



South Florida Water Management District

BIG CYPRESS BASIN BOARD

MINUTES

November 18, 2020

1:30 PM

Via Communications Media Technology

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| Attendee Name | Title | Status |
|-----------------|-------|--------|
| Charlette Roman | Chair | Remote |

1. Call to Order - Charlette Roman, Chair, Big Cypress Basin Board
Chair Roman called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 PM.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
Chair Roman led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Agenda Revisions - Lisa Koehler
There were no revisions to the agenda.
4. General Public Comment
None
5. Picayune Strand Restoration Project Updates

Construction Update for the Southwest Protection Feature and Faka Union Canal Plugging (Staff contact, Jennifer Leeds)

Ms. Leeds provided updates on the Picayune Strand Restoration Project, Southwest Protection Feature and Faka Union Canal plugging. Ms. Leeds stated these projects were part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Board Comment

In response to Chair Roman's inquiry on funding and anticipated completion date, Ms. Leeds stated the remaining features were funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), contracts were awarded, and project features were to be completed by October 2024.

Public Comment by:

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater
Andrew Tyler
Meredith Budd, Florida Wildlife Conservation
Mike Eifenbein

This item is recorded at:

<http://sfwmd.iqm2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=2042&Format=Agenda>

Picayune Strand Restoration Project, Exotic Vegetation Management Plan (Staff contact, Ellen Allen)

Ms. Allen provided details of the District's Exotic Vegetation Management Plan developed for the Picayune Strand Restoration Project. Ms. Allen explained the aggressive invasive plants such as Brazilian pepper and cabbage palm dominating many of the natural areas at the project site. In addition, Ms. Allen provided information on the District's planned control efforts.

Board Comment

In response to Chair Roman's inquiry on when vegetation management efforts began at the Picayune Strand Restoration Area, Ms. Allen stated vegetation efforts began approximately 15 to 20 years ago. Chair Roman inquired on vegetation management goals and if restoration could be completed by 2024 as planned, Ms. Allen responded this timeline would be ideal but unlikely. To this Ms. Allen further added that some plants would persist following hydrologic restoration without treatment.

Public Comment by:

Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater
Mike Eifenbein

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6. Picayune Watershed Water Quality Feasibility Study (Staff contact, Jennifer Leeds)

Ms. Leeds provided an overview of the Picayune Watershed Water Quality Feasibility study, an update on the schedule, and expected deliverables.

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Ms. Leeds for the presentation.

Public Comment

Brad Cornell, Audubon Western Florida
Andrew Tyler
Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater

Marisa Carrozzo, Conservancy SW Florida
Meredith Budd, Florida Wildlife Conservation

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7. Big Cypress Basin Boundary Study (Staff contacts, Akin Owosina and Jeffrey Ludicello)

Mr. Owosina and Dr. Ludicello presented the results of the Big Cypress Basin Boundary study.

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Mr. Owosina and Dr. Ludicello for completing this project well ahead of the February 1st deadline.

In response to Chair Roman's inquiry regarding common elements observed during the analyzation process, Dr. Ludicello responded the main factors were driven by better topography data which allowed for higher resolution and enhanced view of the area. Dr. Ludicello added the entire basin study covered five to six counties, with the majority of the area being in Lee and Collier counties.

Public Comment

Dan DeLisi on behalf of Lee County
Robert Wiley, Collier County Stormwater
Peter Simmons
Andrew Tyler

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8. Regional Partnership Project Updates (Staff contact, Shawn Meyer)

Mr. Meyer presented an update on Regional Partnership Projects consisting of:

- A. Filter Marsh Expansion at The Conservancy of Southwest Florida
- B. Ecosystem Restoration at Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Mr. Meyer for the presentation.

Public Comment

None

This item is recorded at:

9. Lake Trafford Partnership Project Regional Partnership Project Updates (Staff contact, Shawn Meyer)

Mr. Meyer presented an update on the Lake Trafford Partnership Project Regional Partnership Projects:

- A. Phytoplankton Monitoring by The Water School at Florida Gulf Coast University
- B. Eelgrass Planting by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- C. Emergent Vegetation and Wetland Tree Planting by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Mr. Meyer and the team. In response to Chair Roman's inquiry on phytoplankton monitoring, Mr. Meyer stated this was the first time performing this type of monitoring on Lake Trafford.

Public Comment

Beacham Furse, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
Dan DeLisi on behalf of Lee County

Chair Roman expressed the importance of restoring Lake Trafford's ecosystem.

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10. Preliminary Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Capital Plan Review (Staff contact, Kevin Yue)

Mr. Yue provided an overview of the Big Cypress Basin's preliminary capital budget plan for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. Mr. Yue summarized five major projects being the cypress canal weir replacement, canal improvements, C-1 connector canal control structure, I-75 canal weir removal, and the remote monitoring and communication enhancement tower.

Board Comment

In response to Chair Roman's inquiry regarding the schedule of the fully operational communication tower, Mr. Yue stated that the proposed tower is expected to be fully operational and complete by 2024. In response to Chair Roman's question regarding the Bank Stabilization Program and the varying rates of erosion seen throughout the canal system, Mr. Yue indicated that erosion occurs at different rates due to different soil conditions, large storm events, and the initial design and construction of the canal system.

Public Comment

None

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11. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget (Staff contact, Candida Heater)

Ms. Heater provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Preliminary Basin Budget compared to Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Ms. Heater for the presentation. Chair Roman commented on continued efforts with District's economists.

Public Comment

None

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<http://sfwmd.iqm2.com/Citizens/SplitView.aspx?Mode=Video&MeetingID=2004&Format=Agenda>

12. **Board Comment**

None

Technical Report

13. Field Station Activity Report - Juan Bethencourt

Mr. Bethencourt provided an update on rainy season activities, a tree removal project, the structure inspection program and a three-month outlook.

Board Comment:

Chair Roman thanked Mr. Bethencourt for the presentation

Public Comment

None

14. Water Conditions Report - Brad Jackson

Mr. Jackson provided a water conditions report.

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Mr. Jackson for the presentation

Public Comment

Brad Cornell, Audubon Western Florida

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Staff Reports

15. Basin Administrator's Report - Lisa Koehler

Ms. Koehler provided the Basin's Administrator's Report. In addition, Ms. Koehler noted the 2021 Big Cypress Basin Board meeting schedule: February 25, 2021, April 22, 2021, July 6, 2021, August 26, 2021, and October 28, 2021.

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Ms. Koehler for her report.

16. Monthly Financial Report - Candida Heater

Ms. Heater provided the monthly financial report.

Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked Ms. Heater for the positive report.

17. General Public Comments

Mike Elfenbein

18. Board Comment

Chair Roman thanked staff and participants and announced the next meeting scheduled for February 25, 2021.

19. Adjourn

Chair Roman adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:45 PM.

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Lisa Koehler
Big Cypress Basin Administrator
South Florida Water Management District