

Florida Water Resources Monitoring Council

February 6 & 7, 2008

Live Oak, Florida

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ellen McCarron, Florida Department of Environmental Resources (FDEP), CHAIR

Chris Brooks, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DOACS)

Paul Carlson, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) (by phone)

Kevin Carter, Florida Local Environmental Resource Agencies (FLERA)

Graham Lewis, Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD)

Mark Rials, Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)

Steve Richter, Saint Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)

Gail Sloane, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Bob Vincent, Department of Health (DOH) (Day 2)

Megan Wetherington, Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD)

There were 5 observers the first day and 2 observers the second day.

Day One: Wednesday, February 6, 2008

AGENDA REVIEW/MEETING GUIDELINES/PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES

Janice Fleischer, Council Facilitator, began by reviewing the Agenda (Exhibit A), Meeting Guidelines and Public Comment Guidelines.

For meeting Reports, exhibits, Guidelines and other Council documentation go to
<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/WaterMonitoringCouncil/> .

LIAISON UPDATE

Council Liaison, Steve Wolfe, delivered his Liaison Update (Exhibit B).

INTEGRATED DATA MANAGEMENT (IDM), METADATA AND SYSTEMS DESIGN STATUS

Council Chair, Ellen McCarron, FDEP, delivered a presentation on the status of the IDM Systems Design Project. (Exhibit C)

Following Ms. McCarron's presentation, Council members made the following comments and asked questions:

1. What is the major reason for the IDM accelerated meeting schedule?
 - a. Funding must be spent by June 30 and the state budget spending was held up until November this fiscal year.
2. Will these be stand alone workshops at the system requirements level?
 - a. Yes, at the higher level. There will be 3 high-level requirements meetings and then a series of 6 lower level requirements meetings.
3. Will there be guidance from the three high level workshops?
 - a. Yes, in fact, the IT team is meeting with some of the Oceans Council members as well to get their input on what they wanted.
 - b. The information from the Oceans Council will be brought to the participants at the high level workshops.
4. Are the two reconciliation meetings happening?
 - a. Yes. One will be this fiscal year and the final one will be next fiscal year if the funding is continued into next year.
5. Briefing to the agencies will be included in the follow up.
6. There will be no teleconferencing due to the nature of these meetings, teleconferencing just doesn't work well.
7. Will there be a summary of these meetings for those who are not invited to attend or are unable to attend?
 - a. Yes, all meeting information will be posted on a "share point site".
 - b. There will be meeting notes generated for every system design meeting plus requirements documents as deliverables.
8. Who is the audience for the RFI process that is part of this process?
 - a. To the "IT" vendor world.
9. Would this money go into DEP's budget?
 - a. Not yet determined, it may go into another agency or it may come into DEP's.
 - b. There is a new agency, the Agency for Enterprise Information Technology, not many people know about this new agency, they may be considered for the funds.
10. There is a new iteration process that incorporates prototypes to test each stage as it is developed to get user feedback before design aspects are finalized.
11. How does STORET figure into the IDM?
 - a. STORET will eventually disappear as it is known today. It will be replaced by a data exchange network approach where data providers send their data through the network to DEP. Then DEP will be responsible for uploading to EPA/STORET system.
 - b. Remember this Council is tasked with assisting with the STORET replacement so we want to keep track of their progress and assist where we can. The IDM System Design effort will definitely take into account what STORET is up to and report back to the Council.
12. The system being designed now is to assist users in finding out if data sets might be useful for them.
13. Can we hire someone to align STORET with the new program to get data from the existing STORET database?
 - a. We think that is doable, and should be a feasible effort.
 - b. The focus is to make getting to the data as easy as possible.
 - c. Depends on whether the STORET database itself is kept.
14. Kathy Byrd (K.R.Byrd@dep.state.fl.us), who was in the audience was asked to speak on STORET.
 - a. All information currently in STORET will be warehoused, going forward new data will be stored differently.
 - b. STORET is onboard with the IDM effort.
 - c. The repository will be changing, not sure whether it is built or "off the shelf".
 - i. Did you look at WISKI?

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1. Kisters makes WISKI, it has now been found not to fit the needs identified.
2. We are probably heading toward a complete individual build rather than an "off the shelf".
- ii. Metadata pulled from STORET:
 1. There is an effort underway that is mapping the data elements defined by the National Monitoring Council to those currently stored in STORET.
- d. We have known that STORET is inadequate for a very long time; but replacing it is/was not easy, needed some deep thought about how to do it.
- e. What about the interface in order to access the data from STORET once STORET is gone?
- f. What is the time frame for building a new system?
 - i. Possibly 2 years for a complete build, but this will be an iterative approach.
 - ii. Extremely important that this is user friendly.

BREAK

At this point in the meeting, members took a short break.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was invited. No one spoke.

Note: Public comment is not transcribed. If anyone from the public desires to have his/her comments appear in the Report of Proceedings, they can submit their comments in writing on the comment cards provided at each meeting or email the Facilitator, Janice Fleischer (janice@flashresolutions.com) within the first week following the meeting.

PRESENTATION – SAVE OUR SUWANNEE, INC., MONITORING PROGRAM

Presenter: Annette Long, President of the Save our Suwannee (SOS) organization spoke to the group.

(Exhibit D)

Ms. Long explained that SOS has a monitoring program but it is not very technical; it is made up of all volunteers who use homemade equipment although they are now getting some out-of-date equipment that does work. In addition to monitoring, their mission is to get the word out to the public.

When they began, there was no data on the state of the River, and they decided to begin monitoring so reports can be made on what is happening with the River. They recently began including secondary springs in the monitoring effort. Ms. Long indicated that finding the problems is easy, diagnosing the problems is difficult

In concluding her presentation, Ms. Long asked if the data they gather will be able to be added to the new IDM system. For the SOS metadata, yes definitely, as soon as the system is ready to accept it. Getting their actual result values into the system must wait until the system can accommodate it and that will be considerably further into the future.

Member comments following the presentation:

1. Maybe you are really asking for an extension service that talks technical data and turns it into something that everyone can understand?
 - a. We also want to be able to find the data to begin with.
2. SOS is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization; it is member supported.
3. Do you participate in the Lake Watch program?
 - a. No, because we are not regular enough for them.
 - b. Mostly we put out fires and that is why we are interested in historical data, we want to compare to what has happened in the past.
4. To whom do you go for advice on what to monitor/how to monitor?
 - a. We look where the problem is, we look at the location and what karst (topography) might exist in the area of the problem.
 - b. We mostly focus on polluted springs.
5. There are some really good manuals for volunteer water quality monitoring.
6. DEP sponsors field sampling workshops.
7. Do you have a sympathetic legislator that lives along the River?
 - a. Not directly on the River, but we have had some champions.
8. We have quarterly meetings and sometime special meetings.
 - a. DEP has a springs monitoring program, there are reports on the website.
9. The new IDM system is intended to be accessible to the public and it will not be closed to outside data.
 - a. However, there will be requirements to use metadata standards and eventually requirements for data exchange when that part of the system is built.

PRESENTATION – SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SRWMD)

Robbie McKinney, SRWMD Environmental Scientist-Biologist, delivered a presentation on the water monitoring by SRWMD (**Exhibit E**).

Mr. McKinney said that most of the data is available at www.mysuwanneeriver.com. He explained that most data requests are from folks who can't navigate the STORET system and ask for SRWMD's help.

Member comments:

1. Is this done by field staff or is it all contractors?
 - a. Some staff and some contractors.
2. All the springs are free flowing here/ nothing is dammed.
3. Wells, springs, surface water: are you doing data analysis?
 - a. New annual report and take all the data and do trends, not as complex as real analysis.
4. Can this be accessed through www.mysuwanneeriver.com?
5. Any studies to find source of nitrates in the springs
 - a. Yes, on website, Nitrate Trends Report.
 - b. Trend network started in 2000, before that very spotty.
6. What was determined to be the source of the nitrates?
 - a. We don't test for the source, just whether it is getting better, worse or "flat".
 - b. Lately we've been in a drought.
7. Surface water data goes back to the early 1990's; depends on the site (some mid to late 80's).
8. Are all wells from the Floridan aquifer or are there surficial wells?
 - a. Mainly Floridan but there are some surficial wells.

FLORIDA MONITORING ACTION PLAN STRAWMAN- PRELIMINARY CONSENSUS RANKING OF LONG TERM GOALS

A new draft of the Florida Monitoring Action Plan had been sent to members for their review prior to the meeting (Exhibit F). Members were asked first to discuss and finalize each of the Issue areas in the Plan. What follows below are the consensus rankings and discussion of the Issue areas only. Each approved Issue is highlighted. Please see <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/WaterMonitoringCouncil/> for consensus rules. If there are no rankings below a "3", consensus is reached.

Issue: Characterize monitoring activities

5	4	3	2	1
2	5	1	0	0

Consensus achieved

New Issue: Develop Improved Monitoring Methods

Mr. Wolfe explained that he had created this new Issue group when redrafting the Plan. The rationale for developing this new grouping was based on input from the last meeting of the Council. These items did not seem to fit in any of the other categories.

Prior to ranking this section, Council had an open discussion:

1. This seems to be more of the "guts" which is a good thing.
2. Seems like this is coordinating the technicalities of what is being done (the "what" you are coordinating).
3. What are "data quality objectives"?
 - a. the who, what, when, where, why
 - b. the real "why"
4. We may need to define what "data quality objective" means.
 - a. Data quality objectives are fundamentally different for sampling.
 - b. Gail Sloane said she would get the definition from the DEP program that is working on this.
 - c. The Council used this term and we need to describe its relevance to improvements of monitoring methods.
5. There is an EPA document that defines the data quality objectives; it has several steps; all the steps make up the data quality objectives.
6. Are we reinventing the wheel since there are already definitions for this?
 - a. No, because you must establish the objectives.
 - b. It forces the issue of things that do not usually get done.
7. Is this something we want in an Action Plan or do we just want to say that everyone should be doing this?
 - a. Council could recommend that the objectives be set but not do the setting themselves.
8. Looking at the overall issue; I agree with this, not just methods, but all aspects.

First Ranking: The Council members were asked first to give their approval ranking on whether or not they liked the idea of the new Issue Group.

5	4	3	2	1
1	5	3	0	0

Consensus achieved on keeping the Issue Group

Further discussion regarding this New Issue Group:

1. If we want to improve monitoring methods what would we do?
 - a. List those methods about which there is some conflict about the methods to be used.
 - b. Should we look at data comparability?
 - i. That might be a "coordination".
 - c. This is really a best resource monitoring practices action item; maybe comparable to BMPs for monitoring.
 - d. We need to have everyone consider what everyone else is doing.
2. Should we get approval of the data quality objective definition?
3. We should talk about what should be included in this grouping.
4. Perusers of data don't know the context of the data sets you can get on the web; we should be sure that you are adequately describing your methods; that they are planned all the way.
 - a. Are we talking about the methods themselves?
5. I don't think this Action Plan is meant to cover this.
 - a. This is the Council's actions.
 - b. The Metadata Standards could be this part of this.
6. How would the Council improve monitoring methods?
 - a. Possibly establish a committee that looks at monitoring methods and oversees and promotes it and then reports on it.
7. When we are doing our inventory we need to inventory what data quality objectives are being done.
8. Would you establish the data quality objectives for those programs you are creating?

A Council member suggested the following:

Change the issue group name to "Improve Monitoring Practices"

- i. Long term goal: To establish best resource monitoring practices (BRMP)

Ranking of Title and Long Term Goal of New issue:

5	4	3	2	1
1	6	2	0	0

Consensus achieved

Issue: Coordinate monitoring activities

5	4	3	2	1
1	4	3	0	0

Consensus achieved

Issue: Stewardship of Florida Water Resources

5	4	3	2	1
2	4	2	0	0

Consensus achieved

Issue: Funding

5	4	3	2	1
2	6	0	0	0

Consensus achieved

Issue: Legislation

5	4	3	2	1
2	5	1	0	0

Consensus achieved

ADJOURN

Upon completing their rankings and approvals of all the Issue Groups, the Council adjourned for the day.

Day Two: Thursday, February 7, 2008

WELCOME BACK

On the morning of the second day, Council member Mark Rials brought the following links regarding Data Quality Objectives for the Council's information.

EPA Data Quality Objectives: www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/g4-final.pdf

Agency wide quality system documents: www.epa.gov/quality/qa-docs.html#noneparqt

Council member, Gail Sloane had researched and found the DEP DATA Quality Objective definition: *a target or goal describing a level of expected data quality. Example Data Quality objectives include using specified, approved lab methods; monitoring and reporting precision and accuracy for laboratory analyses; developing a detailed sampling plan that controls for confounding variables; meeting specified Method Detection Limits and Practical Quantitation Limits for permit compliance; following specified DEP Standard Operating Procedures for sample collection and field-testing; using Dept. of Health-certified laboratories; maintaining laboratory quality control for taxonomic identification.*

MONITORING ACTION PLAN: FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Council members broke into two groups to work on refining the Goals and "Why do this?" portion of the Plan. Exhibit G reflects the work of the two groups as well as the process of finalizing Goals that was done when the two small groups were reconvened. This process took the remainder of the day.

Council member, Paul Carlson, who was attending the meeting via teleconference, emailed the following comments during the meeting:

With regard to 36 month outcomes, questions to ask of each Action Item:

HAS THIS BEEN ATTEMPTED BEFORE?

IF SO, WAS IT SUCCESSFUL? IF YES, WHY? IF NO, WHY?

IF SO, IS THERE A STRUCTURE OR FOUNDATION WE CAN BUILD ON?

HOW WILL WE USE PAST EXPERIENCE IN SIMILAR EFFORTS TO MAKE THIS EFFORT SUCCESSFUL?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was invited. No one spoke.

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provided at each meeting or email the Facilitator, Janice Fleischer (janice@flashresolutions.com) within the first week following the meeting.

EVALUATIONS/ADJOURN

Members were reminded to fill in their Evaluations and the meeting was adjourned.