk County, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation and Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) and J.N. ‘Ding’ Darling National Wildlife Refuge.
- Letters of support for University of Central Florida, Florida Atlantic University, and Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation for EPA Region 4 Grant Funding.
- Letters of support for Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation RECON and West Florida Coastal Ocean Model (WFCOM) for GCOOS and SECOORA funding.
- Letter of support for USDA Forest Service Trust for Public Land’s Florida Forest Service’s 2027 Forest Legacy grant funding for *Peace River Longleaf Pinelands* land acquisition project.
- Letter of support for funding from the Florida legislature for the Glades County NE Service Area Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Feasibility Study.

CHNEP staff participated in the following meetings:

- ANEP External Affairs Meetings (multiple)
- ANEP Director’s Meetings (multiple)
- ANEP Communications Working Group Meetings (multiple)
- Hardee County-CHNEP Coordination Meetings (multiple)
- DeSoto County-CHNEP Coordination Meetings (multiple)
- Highlands County-CHNEP Coordination Meetings (multiple)
- Polk County-CHNEP Coordination Meetings (multiple)
- CHNEP-Central Florida Regional Planning Council Meetings (multiple)
- Charlotte County Vulnerability Assessment Monthly Meetings (multiple)
- Science & Environmental Council (SEC) Meetings (multiple)
- CHNEP Water Atlas Monthly Meetings (multiple)
- Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods Initiative Meetings (multiple)
- GOAA and Gulf Estuaries Collaboration Meetings (multiple)
- One Water Commission Monthly Meetings (multiple)
- Southwest Florida Regional Ambient Monitoring Program (RAMP) Meetings (multiple)
- WQ Monitoring Project (CCHMN) Field Audits (multiple)
- Lemon Bay Community Workshop Meetings (multiple)
- Southwest FL Estuary Restoration Team (SWERT) Meetings (multiple)
- SW FL Regional Planning Council Meetings (multiple)
- Tiki Point Project Meetings with City of Punta Gorda and FDEP (multiple)
- Silver Jackets Post-Flood Hazard Awareness Project Meetings (multiple)
- Suncoast Waterkeeper Meeting (7/3)
- Big Cypress Basin Board Meeting (7/7)
- SWFWMD Environmental Advisory Committee Meetings (multiple)
- FDEP Grant Reimbursement Back-Up Meeting (7/8)
- GOAA Data & Monitoring Quarterly Meeting (7/8)
- CHNEP – Sarasota County Scope of Work Discussion Meeting (7/9)
- SWFL Resiliency Summit Presentation Discussion (7/14)
- SFWMD Resiliency Partners Flood Information Resource Training (7/14)
- SFWMD C-43 Reservoir Ribbon cutting Event (7/15)
- CCHMN Q3 Deliverables Review Meeting (7/16)

- CHAWG Meeting (7/25)
- CHNEP CAC Calendar Photo Contest Meeting (7/28)
- Glades County initial CHNEP-funded Project Scoping Meeting (7/29)
- CHNEP- Hendry County Vulnerability Assessment Project Meeting (8/8)
- CHNEP Meeting with Lee County Commissioner Brian Hamman (8/8)
- Myakka River Management Coordination Council (MRMCC) Meeting (8/8)
- FLERA Water Resources Committee Meeting (8/12)
- Charlotte County Finance Quarterly Business Meeting (8/22)
- Corkscrew Watershed Initiative Meeting (8/27)
- Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN) Annual Meeting (8/29)
- Florida Sea Grant Advisory & Algae Working Group Meeting (9/2)
- SFWMD Resiliency Coordination Forum (9/3)
- NEPORT IJA Reporting Webinar Meeting (9/3)
- Resilient Florida Rulemaking Workshop Meeting (9/5)
- Florida Wildlife Corridor: Mind the Gaps Workshop Meeting (9/10)
- Hosted 2025 Southwest Florida Resiliency Summit (9/16-9/17)
- Florida Resiliency Conference (9/17-9/19)
- HOBO Data Loggers Meeting (9/18)
- Water Quality Trend Analysis Meeting (9/22)
- FY26 Technical Projects Planning Meeting (10/6)
- Wildlife in Resiliency Plans with Peace River Audubon (10/7)
- CHNEP – Cummins Cederberg Meeting (10/8)
- Bivalve-Seagrass Restoration Consortium Quarter 3 Meeting (10/10)
- SE CASC Bridging the Gap: Steering Committee Meeting (10/10)
- FDEP Acquisition and Restoration Council Meeting (10/10)
- Pine Island Flatwoods Reserve Restoration Project Meeting (10/16)
- Lake Hicpochee Project Phase II Groundbreaking Event (10/21)
- Water Atlas Partners Meeting (10/21)
- Punta Gorda City Council Meeting (presentation) (10/22)
- City of Lakeland & Polk County Coordination Meeting (10/22)
- Southwest Florida Regional Forum Meeting (10/24)
- Data & Monitoring Midyear Meeting (10/29)
- Big Waters Land Trust-Volo Foundation Reporting Meeting (10/28)
- 2025 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop (10/29-10/30)
- C-43 Water Quality Treatment & Testing Facility Project Site Visit (10/29)
- 2025 Florida One Water Summit Meeting (10/30-10/31)

#### CHNEP Staff Presentations

- Presented on the *CHNEP* and *CHNEP Water Atlas* to the Suncoast Reef Rovers.
- Presented on *Leveraging conventional partnerships with novel tools for holistic water quality and ecosystem management* at the 28<sup>th</sup> Biennial Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF) Conference in Richmond, VA.
- CHNEP was the Event Host for the 2025 Southwest Florida Resiliency Summit and staff presented on: *Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessments to Protect Critical Community Assets*, in SESSION 6: New Community Resiliency Initiatives in the Region.

- Presented on the work of CHNEP and co-funded project at the 10/22/25 City of Punta Gorda Council meeting.

#### Publications and Outreach Initiatives

- Sent out monthly Constant Contact emails to subscribers about relevant upcoming public engagement events in the CHNEP area.
- Created a new [speaker request form](#) for those interested in having CHNEP present under a host-preferred software.
- Worked with CHNEP volunteers to host an educational outreach booth at the Wildcat Tailgate Festival, a community event held to kick off the school year in Hardee County. Shared educational materials with over 80 families.
- Held the Photo Contest Voting Meeting with members of the CAC to gather input on selections for the calendar, selecting final photos for the 2026 Calendar design.
- The CHNEP Citizens Advisory Committee meeting included a committee workshop that CHNEP staff planned and facilitated. The workshop was to gather member input on the Role of the CAC, CHNEP Outreach Resources, and to review proposed updates to the CAC Bylaws and the CHNEP ‘Communication and Outreach Strategy’ Documents. CHNEP followed up with members to share resources and coordinate upcoming outreach assistance with committee members.
- Hosted and organized the [2025 Southwest Florida Resiliency Summit](#) held Sept. 16th-17th, 2025.
  - Approximately 150 attendees, including members of the public, scientists, experts from industry, academia, and government with information and ideas on building increased resiliency in Central and Southwest Florida.
  - Created and facilitated interactive question and answer sessions after each panel for audience to interact with the presenters.
  - Advertised through NGOs, WGPU radio ads, and other partners leading up to the event. [Made social media posts before, during and after event.](#)
  - Sent out personalized invitations to all city and county councils/commissions and managers/administrators, as well as federal and state senators and representatives.
  - Coordinated with Blue Arc Engineering, Inc. to provide Continuing Education Hours (CEHs) to professional engineers and geologists who attended the Summit. CHNEP created and filled out certificates for each of the attendees who signed up to earn CEHs and sent certificates out to those individuals to self-report their hours to the Florida Board of Professional Engineers or Florida Board of Professional Geologists.
  - News coverage: [Conferences: Safety in communities tomorrow relies on building resiliency today](#)
- Participated in [National Estuaries Week](#) across CHNEP social media, a collaborative effort led by the National Estuarine Reserves, Restore America’s Estuaries, National Estuary Programs, and National Environmental Education Foundation.
- Provided educational content at a booth at the Miakka Hootenanny in Sarasota County, FL. Over 50 kids and adults stopped by the booth to play games and learn about different fish species adapted for different environments, how to properly measure a fish, and how objects can break down into microplastics.
- Designed new educational activity involving sorting different types of everyday items into the types of microplastics they break down into to be used at future outreach events.

Microplastics are a common water quality pollutant in the CHNEP area based on prior CHNEP microplastic sampling, so working to enhance education on the topic to advance our CCMP goal to improve water quality.

- Provided CHNEP educational materials, including estuary and seagrass informational posters, to Gasparilla Island State Park staff to be placed in their parking lot of the park for interpretive purposes.
- Edited and finalized CHNEP 2026 Nature Calendar design with designer. Met with printer to review scope of the project. Reviewed and approved electronic and hard-copy proofs in advance of printing and mailing.
- Refreshed and reposted CHNEP project factsheets with updated language, organizations, funding sources, and activities as outlined in the new 2025 CCMP.

#### Digital Outreach Insights

- 5,809 subscribers for CHNEP educational mailings
- 2,569 unique visitors and 3,560 page views of CHNEP website since last cycle
- 7 new Instagram followers for a total of 636
- 18 new Facebook followers for a total of 2,053
- YouTube: 17,209 Views (+1.9k), 107 Subscribers (+8), 351 Videos (+15)

#### Media/Press

- [Conferences: Safety in communities tomorrow relies on building resiliency today](#)
- [The Daily Sun 'Women in Water' Feature](#)
- [Opportunities for Resilience of Southwest Florida's Salt Marsh Ecosystem](#)

Jennifer Hecker, CHNEP Executive Director, will be presenting the CHNEP Update.

## **6. COASTAL CHARLOTTE HARBOR MONITORING NETWORK (CCHMN) SOP AND QAPP UPDATES**

The Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network (CCHMN) is a regional partnership of agencies initiated in 2001 that collects monthly water quality data using consistent, technically sound sampling design. Long-term random sampling of strategically located stations allows scientific assessment of status and trends. CCHMN field and laboratory partners collect and analyze water samples from 60 randomly selected field sites throughout 10 waterbodies each month, including Lemon Bay, Cape Haze/Gasparilla Sound, Charlotte Harbor, Pine Island Sound, Matlacha Pass, San Carlos Bay, Estero Bay and the Tidal Myakka, Peace, and Caloosahatchee Rivers. Water quality parameters are measured and analyzed using consistent field and laboratory methods. The data is uploaded by partners to WIN (Watershed Information Network), a public database maintained by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). CCHMN supplements other ongoing water quality monitoring programs implemented by partners, including ongoing fixed station monitoring by counties, cities, agencies, and citizen scientists. The water quality data provided by the CCHMN is an essential component of many water quality assessments and resource management decisions throughout the CHNEP estuarine and tidal waters.

The purpose of this item is to engage the members of the CHNEP TAC to review and discuss updates made to the Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network SOP (Standard Operating Procedures-2025) and Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan-2025). Recent updates were made on an as-needed basis and capture changes to the network structure and strategy, new techniques or quality assurance measures and data formats.



Edits were made by CHNEP staff and CCHMN participating partners. These were discussed at the August CCHMN annual meeting and have been subsequently reviewed by those partners.

CHNEP Director of Research & Restoration Nicole Iadevaia will be presenting this item.

**Attachments:** Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network SOP (Standard Operating Procedures-2025)

Coastal Charlotte Harbor Monitoring Network EPA QAPP (Quality Assurance Project Plan-2025)

**Action:** Review and Consensus on Edits to 2025 Updated CCHMN SOP and EPA QAPP

## **7. CHNEP MONITORING STRATEGY UPDATES**

The 2025 Update to the Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) was reviewed by the CHNEP Management Conference Committees (including TAC) at meetings throughout 2023-2024. The TAC provided feedback on new science and partner programs, and these were subsequently integrated in the 2025 Update to the CHNEP CCMP. This was approved by EPA and adopted by the Policy Committee September 20, 2024 as CHNEP’s guiding document. Several supporting documents which guide implementation of projects listed in the CCMP, including the CHNEP Monitoring Strategy, also require updates to capture the changes made in the 2025 Update. The Monitoring Strategy specifically addresses technical aspects and guidance for how partners are engaging in monitoring and data collection and analysis, as well as covering application of that data to guide management within the CHNEP area.

The purpose of this item is to guide the TAC through updates made to the CHNEP Monitoring Strategy Sections based on the 2025 Update to the CCMP and gather additional comments or consensus on the edits made. Each section in the Monitoring Strategy models the ‘Action Plans’ in the CCMP.

CHNEP Research & GIS Coordinator Sarina Barnard will be presenting on this item.

**Attachments:** Draft 2025 Monitoring Strategy

**Action:** Review and Consensus on Edits to Draft 2025 Monitoring Strategy

## **8. LOSS OF SEAGRASS IN MATLACHA PASS AND THE DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE OF MACROALGAE**

Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation engaged in a project to enhance monitoring and prediction work for Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) events in the lower Pine Island Sound and Caloosahatchee estuaries. For this study, the project team sampled macroalgae and seagrass in Matlacha Pass, Pine Island Sound and San Carlos Bay starting in 2024-2025. This presentation is intended to share the results from the initial biomass analysis, nutrient concentrations after rain events and stable isotope analysis of the macroalgae. This project implements CHNEP’s Water Quality Improvement objectives; specifically, WQ-5 Action 1 to “Support Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) research and monitoring measures to proactively reduce their drivers through the reduction of anthropogenic nutrient pollution and other contributors” and Action 2 to “Support development of methods for early identification of HABs through the use new technologies as well as best practices and technologies to reduce or mitigate their harmful environmental, social, and economic impacts.”

Dr. Eric Milbrandt from Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation will be presenting on this topic.

**9. UNDERSTANDING NUTRIENT LOADING IN A HYDROLOGICALLY SENSITIVE COASTAL WATERSHED. THE PEACE RIVER WATERSHED, FLORIDA, USA**

This presentation will share results from a recent Florida Gulf Coast University study focused on nutrient loading in the Peace River Watershed. Nutrient pollution from anthropogenic activities threatens freshwater and estuarine ecosystems, exemplified by the Peace River Watershed (PRW) in Florida, where excess nutrients fuel harmful algal blooms (HABs) in Charlotte Harbor. This study utilized the Watershed Assessment Model (WAM) to analyze nutrient loading and identify source areas within the PRW, which is crucial for effective mitigation.

Results include annual discharges for total nitrogen and total phosphorus and discussion focuses on nutrient reduction in hotspot areas. This study established a water quality baseline, identified critical source areas, and will help in devising mitigation strategies in the PRW and similar coastal watersheds.

This presentation will be given by Dr. Rachel Rotz from Florida Gulf Coast University.

**Attachments:** Kebedew, M.G., Tsegaye, S., James, A. *et al.* Understanding Nutrient Loading in a Hydrologically Sensitive Coastal Watershed. The Peace River Watershed, Florida, USA. *Environ. Process.* 12, 40 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40710-025-00782-2>

**10. TRACKING NUTRIENT DYNAMICS AND HABITAT CHANGE: THE ROLE OF PARTICIPATORY SCIENCE IN FLORIDA'S SEAGRASS MEADOWS**

Due to the persistence of large-scale marine cyanobacteria and macroalgae blooms throughout Southwest Florida estuaries, a working group of university, municipality, agency and NGO partners convened in 2024. This working group met three times over the course of the last year to assess research needs, discuss current state of the data/identify gaps, and establish next steps for meeting research, management/mitigation and outreach needs.

As an initial step to better understand the macroalgae biomass in upper Charlotte Harbor, Charlotte County and the University of Florida Sea Grant program funded a project to quantify and analyze algae samples collected through the Eyes on Seagrass community science initiative from 2019-2023. This presentation will share some of those initial results as well as highlight the power of participatory science to not only enhance ecological monitoring capacity but also to bridge the gap between data collection and community stewardship. By capitalizing on local knowledge and engagement, the program rapidly addresses emerging ecological phenomena while cultivating informed and proactive conservation advocates. This collaborative model represents an underutilized but vital strategy for estuarine management and resilience in the face of accelerating environmental change.

This presentation will be given by S. Carter Oleckna, on behalf of Charlotte County and University of Florida.

**11. CHNEP TECHNICAL PROJECTS UPDATES**

In addition to the items featured earlier on the agenda, other research and/or restoration projects (or phases of projects) recently completed or currently underway with CHNEP FY22-25 funds. A brief overview will be given on project progress since the previous TAC meeting.

Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP Director of Research & Restoration, will be presenting this agenda item. Project fact sheets are available on the CHNEP website: <https://www.chnep.org/resources>.

## **12. TAC MEMBERSHIP UPDATES**

Each member will have time to update the Committee on research or restoration projects currently underway or recently completed related to clean water and natural resources in the CHNEP area. This time also serves as an opportunity for members to make announcements or discuss other topics of interest with the Committee members.

TAC Co-Chair Arielle Taylor-Manges will be leading and facilitating this discussion.

## **13. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Each participating member of the public is afforded up to 3 minutes total to speak at this point in the meeting.

## **14. FUTURE MEETING'S TOPICS, LOCATION AND DATE**

Please mark your calendar for the upcoming 2026 CHNEP TAC Meeting dates: 4/9/26, 8/6/26, 12/3/26.

If you have ideas of new research and restoration topics and/or presenters (including those outside the CHNEP area if applicable to CHNEP CCMP efforts), please email CHNEP Director of Research & Restoration Nicole Iadevaia at [niadevaia@chnep.org](mailto:niadevaia@chnep.org).

## **15. ADJOURN**