

# Central Florida Water Initiative

TOHO Water Authority  
Friday, November 14, 2014

## Meeting Summary

(All presentations made to the Steering Committee have been posted on [cfwiwater.com](http://cfwiwater.com).)

### Introductions

- a. Steering Committee members present: Drew Bartlett (FDEP), Michael Babb (SWFWMD), Brian Wheeler (TOHO Water), John Miklos (SJRWMD), Ray Scott (DACS) for Rich Budell
- b. Steering Committee members absent: Dan O'Keefe (SFWMMD)
- c. Members of the audience introduced themselves and the sign in sheet for those in attendance has been posted to the website.

### 2. Consent Items

- a. The October 24, 2014 Meeting Summary was approved.

### 3. Kissimmee River Reservation

- a. Len Lindahl reviewed the process and schedule the SFWMD is following to adopt the reservation. Key milestone dates are:
  - Draft rule language by the end of June 2015
  - Final draft rule by September 2015
  - Rule adoption by December 2015
- b. Three additional public workshops will be held at key dates during the rule development and adoption process. Next workshop is Dec 12; location TBA.
- c. Schedule is shown in the presentation associated with this agenda item on the website.

### 4. Data Monitoring & Investigation Team

- a. Chris Sweazy, Team Leader, provided an update on the progress of DMIT.
  - Identify priority site locations for the minimum option
  - Identify possible associations for certain monitor locations and the implementation of Water Supply Option Projects from the draft RWSP.
  - Revisit well costs for consistency factors
  - Develop a written work plan
  - Continued assistance CFWI support
  - Preparation of SPT report
- b. Schedule of ongoing tasks
  - November 24<sup>th</sup> – draft findings to MOC

- Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> – deadline for SPT report materials
  - Dec 19<sup>th</sup> – SC presentation of draft work plan
  - Jan 2015 – SC acceptance of DMIT work plan
- c. Brian Wheeler said the DMIT Plan is a regional monitoring plan that needs to stand alone and not be dependent on when specific water supply projects are implemented. Chris said the plan is regional and the phasing was not based on projects but the need to understand the groundwater resource. Brian stated the importance of having the DMIT Plan completed as soon as possible.

## 5. Conservation

- a. As a follow up to a request by the Steering committee, Ray Scott (DACS) presented an estimate of how much water has been saved through conservation actions of the citrus growers within the CFWI area. His analysis estimated that approximately 23 MGD of water has been saved from the period between 1970 and 2010. He said all categories of agricultural operations will continue to focus on conservation because it makes business sense.
- b. Robert Beltran requested the SC revise the Conservation Plan to reflect more realistic conservation targets. He indicated the conservation targets are based on the best information available and through the programmatic approach being developed can be revised in the future. Brian Wheeler suggested conservation estimates instead of conservation targets.

Public supply	27.8 MGD
Agriculture	4.3 to 6.4 MGD
Other self-supply	4.6 MGD
TOTAL	36.8 to 38.9 MGD

- c. Public comment
- David Gore (NE Polk County) expresses concerns with the savings and felt more conservation was possible.
  - Jane Graham, Audubon Florida, provided a written statement and said lowering the target was disappointing and request the SC direct the Conservation sub team to develop a higher target. (comments attached)
- d. The Steering Committee made the following observations:
- Brian Wheeler said the estimates for conservation are the not the final goals but only reflect what could be achieved based on current planning level efforts. He said future programs can make it more. He emphasized this is a start and not the end of the discussion.
  - Drew Bartlett felt more money was going to have to be invested to achieve more conservation. He side the public water suppliers are estimated to have “saved” 159 MGD of water since 1990 through conservation.

- John Miklos felt the conservation targets should be conservation based on what can be achieved. He stated this was a good starting point and favored using the lower targets for measuring success rather than a range and said the agriculture conservation should be 4.3 MGD.
- e. The Steering Committee unanimously approved the motion to revise the estimate for conservation to be 36.8 MGD as a base target with the expectation to continue refine and update the target based on future programmatic changes.

## 6. Solutions Planning Team (SPT)

- a. Public comment (prior to voting on recommended changes to the SPT membership)
- David Gore (NE Polk County) felt an additional environmental representative was needed on the SPT.
- b. The Steering Committee approved SPT membership changes to make Marjorie Craig, Polk County, one of the public water supply members and Kevin Felblinger, St. Cloud, an alternate public water supply member.
- c. The Groundwater sub team update was provided by Mark Hammond. He said the team is looking at the water supply project concepts to evaluate along with the Environmental Evaluation sub team the following management options:
- Shift withdrawals from the UFA to the LFA
  - Change withdrawal locations away from sensitive areas
  - Targeted Recharge
  - Distributed versus concentrated withdrawals from the LFA
  - Benefit of increasing return flow (Can return flows from non-groundwater AWS projects improve environmental conditions?)
- d. Mark Hammond also provide the following progress of the Environmental Evaluation sub team
- a. Task 1: Review and assess areas of environmental sensitivity
    - Draft map completed
  - b. Task 2: Evaluate projects in areas of environmental sensitivity
    - Draft map completed
  - Task 3: “evaluate projects for MFL water body impacts”
    - Minimum Flows and Reservation Team “free board analysis”; Round 1 scenarios completed – round 2 underway
  - Task 4: “evaluate projects for non-MFL water body impacts”
    - Environmental Measures Team “risk-based” analysis; Round 1 scenarios completed – round 2 underway

- e. Mark Hammond said the next steps will be for the EE sub team to send their technical comments to the groundwater sub team in order to finalize the impacts of the various water supply scenarios. Also, the sub teams are working on presenting the results in a way that can be clearly understood by the general public.
- f. Joanne Chamberlain provided a summary of regional Surface Water projects from the RWSP that meet the SC guidance for regionally significant projects.

PROJECT	TYPE	AMOUNT
St. Johns River/TCR	Water supply	54 MGD
Kissimmee River Basin AWS Project* <i>*pending Reservation determination</i>	Water supply	0-25 MGD*
St. Johns River Near SR 46	Water supply	40 MGD
St. Johns River Near Yankee Lake PHASE II	Groundwater recharge Water supply	40 MGD
C-25 Groveland Reservoir & STA* <i>*raw water, not finished water</i>	Water quality Flood control Water supply	25 MGD*
Joint Tampa Bay Water/ Polk County AWS	Water supply	10 MGD

- g. Joanne Chamberlain reviewed the current schedule for the final work product of the CFWI to be called **2035 Water Resources Protection & Water Supply Strategies Plan** or the **CFWI Plan** for short. Joanne said the final draft list of proposed projects to be included in the CFWI Plan will be brought back to the Steering Committee on December 19 with overall plan approval by in the summer of 2015 (after receiving public input). The CFWI Plan and the draft RWSP (including any revisions) will then go the Governing Boards of the WMDs for final review and approval.
- h. Steve Seibert reviewed the detailed agenda for the upcoming Central Florida Regional Leadership Forum on November 21.

## 7. Regulatory Team (RT)

- a. Len Lindahl, Team Leader, reported on the ongoing process to follow the December 13 FDEP Guidance memo.
- b. RT topics under development:
  - Success principles
  - Water use per capita data collection

- Caution area example review
  - Public interest
  - Conjunctive use
  - Permitting thresholds / domestic self-supply
- c. Len requested the Steering Committee provide further direction with respect to Domestic Self Supply (DSS). The SC directed the RT continue to evaluate the impact of DSS within the CFWI. It is understood that a decision with regard to how to address the impacts of DSS will not be able to be addressed to meet the current schedule so the analysis should continue and any proposed program to address their impacts be handles at a later date.
- d. The RT will continued progress on priority topics, coordinate with Solutions Planning Team (face to face meeting on Nov 20), conduct regulatory review of RWSP Projects and develop draft content for CFWI Strategies document

## 8. Regional Consensus Building

- a. Steve Seibert (triSect) provided the following summary :
- October 29<sup>th</sup>, Haines City
    - Approximately 70 individuals in attendance
    - Covered by the Florida Channel
    - Attendees expressed the following:
      - o “How the projects identified will be developed within the communities.”
      - o “More information on solutions implementation.”
      - o “More financial information on these projects and how it effects the local communities on a financial level.”
      - o “Additional data supporting the justification of projects and validation of the science.”
    - Common themes from both workshops:
      - o Need for more consistent, ongoing education both on general water and environmental issues and impacts written for 3 levels – elected officials, staff, and citizens
      - o More frequent participation in the solutions planning process
      - o More specific information about projects and funding sources
  - Central Florida Regional Leadership Forum- Working Together to Advance a Regional Water Strategy
    - Date: Friday, November 21st
    - Time: 8:00 am - 11:30 am
    - Place: Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport

## 9. 2015 Funding

- a. Robert Beltran presented an updated draft table to comprehensively show how the CFWI could be funded over the time horizon of the initiative. Robert

emphasized the funding requirements would evolve over time as the CFWI is updated and refined based on improved quantification of the effects of aggressive water conservation efforts, the population growth scenarios play out, economic development efforts come to fruition and agricultural practices change based on environmental and market conditions. He showed preliminary aggregate funding needs based on 1 year (2015), 2 year (2016), 5 year (2017-2020), 10 year (2021- 2025) and 20 year (2026-2035) increments. The aggregate funding needs would be further refined to show all the potential funding sources: water users, Federal and State governments, water management districts, local governments and private entities. He emphasized the sub-teams are continuing to review the funding plan, especially years 1 through 5 and therefore should not be considered final.

- d. The Steering Committee approved the concept and asked the Solutions Planning Team to provide more detail as the process develops.

## **10. Open Discussion NONE**

## **11. Public Comments**

- a. David Gore (NE Polk County) expressed concern with the impact of the surface water withdrawals on the aquifer. He suggested more consideration be given to increasing water storage and capturing excess runoff from rainfall events.
- b. Glen Bradshaw, Pasco County, lives in the Green Swamp and encouraged the Steering Committee to revisit the Four Rivers Basin project undertaken by the Corps of Engineers in 1961. He said much more emphasis has to be given to providing recharge. He provided written material to the SC.
- c. Jane Graham, Audubon Florida, provided a written statement and requested the Steering Committee provide more emphasis on the restoration of stressed river basins, springs and wetlands in ecologically important areas such as the Wekiva basin. (comments attached)

## **12. Next SC meetings**

- a. Dec 19, 2014
- b. Future SC meetings (all tentative)
  - Jan 30, 2015- 1<sup>st</sup> review of draft CFWI Plan
  - Feb 27, 2015- 2<sup>nd</sup> review of draft CFWI plan
  - Mar 27, 2015- Approve external draft CFWI Plan
  - June/July 2015- Approve Final draft CFWI Plan and Final draft RWSP

## **13. Adjourn 11:40 AM**

Comments from Jane Graham, Audubon Florida

A great amount of time, effort, and scientific data has been invested in the CFWI, and on behalf of Audubon, we are committed to seeing this through to a sustainable solution for water in Central Florida.

While a great amount of attention has been paid to projects for water supply, something that has been notably lacking is a clear path forward on projects to protect and restore the treasured springs, rivers, and wetlands within the CFWI.

The standard of harm in many conversations has been "significant harm" from Minimum Flows and Levels, instead of restoration for water to sustain fish and wildlife. This falls short. With a magnifying glass to Central Florida, there has never been a more appropriate time to invest resources in projects that will restore stressed wetlands and maintain healthy flows to our rivers. It is not just that we don't want our springs to run dry. It is that we want our springs to flourish and be restored to their previous splendor.

We request that the Steering Committee directs the Solutions Committee and its sub teams to look at projects that will restore natural areas in this region that have been degraded or are vulnerable from over consumption of water. And, integrate these solutions into the larger planning process and final suite of solutions. Specifically, we suggest the Solutions team works in coordination with the Environmental Evaluation team (which I believe should be named "environmental solutions" team) to put forward a suite of projects to restore the stressed river basins, springs, and wetlands in ecologically important areas, such as the Wekiva.

Additionally, we welcome the Steering Committee's robust conversation on water conservation at previous Steering Committee meetings. Today, you are asked to request approval of a total conservation savings of 36.8 to 38.9 mgd. This is less than what was stated in the draft water supply plan- 42 mgd. This is disappointing, and we urge the Steering Committee to recommend that the Water Conservation sub team comes back with a higher number.

Thank you and we look forward to continuing to work with you to make the most of this important opportunity for restoration and water sustainability in Central Florida.