

# Central Florida Water Initiative

TOHO Water Authority  
Friday, February 28, 2014

## Meeting Summary

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

### 1. Introductions

- a. Drew Bartlett, FDEP Deputy Secretary for Water Policy & Ecosystem Restoration, opened the meeting. Self-introductions of Steering Committee (SC): Dan O'Keefe (SFWMD), Paul Senft for Carlos Beruff (SWFWMD), John Miklos SJRWMD), Drew Bartlett (FDEP), Brian Wheeler (TOHO Water), Rich Budell (DACS).
- b. 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 December 13, 2013, CFWI Meeting Summary was approved as presented along with the CFWI schedule update.

### 3. Minimum Flows & Levels/ Reservations

- a. Doug Leeper explained that in order to minimize confusion between MFL assessments and permit compliance concerns, the MFLRT and MOC recommend several revisions to Guidance Document language. The Steering Committee approved the changes.
- b. Brian Wheeler said this change to the process will not address a stated CFWI Goal of ensuring consistency amongst District. He said the utilities are worried without uniform definitions for "harm" and "significant harm" decisions by one District will cross district boundaries and be applied differently by another District.
- c. The document titled "*Central Florida Water Initiative Area Minimum Flows and Levels Water Body Status Assessment*" was accepted by the Steering Committee and approved for posting to the website. This completes Task C3 to develop options for consistently evaluating the status of MFLs in the CFWI area.

#### 4. Regional Water Supply Plan Team

- a. Tom Bartol reviewed the remaining schedule to complete the RWSP.
  - April 11, 2014- Updates to the Technical Editor
  - April 25, 2014- Final Draft RWSP
  - May 2014- Governing Board Approval for SJRWMD, SFWMD, SWFWMD
  - June 20, 2014- RWSP completed and ready for public dissemination (website, etc.)
- b. Tom summary public outreach of the plan:
  - From June 28, 2012 through Feb. 12, 2014, directly reached more than 3,500 people through 119 presentations/briefings
  - There were five public meetings/workshops held June 28, 2012; September 26, November 7, December 12, 2013; and January 16, 2014
  - One live webinar (recorded & on CFWI website)
- c. Tom explained the delay in completing the CFWI RWSP has caused some concern with the overall SJRWMD District Water Supply Plan. The SJRWMD recently received comments from the STOPR +2 utilities (St. Cloud, TOHO Water, Orange County, Polk County, Reedy Creek Improvement District, Seminole County and the Orlando Utility Commission) about potential inconsistencies between the two documents. Tom said the District will address them and that where there are inconsistencies, the CFWI RWSP will govern.
- d. Drew Bartlett wants the Steering Committee to review the relationship between the CFWI RWSP and the final work product of the Solutions Planning Team (see Agenda 6d. below) at their next meeting on April 25.

#### 5. Data Monitoring and Investigations Team

- a. Mary Thomas reviewed the *“Minimum Standards for Water Resource Data Collection, Site Establishment and Field Data Collection Protocols”* document. The Steering Committee accepted the document and approved for posting to the website. This completes Task D4 to establish minimum standards for data collection.
- b. Mary update the SC on several Action Items for the Dec 13 SC meeting and will continue to report their progress at future meetings:

- Investigate placing inventory on CFWI using Google Earth application
  - Identify a DMIT sub-team to update inventory periodically
  - Assess level of effort for future updates
- c. An overview of Task D5, Recommendations for Regional Monitoring was discussed including generalized maps indicating where the DMIT felt additional monitoring was needed in the surficial aquifer system and the upper and lower Floridan aquifers. Mary indicated the work was nearly complete and will be ready for additional discussion with specific recommendations at the next SC meeting.

## 6. Solutions Planning Team

- a. Robert Beltran reviewed the SPT's goals and the schedule to complete their effort:
- Through October 2014 the SPT and sub-SPT will meet as needed
  - October 2014 complete Draft of Chapters in the “*2035 Water Resources Protection & Water Supply Strategies Plan*” (CFWI Plan)
  - December 2014 present DRAFT of the *CFWI Plan* to Steering Committee to begin the formal Public Comment period
  - February 2015 incorporate Public Comments into *CFWI Plan*
  - April 2015 present final DRAFT of *CFWI Plan* to each Governing Board
- b. The Steering Committee accepted the schedule as proposed.
- c. Robert presented the proposed membership of each of the SPT Sub Teams. Since the Teams will operate under the direction set forth by the SC as Technical Teams the sub team's membership was approved by the SC.
- d. The chapter outline for the “*CFWI 2035 Water Resources Protection and Water Supply Strategies*” document was reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee.
- e. Robert reviewed the draft goals and focus of each of the Solutions Planning Sub Teams and requested SC comments. Brian Wheeler re-emphasized that all Solutions Sub-Team Goals were in draft form and have not been finalized. The Steering Committee will be revisiting again.

- f. Robert presented the following table that summarizes the SC decisions with respect to the direction of CFWI regional water supply planning effort. It shows the relative role of demand management in reducing net total water needs.

<b>Gross total water needs by 2035</b>	<b>1083 MGD</b>	<b>Draft RWSP for all water uses</b>
Demand Management	42 MGD	Minimum conservation per draft RWSP
<b>Net Total water needs by 2035</b>	<b>1041 MGD</b>	<b>Draft RWSP for all water uses</b>
Sustainable groundwater use	850 MGD	By CFWI Steering Committee
Current groundwater use	800 MGD	15 year average
Additional groundwater available	50 MGD	Regulatory Team to address
Potential additional groundwater available	75 MGD	Solutions Planning Team to address
Alternative water supply needs	158 MGD	AWS need; Solutions Planning Team to address
Current permitted water use	1050 MGD	See FDEP Interim Guidance memo (12/13/2013)

- g. Robert explained there are 139 water supply development projects (136 alternative water supply projects and three management strategies) to deliver water within the CFWI Planning Area which have the potential to generate 275-405MGD at an estimated cost of \$2.8B to \$3.0B.
- h. As provided in the scope of work for the SPT, Robert indicated the SPT will be focusing on the most significant regional projects which can generate approximately 90% of the estimated to be generated by the RWSP.
- i. Robert emphasized demand management (especially conservation) and reuse will be given the highest priority.
- j. A general discussion by the Steering Committee on issues raised in Robert's overview:
- Brian Wheeler questioned the validity of the capital costs for Conservation & Other Management Strategies. It was shown to be \$451M for water savings of 42 MGD. Robert said he will verify and report back.
  - Surface water reliability cannot be 100% so conjunctive uses of water will need to be explored.

- Drew Bartlett expressed the need to document the conservation effort to ensure all possible options are explored to maximize conservation.
- Brian Wheeler said public utilities operate as enterprises so the business case must be developed to balance reasonable costs to benefits to be received. Robert said each team will address cost-benefits as part of their deliberations.
- Drew Bartlett emphasized that wherever possible we maximize reclaimed water reuse to minimize surface water discharges.
- Brian Wheeler commented that the Sub-Team was not able to address non-MFLs because there was not an agreement between the three WMDs on consistent criteria or methodology for evaluating non-MFLs. He stated that for now the Recovery and Prevention Strategy Sub-Team should focus on MFLs which presently exist.

## **7. Regulatory Team**

- a. Len Lindahl updated the SC on the Interim Steps taken in response to the FDEP Guidance memo (12/12/13):
  - Application decisions
  - Conservation
  - Permit duration
  - Limiting conditions added to all CUPs issued
- b. Len summarized activities included in Tasks H2- H6
  - Menu of conservation measures
  - Options for permissible thresholds of withdrawal related impacts
  - Performance measures in model compatible terms for application to regional scale natural systems
  - Schedule deliverables in coordination with Solutions Planning Team

## **8. Regional Consensus Building**

- a. Len Lindahl said the communications team has selected triSects, LLC as the contractor to assist with the enhanced communication program. All that remains is for the final purchase order to be signed which is expected shortly.

## **9. Open Discussion**

- a. None

## **10. Public Comments**

- a. Lisa Rinaman, St. Johns Riverkeeper- expressed concern with the CFWI process especially the lack of outreach to areas outside the CFWI area and the lack of public input to the technical teams. More emphasis needs to be given to conservation. The Riverkeeper organization is opposed to all surface water withdrawals. (Attachment A).
- b. Mark Middlebrook, St. Johns River Alliance- there is a greater need for better communication amongst stakeholders and citizens. He offered the support of his organization to help foster better communication.
- c. Linda Bystrafe, Ocklawaha Valley Audubon, felt the 42 MGD water conservation target was too low and should be 126 MGD. She questioned the lack of consistent per capita water use measure amongst the utilities and the districts. Also, the \$3 per thousand gallon threshold for conservation to compare against other alternatives was too low because if other supply options cost as high as \$10 per thousand then conservation should also use that same threshold.
- d. David Gore, Haines City, stressed the importance of recharge in maintaining the groundwater table and the importance of managing the groundwater table.

## **11. Next SC meetings**

- April 25, 2014
- June 27, 2014

## **12. Adjourn**

Thank you for the opportunity.

The St. Johns River continues to be plagued with excess nutrient pollution from failing septic tanks, wastewater, stormwater, urban fertilizer and runoff for agriculture.

For years, each summer the river turns a sick green that is toxic to wildlife and humans.

In 2013, the St. Johns had one of the most persistent and most toxic outbreaks on record with toxicity readings more than 200 times greater than the World Health Organization's standards for safe recreational contact. This green slime can cause respiratory stress, skin rashes and liver damage.

To make matters worse for our river, CFWI is targeting the St. Johns as a future water supply.

## **RIVER WITHDRAWALS ARE SIMPLY NOT SUSTAINABLE!**

### **Our rivers are already under dire stress.**

- Will worsen existing pollution problems
- Increase the frequency of toxic algal blooms
- Further reduce flow and increase salinity levels farther upstream
- Adversely impact vegetation, habitat, fisheries and wildlife

These withdrawals from the St. Johns are being justified based on the findings of a flawed study by the District.

The National Academy of Sciences said that the District's study "operated within a range of constraints that ultimately imposed both limitations and uncertainties on the study's overall conclusion."

We are adamantly opposed to withdrawing water from any of Florida's rivers, lakes and springs.

Withdrawals are simply unacceptable and not sustainable.

## **WATER USE PROBLEM not a WATER SUPPLY PROBLEM**

50% of Florida's drinking water is STILL used to water our grass.

- There is a lack of enforcement of existing irrigations ordinances.
- Educational programs designed to promote water conservation have been CUT.
- Deregulation relies on voluntary conservation

The Central Florida plan targets water conservation as only 4% of the solution.

The District's plan has a wide range between 84 to 212 mgd depending on how aggressive they are on water conservation.

It is time to make aggressive water conservation a PRIORITY.

The SJRWMD Water Supply Plan report states:

Appendix "D"

The estimates of water conservation presented here are a level that can be likely be attained under present economic and regulatory conditions.

However, **considerably greater potential for water conservation exists if more incentives are provided, stricter regulation is required, or the cost of new water supplies rises sharply.**

**We need bold leadership to craft statewide water policy that emphasizes water conservation, sustainable building and planning practices, incentives that encourage the efficient use of water, and market solutions, such as aggressive conservation rates.**

On behalf of the St. Johns River, the Riverkeeper members and future generations, we have asked the SJRWMD and the CFWI to table this unsustainable plan and focus on measurable, mandatory water conservation and water resource development projects that do not harm our rivers, lakes or springs.