

Florida Water Resources Monitoring Council

May 23 & 24, 2007
West Palm Beach, Florida

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chris Brooks, Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACs)
Kevin Carter, Florida League of Environmental Resource Agencies (FLERA)
Linda Lindstrom, Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) (Day 2)
Darlene Haverkamp for Gil MCrae, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
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, Florida Department of Health (DOH)

MEMBER ALTERNATES PRESENT:

Megan Wetherington, Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD)
Nenad Iricanin, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) (Day 1)

There were 6 observers.

DAY ONE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2007

AGENDA REVIEW AND MEETING GUIDELINES

Council Chair, Ellen McCarron, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone back. She then turned the meeting over to the Facilitator, Janice Fleischer.

Ms. Fleischer began by reviewing the Agenda (Exhibit A). She also explained public comment opportunities and guidelines to new visitors, reminded Observers and Members that there are comment cards available to allow them to add information they want to appear in the Report of Proceedings. Ms. Fleischer reminded members to be aware that there are member tasks that sometimes need to be done between regularly scheduled meetings; therefore, it is very important that Council members read and respond to email requests that may be made by Council Liaison, Steven Wolfe.

Following this, Council members decided on the dates below for future Council meetings:

July 25 & 26, 2007- Tallahassee
September 11 & 12, 2007- TBA
November 7 & 8, 2007- Tallahassee
February 6 & 7, 2008- TBA
March 5 & 6, 2008- Tallahassee
May 7 & 8, 2008- TBA

LIAISON UPDATE AND STATUS OF COUNCIL CHARGES

Council Chair, Ellen McCarron, made the announcement that FDEP Secretary Sole's response to the Council's request to increase Council membership was that he wants to keep the current council make-up at this time. He encourages local and county governments to participate in the Council efforts and provide feedback to the Council. This decision can be revisited at the end of the next phase of Council work.

Member responses:

1. FLERA constituents will be disappointed but it will mean we need to get timely feedback to Council members so we can get the material to constituents in a time that gives them notice so they can react and send in comments or come to public comment.
2. We should make linkages to the original Water Monitoring Council retreats; maybe have those linked from this webpage; Ms. McCarron will look for summaries of those retreats.

Council Liaison, Steve Wolfe, reported on the Legislative budget (**Exhibit B**). The Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Council received funding for FY 2007-2008 from the Florida Legislature to pursue their Integrated Data Management and Dissemination (IDM) effort. During the Oceans Council meeting last week, the Oceans Council decided to focus the funds on the first two of the four Data Focus Areas in the IDM description in their 2007-2008 Annual Science Research Plan. This decision was made to permit these two parts to make substantial progress in this fiscal year, as they felt it more important to begin implementing these two tasks rather than just completing plans for all four. This change means that approximately \$200K will be available for the Monitoring Council to use toward establishing metadata standards, the first of the two Data Focus Areas in IDM and, in the Oceans Council's opinion, one of the most important steps of the effort. The funding for metadata standards was increased to allow the use of contractors to speed establishing the standards.

Data Focus Area 2 of IDM, not a Monitoring Council charge but of relevance to Council activities, is the design of a system to safely store and retrieve research and monitoring data in Florida. In conjunction with the metadata standards, this is envisioned to provide the ability to store, archive, and access Florida data and easily assess its suitability for the user's purposes. A component of Data Focus Area 2 is to undertake a pilot to add metadata to an existing data set, estimate costs for this activity on a larger scale, and to collect information to establish priorities for porting existing data to the new system. There is approximately \$400K for this portion of the effort.

Member discussion:

1. On the recommended \$1.5M for Coastal and Ocean Observing Systems (COOS), can agencies apply for these funds?
 - a. RFPPs will be going out in the next week or so to get input on who might be interested in putting in proposals.

Mr. Wolfe went on to update the Council on the work of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA). GOMA is holding an "All-Hands" meeting with workshops in St. Petersburg July 10-12. The status of the Governor's Action Plan and any changes needed to complete the goals of that plan will be discussed. Workshops on standardizing coastal water resources monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico, on strategies to develop coastal nutrient criteria, on habitat identification, and on coastal restoration are included in the agenda.

Nutrient criteria is a major thing being focused on, with the GOMA Water Quality Team and the Nutrients Team joining to coordinate nutrient monitoring efforts. There was additionally a GOMA Pilot proposed to the National Water Quality Monitoring Network, to perform nutrient fate studies all using same study design.

National Monitoring Council did not select this proposal but the Gulf Alliance will consider whether to pursue them anyway at the July meeting.

COMPLETING THE STRATEGY, CHARGE #1 - METADATA STANDARDS

The remainder of the day was spent in open discussion on the different elements of the Strategy for Metadata Standards. Each discussion held and decisions made are reflected below. Additionally, attached as **Exhibit C** is the Strategy in Table Form as refined and adopted by consensus during this meeting.

The Council agreed that it was important that all members are utilizing the same definitions of important words in their Council discussions.

1. Definitions to be used by this WRMC:
 - a. Datum: a specific item of information
 - b. Data Record: collection of data
 - c. Metadata element: the specific attribute about individual components of a data record
 - d. Metadata Standard: technical specification used to create a data record

Definitions decision:

5	4	3	2	1
0	4	5	0	0

Consensus achieved

PUBLIC COMMENT

At this stage of the meeting, public comment was invited. No one commented.

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: U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS - COMPREHENSIVE EVERGLADES RESTORATION PLAN (CERP) MONITORING LOCATOR, AGENCY DATA TO SHARE BETWEEN CERP AGENCIES

Bill Hall, SFWMD and Frank Grant, USACE gave a presentation on the CERP Monitoring Locator Program (**Exhibit D**).

At the conclusion of this presentation, Members made the following comments:

1. How did you get all folks agree?

- a. Initial meetings were teleconferences and group meetings; first talked on a very high level to get agreement on what they wanted to do.
 - b. Initial meetings were more difficult.
 - c. This group was only made up of agencies that were willing to participate; there were about 70% of the agencies participating.
 - d. We pursued each agency to see what they had, what they wanted to build, if they were willing to share and incorporate their information into a central database.
2. Basically it is persistence.
3. GIS developers are designing the site.
4. They don't care where the data is, they just want to know what is being monitored and what are the results of the monitoring.
5. How are you going to deal with the QAQC (quality assessment, quality control) data? What value are you putting in?
 - a. There needs to be some type of descriptive so they can type in what type of QAQC is being done; if there is a standard in the industry it needs to be noted.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned for the day.

Day Two: Thursday, May 24, 2007

WELCOME BACK

Upon reconvening the second morning, the Council went to work immediately.

FINALIZING CHARGE #1 METADATA STRATEGY

Timeline

The first item considered was the concept of two timelines for accomplishing work on the strategy: one timeline for Standard setting and another timeline for Standard adoption.

Member Comments:

1. We need to talk about how we go about doing it before we decide on two different timelines.
2. The Legislature doesn't need the finished product but they do need to see a product that they can see will be finished in time for them to authorize funding.
3. The document should be brought to stakeholders prior to bringing it to the Legislature so Legislature knows there has been some input into the document they receive.
4. Preliminary proposal to take to stakeholders should be done by ?
5. This document will be a collaboratively developed item by all the agencies represented on the Council.
6. You need to have a document and presentation to take to the Legislature so they can support the initiative.

Consensus was reached on establishing two separate timelines for accomplishing the metadata strategy:

Establishing a Panel of Experts (See Exhibit C, #3):

Discussion of establishing panel of experts:

1. What is most important? The expertise on the panel or the full representation of all agencies?
2. We need to decide criteria for what is being sought; level of effort, product.

Criteria for selection of experts:

- a. Primary focus is expertise in data management for monitoring programs.
- b. Experience with data sharing between agencies or entities (example: STORET).
- c. Experience with metadata standards.
- d. Ability to work collaboratively; team player; flexibility.
- e. Ability to serve considering time needed.

Adoption of criteria for selection of expert

5	4	3	2	1
3	5	0	0	0

Consensus achieved

Deliverables from Consultant:

Council members suggested the following minimum deliverables due from the Consultant to be hired:

1. Work plan with specific timeline.
2. Survey of all existing metadata elements in Florida (including but not limited to: local, state, federal, universities); submitted to expert panel when completed.
3. Survey of metadata standards internationally; submitted to expert panel when completed.
4. Analysis of existing metadata elements vs. existing metadata standards: submitted to expert panel when completed:
 - a. Showing how various metadata are linked/coordinated
5. The Report of the Analysis (Summary: give Council available feasible options); submitted to expert panel when completed.
6. Preparation of interim Report delivered to Expert Panel and Council.
7. Weekly Progress Reports to Expert Panel.

Ranking on draft Deliverables

5	4	3	2	1
3	4	2	0	0

Consensus Achieved

PUBLIC COMMENT

At this stage of the meeting, public comment was invited. One person commented: Craig Dye, Pinellas County.

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.

The Council then broke for lunch.

Draft Skill set criteria for consultant to be refined by expert panel:

1. Ability to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing
2. Experience with data sharing between agencies or entities
3. Experience with metadata standards
4. Ability to work collaboratively; good interpersonal skills; flexibility
5. Expertise in data management in diverse water resources related monitoring programs
6. Familiarity with local, state and federal agencies in Florida
7. References and demonstration of past performance with similar projects in metadata and data management
8. Previous survey experience
9. Experience working with scientific data
10. Scientific background
11. Experience as a user of various forms of monitoring data

Ranking of draft skill set for criteria

5	4	3	2	1
5	3	1	0	0

Consensus achieved

Members suspended their discussions on the Metadata Strategy to allow time for two presentations; these presentations focused on methods for handling and assessing data developed by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).

PRESENTATION: SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESENTATIONS

FIRST PRESENTATION: *CONSOLIDATING DATA FROM MULTI-AGENCY DATABASES: THINGS TO CONSIDER AND LESSONS LEARNED*

Nenad Iricanan, SFWMD (Exhibit E)

Member comments following the presentation:

1. Did you scrub for Quality Assurance?
 - a. No time to do that
2. What do you do about new data?

- a. No real plan to update.
- b. This will probably be used for information.

SECOND PRESENTATION *SFWMD CONSOLIDATED DATA MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE AND DATA STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM*

Presenters: Brian Turcotte, SFWMD (Exhibit F)

Member comments following the presentations:

1. If we come up with metadata standards, will you embrace that?
 - a. We are not developing metadata standards.
 - b. Two leading metadata standards for ecological data can handle what we do so far.
2. What do data stewards do with the other 95% of their time?
 - a. Some are designated "data stewards", others have other responsibilities.

Following these presentations, Members resumed their discussion on the Metadata Strategy.

Types of data in list of standards

1. The Consultant will be informed that the universe of water resources data covered is physical, biological, and chemical; and
2. The Consultant is encouraged to refine/enlarge the water resources data table, ensuring that the ultimate list includes but is not limited to those items on the following list under each of the categories of P, C, and B: (note: take from table)

Ranking on adopting the language above and the list of data types on the table (Exhibit G):

5	4	3	2	1
2	3	3 4	4 0	0

Consensus achieved after discussion below

This initial ranking of this language yielded one individual who ranked it a "2". That person was asked to explain his concern, upon having the following discussion, the member changed his ranking to a "3" - see above ranking table as noted.

"2":

1. I don't have a good idea of what the Consultant will produce; what is the final product scale?
 - a. We don't want to tell Consultant what scale.
 - b. Moved ranking to a "3"
2. What is the ultimate goal of what we want?
 - a. We want it as detailed as possible so we can handle all the data we are dealing with for now and in the future.
 - b. Structure should accommodate new information as it is found.
3. Consultant should read all meeting reports of Council to familiarize him/herself with Council desires.
4. What are gaps that need to be filled as well as what is in place?
5. We must designate what parts of the metadata standard are mandatory.
6. There are many ways to go about getting this information.

7. Some of the standards will have “minimums” which should satisfy whether information is useful or not.

FOLLOW UP

Council Liaison, Steve Wolfe, will send an email to Council members with the criteria for the selection of the expert as decided at this meeting along with other information so Council members can select the person for the Expert Panel.

Members made the following suggestions for topics for future presentations:

TMDL program

We need to learn what others are doing.

EVALUATIONS

Members were reminded to complete their Evaluations.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.
