

Meeting Minutes from CFWI Workshop

Focus on the Environment

May 18, 2015

1:30pm - Shelley Lauten, Principal of triSect, welcomed 52 attendees to the workshop and asked each to introduce themselves. Following that, she discussed contents of the packet that each attendee received including the agenda, copy of the Power Point presentation, copy of the CFWI boundary map, copy of the CFWI Regional Project Solutions, snapshot of the new CFWI website, and an executive summary of the CFWI Regional Solutions Plan.

Greg Knecht, Director of Protection for The Nature Conservancy, then spoke on the importance of the CFWI and how organizations need to be part of the solution.

Mark Hammond, Director of Resource Management, Southwest Florida Water Management District then provided an overview of the history of the CFWI. Points of emphasis included:

- There were many people involved in the solutions planning phase including those from government, business, FDEP, consultants, environment representatives, and agriculture representatives
- The issues we are facing with water resources did not happen over the past 12 months and, therefore, will not be solved in the next 12 months. Implementation of the proposed solutions plan will take time.
- Review of what happens when we overuse the aquifer
- It is important to understand what are the issues and options for our region

Further, Mark discussed that we would focus input today on three of the eight solution identified by CFWI:

- Implementing Water Conservation
- Developing Specific Prevention and Recovery Programs
- Supporting Development and Implementation of Regional Projects

Mark also mentioned the following work that has been ongoing:

- CFWI identifies sustainable quantities of groundwater – completed 2 years ago
- Develop strategies to meet water demands – the draft Regional Water Supply Plan is the beginning of this work (a higher level, big picture look at the region); he noted that there is sufficient water to meet our needs, but many need multi-jurisdictional cooperation
- Establish consistent rules – working on that in the next year

Finally, Mark noted the Key Findings of the CFWI Solutions Phase. They include:

- Water conservation is an important element
- Sufficient options to meet the regions' needs through 2035
 - 150 options – more than 334 mgd

- Conceptual management strategies can be developed into specific projects
- Stakeholder engagement has and will continue to be important
- Project cost estimates scenario
 - \$2.8 billion for 225 mgd
- Establishment of consistent rules and regulations to be developed to implement the results of CFWI Planning effort
- Implementing results of CFWI is critical to long-term sustainability

Mark closed by reminding the attendees that the comment period on the draft Regional Water Supply Plan is open until July 31st.

QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES following Mark Hammond presentation:

Greg Knecht: Are you looking forward toward prevention & recovery? Would you say that the majority are looking at minimum flows and levels? RESPONSE FROM MARK: Yes, the steering committee is also looking at wetlands where there is not an adopted minimum level.

Len Lindahl, Assistant Executive Director of the South Florida Water Management District, reviewed the Water Conservation Plan. He noted the following in his presentation:

- The Regional Water Supply Plan is a 20-year plan which will be updated every 5 years
- The CFWI has looked at best practices from around the state and nation
- The best management practices are found in the detailed Solutions Plan report
- Additional items noted in the Water Conservation section are:
 - Public Supply & Other Self Supply
 - 10 BMPs
 - Adopt High-Efficiency Standards
 - Landscape and Irrigation Systems
 - Plumbing Fixtures and Appliances
 - Public Education
 - Clearinghouse/Conservation Planning Tools/Research
 - Agriculture (Programmatic Approach)
 - 7 BMP categories
 - Includes training workshops, on-site demonstrations, mobile labs and support for Extension Services

QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES following Len's presentation:

- David Gore: How are we addressing irrigation (evaporation)? RESPONSE from Len: Irrigation is addressed in the best management practices
- David Gore: We also need to think about conservation and how to manage and protect water.
- Chuck O'Neill: How do we deal with new development if all the water is already permitted? RESPONSE from Mark: Big developments have already been factored into what's been permitted. Len reminded the attendees that the plan is updated every 5 years so additional new development can be reviewed then. Mike Register, Acting Executive Director of the St. Johns River Water Management District also

noted that at the time many permits were issued development was at its peak, so much of what has been allocated has not been used yet.

- Unknown: How are you going to take back water permits that have issued and give them to others; RESPONSE from Mark: Data and models are developed and the WMDs are comfortable with groundwater availability; they will continue to review data to see where they need to move in the future
- Eric Rolling: Has the study considered future water usage in places like California; Agriculture business may move to Florida since there is not enough water in CA to sustain their business. Additionally, how does fracking and tourism impact water usage? RESPONSE from Mark: The WMDs recognize that market factors can impact agriculture, which is why the plan is reviewed every 5 years. This allows them to evaluate any significant changes in how we need to move forward. Tourism is considered in demand piece.
- Unknown: Why does conservation only get 6% of the budget? RESPONSE from Mike: Conservation is very cost effective and doesn't need as much of the budget.
- Charles Lee: Audubon has some suggestions including when someone buys new house they must install energy efficient appliances and low-flow toilets to get their utilities turned on; this needs to become routine. He suggested looking at what DeKalb County GA is doing. RESPONSE from Len: There has been considerable conversation on conservation and changing codes in the districts, etc. The next part of the draft report talks about implementing some of the items Charles mentioned.
- Jean Reed: Expressed concerned about cost of some projects; is cost factor considered? RESPONSE from Mark: The solutions strategy doesn't layout what communities have to implement and in what order. They have latitude.
- Sandy Webb: Can we get away from lawn turf? RESPONSE from Len: Florida friendly landscaping is part of the conservation solutions plan
- Unknown: How do we regulate groundwater being used for irrigation? Shelley Lauten followed up with: Who is responsible for enforcement? RESPONSE from Judith Benson: Each municipality is responsible for their own enforcement.
- Unknown: We need to have a plan for coordinating/streamlining governance from local to regional to state. Who's responsible for what and how are these efforts coordinated?
- Bob Stamps: Noted that water use declined from 1998 to 2001 when water conservation measures were first put in place. Then from 2001 to 2012 residential water use is up to 101mgd. He questioned if conservation is so important why don't we put more money in on the front end? Shelley Lauten noted that she is hearing that everyone wants more money up front and for the life of the program; Charles Lee noted that Audubon feels it is a mistake to say conservation is the only response.
- Shelley Lauten noted that she hears three themes from the comments of the audience: 1) Spend more money incrementally, 2) Look for regulatory solutions that will manage conservation over time and 3) More enforcement of conservation

- John Ryan: Water law and land use law correlation has to be fixed
- Lisa Rinaman: Noted that conservation, public education, & enforceable regulation are key; RESPONSE from Len: The third principal is to get consistent regulation; there are things that can be looked at to be more consistent in rule making; Mike Register noted that there is a new staffer that is working on this issue.
- Chris Lewis: Can you break down the percentage of what public vs. tourists vs. industry uses our water; RESPONSE from Joanne Chamberlain: 80% is public supply

Unknown: Did you contemplate agriculture water usage in 5 year projections?
RESPONSE from Mark: Yes

Michael Register, Acting Executive Director of the St. Johns River Water Management District then provided an overview of the Prevention and Recovery section of the Solutions Plan. Items of note included:

- \$2 million in 2016 and \$1.5 million in 2017
 - Evaluate recovery options for 3 waterbodies
 - Options include
 - Conservation
 - Recharge
 - Relocation of withdrawals
 - Development of AWS

QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES following Michael's presentation:

- Marty Sullivan: Noted that he disputes that any more water can be removed from the Floridian aquifer without significant impacts. We need to monitor at protection metric levels; RESPONSE from Mark: We do have aquifer levels set as well as goals
- Nyla Pipes: Noted that One Florida attended this meeting to learn what everyone is doing regarding water in Central Florida. Shelley Lauten noted that CFWI is working to link CFWI solutions with what is occurring in other regions Nyla noted that they want to know how they can help.

Mark Hammond walked through the Regional Projects Solutions List. He noted that not all of this projects will actually be completed immediately; they will be brought online as demand increases.

FINAL COMMENTS FROM ATTENDEES:

- Unknown: It is important to educate our youth
- Unknown: Statewide adoption of new fixtures is imperative
- Unknown: We need much more on-going public engagement on why this issue is important to everyone. We need to build a “water ethic”.
- Unknown: Noted that a new well is being financed in the southeast part of Polk County and feels that the money could be better used toward restoring wetlands in the area.
- Carolyn Cooper: Noted that she would like to see more coordination amongst jurisdictions; mandate to pervious space
- Unknown: The total cost to consumer is going to be high; need to look more at restoring wetlands
- Unknown: There were only three water bodies mentioned in regional projects solution slide; are there more? RESPONSE: This is only the start.
- Unknown: We need to get to a place where every new development is having a positive influence on water development; today is not sustainable.
- John Ryan: Suggested a school of law have CFWI be a participant and get some legal solutions
- Unknown: We need an on-going regional summit (applause from audience)
- Chuck O’Neil: Referred to a senate bill proposed by Senator Soto. Perhaps having users over 10,000mgd pay more.
- Charles Lee: Really need to look at cutting off pulling out of St. Johns River and putting into reclaimed; collaboration should be a higher priority than selling off as surplus.
- Lisa Rinaman: St. Johns Riverkeeper does not believe that rules are strong enough. What are you doing in the solutions phase to protect natural resources; RESPONSE from Mark: We need to recover places that are impacted and make sure new supplies are done so they are not impacted; reevaluating to make sure it is consistent and accurate and will include St. Johns
- Marge Holt: Would like to see a shift from a financial focus of reclaimed and reuse water to potable water; RESPONSE from Mark: Many jurisdictions looking at this option.
- Unknown: Is there any opportunity for public comment between July 31st and when the document goes back to the Steering Committee; RESPONSE from John Shearer: It will be posted on the website. RESPONSE from Mark: That’s a good point and we need to incorporate that. People will want to see whether we have adjusted the solutions plan based on the input we receive.

Mark Hammond reminded everyone that this is a living document, so things will be reviewed annually and updated every five years.

Shelley Lauten reviewed the upcoming workshops and public meetings and encouraged attendees to invite others to provide input during the open comment period. She then reviewed the updated CFWI website with attendees.

Shelley Lauten thanked everyone from attending the meeting. The meeting concluded at 4:00pm.