

Central Florida Water Initiative

TOHO Water Authority
Friday, December 19, 2014

Meeting Summary

(All presentations made to the Steering Committee have been posted on cfwiwater.com.)

1. Introductions

- a. Steering Committee members present: Drew Bartlett (FDEP), Paul Senft (SWFWMD), Brian Wheeler (TOHO Water), John Miklos (SJRWMD), Rich Buddell (DACS)
- 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 November 14, 2014 Meeting Summary was approved.

3. Minimum Flows & Levels/ Reservation

- a. Kissimmee River reservation (update)
 - Len Lindahl reviewed status and objectives of the reservation development and mentioned two public workshops were held and draft rules distributed. Len stated that "some" water might be available for water supply needs in the Upper Chain of Lakes. The draft rule has been posted on the SFWMD website.
 - Objectives:
 - Protect water for authorized Kissimmee River Project
 - Ensure healthy, sustainable, native fish and wildlife community
 - Maintain C&SF Project operations per federal regulation schedules
 - Protect water supply inflows to Lake Okeechobee and the Greater Everglades Ecosystem (natural and human uses)
 - Support solutions for Central Florida's water supply needs, consistent with other objectives
 - Len Lindahl reviewed the process and schedule the SFWMD is following to adopt the reservation. Key milestone dates are:
 - Governing Board and WRAC updates-Early 2015
 - Public Comment on rule draft-Requested by January 15
 - SFWMD's web site provides information-Technical Publication draft-Early January
 - Additional workshops and meetings
 - Prepare Statement of Estimated Costs

- On schedule for 2015 adoption

b. Future MFLs

- Len Lindahl presented the following update for SWFWMD MFLs:
 - Adoption of new MFLs and a reservation for Lake Hancock expected in spring 2015. Reservation to be developed to reserve water stored in the lake through the Lake Hancock Lake Level Modification project. Reserved water that is exempted from consumptive use permitting will aid in the recovery of MFLs for the upper Peace River.
 - Six lake MFLs are proposed for reevaluation by the end of 2015 based on application of methodological enhancements, including hydrologic modeling approaches that were not previously used for adoption of the MFLs, to improve consistency in MFLs development in the CFWI area and support solution efforts.
- Len Lindahl presented the following update for SJRWMD MFLs:
 - The St. Johns River at SR520 (Lake Poinsett); Systems is located on the CFWI eastern boundary (Brevard County). It is a new MFL. This is a surface water system with little influence on the UFA at this location. MFLs report and peer review is complete. Rulemaking planned to begin in summer 2015, however this may depend on the schedule for completion of the CFWI Solutions Phase efforts.
 - Lake Apopka. 2015 priority list. Rulemaking planned to begin in late 2015, however this may depend on the schedule for completion of the CFWI Solutions Phase efforts
 - The remaining water bodies are not within the CFWI Planning Area but are within the ECFT model domain. Initiate rulemaking in late 2015. Refinement of HSPF surface water models for the basin and the intensive stakeholder/peer review panel process for the CFWI will most likely push these systems into 2016 for rulemaking to be completed.
- c. Drew Bartlett requested the Steering Committee be briefed regularly on the progress of all ongoing and proposed MFLs and reservations in the CFWI.

4. Data Monitoring & Investigation Team

- a. Chris Sweazy, Team Leader, provided an update on the development of a written work plan including an estimate of probable costs and schedule. Chris stated the work plan is based on the “minimum option” as directed by the Steering Committee. Also, he said the unique geologic and hydrologic features throughout the CFWI area complicate the SC’s desire to standardize the work plan implementation.
- b. The Steering Committee accepted the general approach for monitoring but directed the DMIT to revise the schedule to accomplish the work plan’s completion in a five year period. This also is to include using outside contracting/consulting services to handle the accelerated schedule. Drew Bartlett said he would like to see the work plan’s costs for each year.

- c. The DMIT is to present the revised work plan to the Steering Committee on January 30, 2015.

5. Solutions Planning Team

- a. Robert Beltran, Team Leader, gave an overview of the final work product of the CFWI effort. He explained that all the individual elements of the Central Florida Water Initiative are coming together and for most people this is their first comprehensive look at the initiative. Because of the breadth and depth of the CFWI he suggested the SC should revisit the schedule and perhaps change some of the completion targets to be sure the SC and all interested parties have enough time to digest and understand its contents.
- b. Dean Powell, Environmental Evaluation sub team leader, said most of the sub team's work on the following tasks has been completed and indicated they will continue to work with the SPT to refine the evaluations when needed:
 - Review and assess areas of environmental sensitivity
 - Evaluate project locations relative to areas of environmental sensitivity
 - Work with the MFLRT to evaluate projects for MFL water body impacts
 - Work with the EMT to evaluate projects for non-MFL water body impacts
- c. Mark Hammond, SWFWMD, discussed the results of the project concept scenarios:
 - 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 explained that there were 142 projects in the draft RWSP and the Solutions Planning effort identified an additional 10 projects. The Steering Committee's regional project guidance criteria was applied to these 152 projects which resulted in 18 regional projects/programs. Since these 18 regional projects generate approximately 417 MGD of water supply which greatly exceeds the anticipated need at an estimated cost of \$3.7 billion dollars, the final list of projects/programs will need to be further refined and

scaled by the Steering Committee. The SPT provided an example of scaled program funded over the next 20 years that would generate approximately 250 MGD of water at a cost of \$2.7 billion dollars. Mark emphasized this is only one scenario and many others are possible. The SPT feels that the initial years of the program should be the highest priorities of the CFWI and that progress should be evaluated regularly with the plan being updated every 5 years coincident with the statutory scheduled Regional Water Supply Plan updates. The SPT says progress toward developing prevention and recovery processes/projects for MFLs must be in place for the initiative to succeed.

- e. Robert Beltran outlined the next steps needed to complete the CFWI Plan and asked the Steering Committee for guidance on potential additional next steps:
 - i. Finalize the Regional Water Supply Plan
 - ii. Finalize the CFWI 2035 Water Resources Protection and Water Supply Strategies Plan (CFWI Plan) including:
 - CFWI Regional AWS Priority Projects List
 - CFWI Regional Financial Plan
 - iii. Finalize Options for Consistent Regulations & Implement Solutions Strategies

Potential additional next steps

- I. Implement Conservation to the Greatest Extent Practicable
 - II. Implement Critical Water Resource Data Collection
 - III. Implement Investigations to Support Water Resource Projects
 - IV. Update the ECFT Groundwater Model
 - V. Initiate Annual Status reports
 - VI. Initiate a process for a 5 year assessment and update
- f. The Steering Committee had extensive discussion on the next steps:
 - Paul Senft felt the costs presented were “total project/program costs” and that the final report should indicate the expected share of the various funding partners (State, WMD, water users, etc.). He felt the aggregate costs if funded consistently over the next 20 years were manageable,
 - Drew Bartlett questioned the relative expense of the groundwater project options. Mark Hammond explained they were due to developing the Lower Floridan Aquifer which is much more costly to construct. Mark also stated that two of the projects have already been permitted (SE Polk and Cypress Lakes).

- Rich Budell felt much more detail was needed to explain the reasons for the projects especially if they are proposed to reduce or prevent MFL impacts. The projects/programs will need to be prioritized.
 - Drew Bartlett questioned if some of the projects had included environmental recovery as part of their costs. If so, he wanted this element presented in more detail.
 - Brian Wheeler felt the DMIT Work plan must be given the highest priority because the results would help develop the most cost effective solution. Brian also stated conservation funding should be funded immediately.
 - The Steering Committee directed the SPT to recommend funding the Florida Conservation Clearinghouse beginning in the first year and continue throughout the planning horizon.
 - The Steering Committee's general direction was to better define conservation, identify programs to maximize conservation, maximize data collection to support cost effective project/programs and begin the effort to continually update the groundwater model.
- 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. The CFWI Plan and the draft RWSP (including any revisions) will then go the Governing Boards of the WMDs for final review and approval. Based on the earlier discussion, the SPT is suggested the plan's completion date be changed to August or September 2015 with WMD Governing Board approval for September/October 2015.
- Public comment
 - Shelley Lauten (triSects) expressed concern that enough time be provided for enhanced community engagement and understanding of the CFWI effort. She mentioned that business leaders have been supportive of the effort but lack an in depth understanding of the plan's fundamental objectives. A continuation of the community outreach is needed.
 - The Steering Committee approved the change to the schedule as proposed with the caveat that Public Input start May 1 (earlier then proposed). The CFWI Plan completion date is targeted for August/September 2015.

6. Regulatory Team

- a. Len Lindahl, Team Leader, reported that the Team's Environmental representative/ Jane Graham (Audubon Florida) has resigned from the Team and the position is proposed to be replaced by Mary Jean Yon (Audubon Florida). The SC approved the change.
- b. Len reported on the ongoing process to follow the December 13, 2014, FDEP Guidance memo.

- d. The RT will continue progress on priority topics, coordinate with Solutions Planning Team, ongoing regulatory review of RWSP Projects and develop draft content for CFWI Strategies document

7. Regional Consensus Building

- a. Shelley Lauten (triSects) reported on two significant outreach efforts:
 - Central Florida Partnership engagement on November 21 with the business community leaders. The three WMD Executive Directors were part of the program and their session was well received by those in attendance. However, the business leaders stated they need to develop a much better understanding of the water supply challenges in Central Florida.
 - Central Florida Legislative delegation on December 17 had a presentation from Michael Minton (SPT member) on the CFWI and its funding needs. Shelley felt it was well received by the entire legislative delegation in Central Florida. This gathering is the only legislative delegation that includes all of central Florida's elected representatives.
- b. Drew Bartlett supported the idea of continuing the outreach to the community. The Steering committee requested that a plan to extend the community outreach through 2015 was needed and requested that the plan be presented to the SC at their next meeting on January 30.

8. Open Discussion - NONE

9. Public Comments

- a. David Gore (NE Polk County) stated the money that will be spent needs to make a difference. He is concerned that the CFWI is not on the right track and the environment needs to be addressed especially improving the long term viability of the water table.

10. Next SC meetings

- a. Jan 30, 2015
- b. Feb 27, 2015
- c. Mar 27, 2015
- d. Additional meetings to be identified through 2015

11. Adjourn