



**Minutes**

**WATER RESOURCES ANALYSIS COALITION**

**Monthly Public Forum**

October 04, 2018, 9:00 AM

District Headquarters - B-1 Auditorium

3301 Gun Club Road

West Palm Beach, FL 33406

**1. Call to Order - Brandon Tucker**

Mr. Tucker called the forum to order at 9:01 AM and welcomed fellow Governing Board Member, Jaime Weisinger, to the forum.

**2. Water Conditions Report - John P. Mitnik, Chief Engineer**

Mr. Mitnik provided an update on current water conditions.

WRAC Invitees inquired about water moving south into Taylor Slough, and the October first closure criteria for the S-12 structures. Mr. Mitnik clarified that the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline was associated with discharges on the western side of Conservation Area 3A. Constraints associated with movement of water towards Taylor Slough would not come into effect until March 2019.

WRAC Invitee comments provided by:

- Chad Kennedy
- Karson Turner
- Adam Gelber
- Newton Cook

Comments are recorded at:

<http://sfwmd.ig2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=1845&Format=Agenda>

**Public Comment**

None

**3. Around the Table Discussion**

An around-the-table discussion took place, wherein WRAC invitees expressed

continued concerns on the issue of Red Tide and how it is now making its way to the East Coast. A WRAC Invitee stated that both red tide and blue green algae are two separate, but serious issues and expressed concerns with the burden being placed on west coast labs as they are responsible for testing all samples on both coasts.

Lieutenant Colonel Reynolds stated that the Corps, District, along with other agencies are committed to addressing the ever-increasing population impacting south Florida water resources. She stated sound science and good engineering must both be utilized to operate the system and restore the Everglades.

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#### Public Comment

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#### **4. Curtain Wall as Part of Flood Protection Strategy in South Dade - Akin Owosina, Bureau Chief, Hydrology & Hydraulics**

Mr. Owosina presented Curtain Walls as part of the Flood Protection Strategy in South Dade. He introduced the topic and presented analysis findings that demonstrated that curtain walls could effectively provide flood protection in developed areas of South Dade while improving restoration in the natural areas.

WRAC Invitees stated that this concept was not new and citing a 5-mile segment in South Dade that would benefit both restoration and flood control. Invitees also noted that it was relatively inexpensive in comparison to restoration projects. WRAC Invitees appreciated that while efforts were geared to flood control, the analysis also considered impacts to water supply, salt water intrusion, flows to Florida Bay through Taylor Slough and flows to Biscayne Bay.

Invitees were interested in the effects of Sea Level Rise on the analysis and the sequence of implementation of the seepage wall with other restoration projects.

WRAC Invitee comments provided by:

- Mike Collins
- Barbara Miedema
- Celeste DePalma
- Gene Duncan
- Charles LaPradd
- Joan Lawrence
- Adam Gelber
- Jennifer Jurado
- Malcolm Wade
- Chad Kennedy
- Mike Collins
- Nyla Pipes
- James Humble
- LTC Jennifer Reynolds
- Pete Quasius

Comments are recorded at:

<http://sfwmd.iqm2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=1845&Format=Agenda>

#### Public Comment

None

**5. Water Flow and Nutrient Loads to Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Estuaries in Water Years 2014-2018 - Stuart Van Horn, Bureau Chief, Water Quality**

Mr. Van Horn presented Water Flow and Nutrient Loads to Lake Okeechobee and the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries.

WRAC Invitees stated that nutrient loads come from north of Lake Okeechobee and during Water Year 2018 a significant portion of the flow and nutrient loads were results of runoff produced from rainfall occurring during Hurricane Irma in September 2018.

Invitees stated that Emergency Estuary Protection Wells could be constructed quicker than the planned northern CERP reservoirs which are 20-30 years away and would be able to capture the majority of the loading from Lake Okeechobee to the estuaries. The funding mechanisms to construct the Estuary Protection Wells are not in competition with funding for other restoration projects and the wells are part of the solution.

Invitees also commented that an in-depth look at projects contained in the Florida Department of Protection's Basis Management Action Plan needs to occur because the phosphorus trends in Lake Okeechobee, St Lucie and Caloosahatchee Watersheds do not appear to have significant decreasing trends in the past 20 years.

Invitees expressed concerns about nutrient loads coming from the C-25 basin which does not discharge directly to the St Lucie Estuary but is a local contributor to the pollution to the Indian River lagoon.

Invitees requested a similar presentation to show the trends in the southern Everglades below Lake Okeechobee. However, Invitees commented that projects south of the lake continue to dominate the conversation and more focus needs to turn towards implementing solutions north of the lake. Additionally, there was much concern expressed about maintaining Lake Okeechobee at lower levels to create storage capacity for northern watershed inflows, as some have proposed, due to impacts to lake ecology and water supply for the residents in south Florida.

WRAC Invitees expressed a desire to look at more holistic approaches to critical investments on projects, both local and large scale, and stated examples such as sewer systems. In addition, WRAC Invitees requested that staff work with the legislature to restore funding mechanisms to implement small scale projects which collectively could provide many benefits.

WRAC Invitee comments provided by:

- Richard Lewis
- Celeste De Palma
- Chad Kennedy
- H.M. Ridgely
- Newton Cook
- Malcolm Wade

- Joshua Kellam
- Nyla Pipes
- Kurt Harclerode
- Pete Quasius
- Karson Turner
- Charles LaPradd
- Mike Collins
- Jennifer Jurado
- Gene Duncan

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#### Public Comment

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### **6. Staff Reports**

There were no staff reports.

### **7. Public Comment**

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### **8. Adjourn**

Mr. Tucker announced that the next WRAC Recreational public forum is scheduled for October 22nd, 2018, and the next regularly scheduled WRAC public forum is scheduled for November 1st, 2018 at District Headquarters.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:53 PM.