

Central Florida Water Initiative

Regional Water Supply Plan

Draft Regional Water Supply Plan Public Workshop Summary

December 12, 2013, 4:00 –7:00 p.m.

Clermont Community Center, 620 W. Montrose St., Clermont, FL

The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of the Central Florida Water Initiative (CFWI) draft Regional Water Supply Plan, answer questions, take public comment, and facilitate public engagement in the regional water supply planning effort.

Meeting notification occurred by email to stakeholders, interested parties and attendees of prior meetings from the St. Johns River, South Florida and Southwest Florida water management districts. Web-based meeting notification occurred on the CFWI and water management district calendar webpages. The meeting was also noticed in Florida Administrative Weekly. There were 105 attendees participating in the meeting, including about 85 members of the public and 20 staff members from the water management districts, water utilities and CFWI technical team members.

The agenda consisted of the following:

4:00 p.m. – Visit the Information Tables

- Water Supply Planning, Population & Water Demands (Chapters 1 & 2)
- Resource Protection & Assessment Criteria (Chapter 3)
- Evaluation of Water Resources (Chapter 4)
- Water Conservation (Chapter 5)
- Water Source Options, Water Supply & Water Resource Development & Funding (Chapters 6-9)
- Conclusion, Recommendations/Future Direction (Chapters 10 & 11)
- Submit Your Comments on Draft RWSP (2 computer stations)

5:00 p.m. – Welcome and Overview of Regional Water Supply Plan

Tom Bartol, St. Johns River Water Management District

5:45 p.m. – Public Comments

6:30 p.m. – Visit the Information Tables for Questions and Discussion

The public provided verbal comments during the Public Comments section of the agenda. Written public input was also received on public comment cards.

Summary of Public Comments Received at CFWI Public Workshop – 12/12/13

Written public input was received on public comment cards. Three comment cards were submitted. Six citizens made statements at the meeting. These verbal comments, paraphrased, consisted of:

- It has been reported to be expensive to desalinate, but so what. If it is expensive now, try water wars later. Desalination is and shall be the only game in town. We are moving toward a critical need, not want of water. If we offer a reward for the scientific minds, a solution can be found. Now is the time to get serious about desalination.

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- You do not include the tourists, the 55 million who visited last year. What about the water they consume? Nothing was mentioned about cisterns, yet our building codes discourage the use of these. Perhaps offer a tax break. We have to do something about getting rid of grass. Las Vegas offers an incentive to residents to remove grass. The SJRWMD had a great program – Watershed Action Volunteers Outreach program, and then was cut in the budget. Will be writing to the legislature to restore this funding. Only 10 percent of the farmers follow through on mobile irrigation lab recommendations. They need cost sharing and SJRWMD is no longer funding this program. Did not mention arsenic and the issue with injection that increases arsenic levels.
 - Concerned about what will happen with the water infrastructure. In Chapter 11 – humble plea to remove Indian River Lagoon from the options. There is more science and good science, but essentially saying no more water would be available and have to solve the problem. No discussion of the financial vehicles and utilities are distribution systems not buying and selling water – who is responsible? Need to decide on fairly equitable funding, three options:
 - Impact fees
 - WMD millage rates
 - Premium on water bill for future investment
- Money has to be spent and almost free well water is gone. SJRWMD should put back the WAVE program.
- Audubon Society concerns –
 - Reliance on surface water as noted in Appendix F
 - Evaluate Kissimmee Water Basin and impact on systems
 - Water conservation – don't see clear direction towards measurable goals; look at wasteful lawn irrigation/agricultural irrigation
 - Sand mines have massacred the lake levels. What are we doing to protect the Green Swamp?
 - Have had a serious lack of rainfall over the past few years. We may be approaching a new normal and the historic average we may not be able to rely on. Need to look at when new development is approved what impact will it have on water? They should have the most technologically advanced appliances. Utilities need to incentivize these uses. Include some of this in the recommendations.

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Photos

