

**Caloosahatchee Estuary Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP)
Annual Meeting Summary**

Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at 2:00 PM

*South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Lower West Coast Service Center
2301 McGregor Boulevard, 1st Floor Large Conference Room
Fort Myers, FL*

Attendees

Terry Bengtsson, Johnson Engineering	Sam Lee, Lee County
Karen Bliss, Charlotte County	Kelly McBride, City of Cape Coral
Bob Burleson, ATM	Linda McCarthy, Lykes Brothers
Steve Canton, GEI Consultants	Stacey Ollis, SFWMD
John Cassani, Calusa Waterkeeper	Kelly O'Nan, Hendry County
Michael Cook, LA-MSID	Sherri Ouimet, Charlotte County
Sara Davis, DEP	Steve Peene, ATM
Greg DeAngelo, DEP	Harry Phillips, City of Cape Coral
Tim Denison, Johnson Engineering	Libby Pigman, SFWMD
Patricia DiPiero, Lee County	Ray Pribble, Janicki Environmental
Cathy Foerster, Wildwood Consulting	Erin Rasnake, DEP
Marcy Frick, Tetra Tech	Raulie Raulerson, FDACS
Kathleen Greenwood, FDACS	Gary Ritter, Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Katie Hallas, FDACS	Steve Sentes, SFWMD
Ron Hamel, Gulf Citrus Growers	Johnathan Sieg, Pavese Law Firm
Janet Hearn, ATM	Jeff Sumner, Federico & Assoc.
Connie Jarvis, City of Cape Coral	Richard Thompson, City of Fort Myers
Steven Kelly, FDOT District One	Bill Walker, LA-MSID
Keith Kibbey, Lee County	Rhonda Watkins, Collier County
Lisa Kreiger, Lee County	

Introduction

Cathy Foerster opened the meeting at 2:00 PM by welcoming everyone. She stated that this is the fourth annual meeting of the adopted Caloosahatchee Estuary Basin Management Plan (BMAP). She reminded attendees to sign in and provide their email information should they desire to be on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) contact list to receive meeting notices regarding the Caloosahatchee Estuary. She told them to complete a stakeholder notification sign-up card if they would like to be on distribution lists for other basins. She requested that each person in the room introduce them self. She then turned the meeting over to Sara Davis, DEP Basin Coordinator. Sara stated that the purpose of today's meeting is to provide an overview of the 2016 annual report for the Caloosahatchee Estuary BMAP; discuss activities that occurred during the reporting period; provide an update on the monitoring program and modeling; discuss next steps; and receive comments. She mentioned that the draft annual report was posted on February 20, 2017 and available for review. A public workshop was held earlier today to discuss the status of total maximum daily load (TMDL) development for impaired waterbodies in the Caloosahatchee River basin. At that public workshop, DEP presented the final calibrated watershed and receiving water models, status of the nutrient impaired waters, suggested approaches for development of TMDLs, and results from modeling scenarios completed.

Overview of the 2016 Annual Report

This is the fourth annual report for the Caloosahatchee Estuary BMAP that was adopted in 2012 to implement a total nitrogen (TN) TMDL that was adopted in 2009. The reporting period for the 2016

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annual report is December 1, 2015 through November 30, 2016. Sara presented a series of slides that showed the progress toward achieving the TMDL. The required TN reduction is 388,718 pounds of nitrogen per year (lbs-N/year). To date, the estimated TN reduction is 183,482 lbs-N/yr (47 % of the required reduction) through projects completed by the City of Cape Coral, City of Fort Myers, Charlotte County, Lehigh Acres Municipal Service Improvement District (LA-MSID), Lee County, Lucaya Community Development District, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and agricultural producers.

Activities During the Reporting Period

The City of Cape Coral completed a catch basin cleanout project that reduced TN by 590 lbs-N/year and Lee County completed the Caloosahatchee Creeks Preserve Restoration project, reduction credits still to be determined. LA-MSID broke ground on the Southwest Lehigh Weirs Project that is also known as the Aquifer Benefit and Storage for the Orange River Basin (A.B.S.O.R.B.) project. A representative of LA-MSID will provide an overview of this project in just a few minutes. Various ongoing efforts continued through the reporting period by stakeholders such as public education, street sweeping and maintenance, and implementation of local ordinances for source control. Sara presented a series of slides with photos of activities during the reporting period such as Lee County's "Don't Feed the Monster" public education campaign; LA-MSID's Wings Over Water Festival; and SFWMD's C-43 Water Quality Treatment and Testing Facility, C-43 West Basin Storage Reservoir Project, and Tape Grass Restoration Pilot Study. Sara then displayed slides regarding the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) agricultural lands enrollment activities during the reporting period. Sara mentioned that DEP looks at enrollment acreage differently than FDACS. For example, in this BMAP study area, the total agricultural acres are 30,049 acres, but 18,937 acres are used for purposes of TN reduction estimates based on land use classifications. FDACS met its five-year enrollment goal and 11,112 acres remain to be enrolled. The estimated TN reduction to date is 36,169 lbs-N/yr.

Michael Cook, Assistant District Manager for LA-MSID, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the A.B.S.O.R.B. project. The project includes the construction of 25 weirs in Lehigh Acres to improve water quality and aquifer recharge and increase storage (approximately 800 acre-feet) for the Orange River Basin as well as improve the health of the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary. The project is currently 65–70% complete with 21 weirs constructed. Preliminary estimates by LA-MSID indicate TN reductions of 888 kilograms/year, but monitoring will be conducted to determine actual reductions.

Monitoring Program Update

Sara presented a series of slides regarding the monitoring program. Water quality monitoring is conducted by the City of Cape Coral, City of Fort Myers, DEP South Regional Operations Center, Lee County, and SFWMD via a monitoring network that was set up in 2011/2012. Sara would like feedback from the stakeholders on how to improve the network such as adding identifiers for stations (bay, estuary), changing the tiered system, and/or adding new stations. She stated that the Florida STORET and RETrieval (STORET) water quality database is being replaced by the Watershed Information Network (WIN). There are minimum data quality standards associated with WIN. WIN will be open for data uploads in spring 2017; after December 2017, all data will need to be uploaded to WIN. Sara provided a slide with contact information for the STORET/WIN coordinators as well as a webpage address that can be accessed for more information.

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Sara mentioned that biological monitoring is conducted by SFWMD (oysters and seagrass) and DEP (seagrass only). SFWMD will publish its 2017 South Florida Environmental Report in March 2017. Volume I, Chapters 8A and 8C will include information on the Caloosahatchee Basin.

Modeling Update

Sara stated that during BMAP development, stakeholders expressed concerns about the models used to establish the TMDLs. In response, DEP contracted with Tetra Tech and Amec to evaluate and revise the existing models. A public workshop was held earlier today to discuss the results of this effort. The Hydrologic Simulation Program-FORTRAN (HSPF) is the watershed model; Environmental Fluid Dynamics Code (EFDC) is the estuary model. DEP is currently reviewing stakeholder comments on the draft model calibration report, a 1,200-page document. Sara encouraged attendees to review the draft report and provide DEP with any comments. She also provided information for the two primary DEP TMDL contacts.

Next Steps

Greg DeAngelo, DEP Deputy Director of the Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration, presented on recent legislative changes that affect all BMAPs as well as specific requirements related to the Caloosahatchee Estuary BMAP. For the Caloosahatchee Estuary BMAP, which is one of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program watersheds, a formal five-year review is now required, with the first review due by the end of this year. This review must include five-year milestones to measure progress, since the aim will be to achieve the TMDL within 20 years. All new or revised BMAPs must include the following information on existing and future projects: priority ranking; planning level cost estimates; estimated completion date; expected nutrient load reduction; source and amount of funding. Sara elaborated that more projects are needed from the stakeholders to achieve the TMDL.

Sara stated that she would like stakeholder comments provided to her on the draft annual report, including missing information for the project tables, by March 7, 2017. She reminded attendees that: 1) the draft model calibration report is available for review and the final report will be released in March; 2) STORET database uploads need to be completed; 3) she will be seeking stakeholder assistance in the compilation of water quality analyses, future projects to meet milestones, and detailed allocations for inclusion in the five-year review. The draft five-year review is to be completed by November 2017.

Questions/Comments

1. Lisa Kreiger: Lee County is determining its projects for the next five years. In what format should we provide these projects to you? Sara: Please use the project table format as reflected in Appendix B of the draft annual report, Future Projects for Planning and Funding Purposes.
2. Lisa Kreiger: We have a lot of "dream" projects, do you want those too? Sara and Greg: Yes, we need as many projects as possible since there is a 20-year planning horizon with 5-year interval milestones. For the 10 and 15-year milestones, the projects can be project types, rather than specific projects.
3. Gary Ritter: There is a lot of development across the state. Is there an expectation that local governments will also estimate population growth when determining and submitting projects? Greg: Yes, local governments will need to contemplate future growth, which is a component of the BMAP. Examples of strategies to address future growth are ordinances or land development regulations that limit the use of septic systems.
4. Steve Canton: Will the BMAP change based on the model output, especially since the model is for the entire watershed rather than just the BMAP study area? Sara: We do not know yet, but do anticipate that the BMAP boundary will be expanded.

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5. John Cassani: DEP should be responsible for environmental resource permits (ERPs) and achieving associated TMDL allocations rather than require local government responsibility for achieving TMDLs.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.

Action Items

Below are action items from the meeting.

1. Sara: Post final presentations and meeting summary to the DEP BMAP public site.
2. Stakeholders: Provide comments on draft annual report and missing project information to Sara by close of business March 7, 2017.
3. Sara: Seek feedback from stakeholders on improvement of the water quality monitoring network.
4. Sara: Send Steven Kelly (FDOT) the BMAP boundary maps for St. Lucie, Lake Okeechobee and Caloosahatchee for Steven to coordinate with appropriate FDOT personnel on long-term plans.
5. Richard Thompson: Provide Sara the future projects the City of Fort Myers is contemplating along with draft reduction calculations for her review.
6. Sara: Provide Richard Thompson the DEP best management practice efficiencies handout.
7. Sara: Provide Richard Thompson the 2009 SFWMD land use categories that are used in the latest model.