

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Hernando County Task Force
of the
Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council

August 25, 2008

The Hernando County Task Force met at 3:31 p.m., at the Springs Coast Environmental Education Center, Weeki Wachee, Florida.

Task Force

Members Present

Nicholas Nicholson, Chair
Charlie Miller, Member
Charles Morton, Member
Norman Pallot, Member
James Polk, Member

Technical Advisory

Group Members Present

Paul Thomas, FFWCC
Denise Tenuto, SWFWMD
Bruce Hasbrouck, FDOT

Recording Secretary

Gwen Brown, SWFWMD
Josie Guillen, SWFWMD

Task Force

Members Absent

James Adkins, Secretary
Jim Griffin, Member

Technical Advisory

Group Members Absent

Colonel Paul L. Grosskruger,
USACOE
Chris Anastasiou, FDEP
John Burnett, Hernando Co.
Sam Lyons, CRBB Member

SWFWMD – Southwest Florida Water Management District
FDEP – Florida Department of Environmental Protection
CRBB – Coastal Rivers Basin Board Member

FFWCC – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
FDOT – Florida Department of Transportation
USACOE – United States Army Corp of Engineers

A list of others present who signed the attendance roster is filed in the permanent files of the Task Force. The numbers preceding the items listed below correspond with the published agenda.

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Nicholson convened the meeting. Members were in attendance and a quorum was present.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Nicholson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Approval of the Minutes**

Following consideration, Mr. James Polk moved, seconded by Mr. Charlie Miller to approve the July 7, 2008 meeting minutes with changes noted. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Hydrologic Conditions Report for Hernando County

Mr. Steve DeSmith, SWFWMD, provided an assessment of the hydrologic conditions with five parameters: rainfall, groundwater levels, lake levels, spring flow, and stream flow. Mr. DeSmith presented many graphs showing the rainfall distribution in Hernando County and the District boundaries.

5. Draft Report to the Legislature

Mr. Paul Thomas, FFWCC, stated last year 4 projects were submitted to the Legislature for funding and no funding was received. Mr. Thomas distributed a draft of the Hernando County Task Force's section of the 2008 Report to the Legislature, changing only the date and re-submitting the same projects since there were no other new projects brought to the Task Force this year. The Task Force agreed they would recommend incorporating it into the full report at the next Council meeting.

6. Salinity Tolerance of Barnacles

Mr. Charles Morton, Task Force Member, read the response from Mr. Dan Marelli, FDEP, to his email inquiry as follows: "When flow is reduced the mixing zone between the saline Gulf waters and the river will move landward. If you recall this happened some years ago when the brackish water mussel *Mytilopsis leucophaeata* settled on your dock and boat. In this case the species is likely to be the bay barnacle *Balanus improvisus*, which can tolerate very low salinity. You are also correct that marine animals penetrate further upstream when there is an abundance of another dissolved ion like calcium or magnesium."

Ms. Veronica Craw, SWFWMD, researched the subject and reported that common barnacles can tolerate short periods of extended freshwater. However, juveniles, when exposed, can actually acclimate to the system they're in. It is possible in salinities of approximately 6 parts per thousand for barnacles to reproduce and survive. At the river, the salinity was 8 parts per thousand. It is within the range for them to reproduce and survive through the juvenile stage.

7. Agenda for Next Meeting

Duties and Responsibilities of the Task Force and agency jurisdictions.

The next meeting will follow the Citrus/Hernando Waterways Restoration Council meeting in October.

8. Public Input

- Ms. Suzanne Kirkconnell, citizen, handed out to the Members copies of a newspaper article. Mr. Sky Notestein, University of Florida, spoke with Ms. Kirkconnell, regarding the purchase of the Weeki Wachee Spring attraction. The State is holding the money and if the State takes over, the attraction will remain the same. Ms. Kirkconnell stated there is a large plume of sand that comes out of the spring, which needs to be addressed; but, there is no purpose in cleaning up the river until something is done about the turbulence that is created by the size of the boat and propellers.

Ms. Craw stated that the District is funding a sediment removal project at the headspring at Weeki Wachee. Construction is scheduled to begin in October 2008.

- Mr. Bill Pent, citizen, stated that in front of his home the water is flowing upstream. Mr. Pent stated in 1952, the area between big cypress and Roger's Park was 12-15 feet deep. Unless this issue of reduced flow is addressed, we are losing the battle.

- Mr. Byron Shipley, citizen, stated in 1982 or 1983 Mr. John Richardson, formerly with the Port Authority, kept the river cleaned up by maintaining the wooden groins. Mr. Shipley saw Mr. Richardson pull out a homemade weir. Gradually the river eroded away and left a sandbar in front of his property. Mr. Shipley said if the County pulled the weir out, why can't the County put it back?
- Mr. Guy Panzner, citizen, stated that barnacles do not live in freshwater. Mr. Panzner stated that the river is dying fast. Mr. Panzner stated that saltwater fish are swimming in the river. Mr. Panzner asked the Members if anything about this has been brought to their attention. Mr. Mark Rials, SWFWMD, indicated that there was nothing unusual about saltwater fish swimming in the river.

9. **Adjournment**

There being no further business or announcements presented before the Task Force, the meeting was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.