

Seagrass Protection and Restoration Steering Committee Meeting

October 11, 2013 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve Office

Attendees: Heather Stafford, Al Durrett, Keith Laakkonen, Cristina Denegre, Robert Brooks, Bob Swett, Judy Ott, Cheryl Clark, Althea Hotaling (phone)

- Focus on protection, restoration and education. This group should play an active role in the protection and restoration of the seagrasses in Estero Bay.
- There are many passes in Estero Bay. We are working with an altered system and changes in hydrology will alter other areas and passes.
- Mapping Seagrasses –get a handle on what is available and what still needs to be done.
 - o WMD is conducting aerial mapping
 - o FWC conducted low aerial flights for seagrasses two years.
 - o WMD conducted side scan sonar of seagrasses
 - o Seagrass changes for sea-level rise
- Try to get WMD to fly Matlacha Pass, San Carlos Bay and Estero Bay every other year – in conjunction with Caloosahatchee visioning process.
- What needs to be restored?
- Limiting factors to seagrass growth in Estero Bay (there is an optical model available)
 - o Color
 - o Turbidity
 - Estero Bay is shallow with fine sediments and turbidity may not be the easiest factor to reduce.
 - o Chlorophyll
- Overlay limiting factors with Thea's work
- Look at relationship between aerals and EBAP's transect data
 - o EBAP's transects do not have a deep edge – depth may not be the determining factor in end of bed in Estero Bay.
- Create a map and indicate where people think seagrass restoration should occur/ is needed.
- Water Quality data
 - o Where does the WQ data collected by businesses and development around the watershed go? (talk to Don Duke about this being a master's thesis)
 - o Who else is collecting data in the bay
 - o EBAP collects data
 - o Lee County collects data
- Look for grant funding
 - o Coastal Zone Management
 - o SeaGrant - \$10,000
- What type of seagrass restoration will work in Estero Bay
 - o Field research needed/Pilot Projects
 - o Estero Bay may flush so rapidly that seed sources are flushed out.

- o Sediment tubes were placed in Hurricane Bay Oct/Nov 2012.
 - o Grazer stress may be an important factor
 - Manatee
 - Large population of juvenile green and kemp's ridley sea turtles
 - Greens eat grasses and algae
 - Kemps Ridley eat crabs, mussels, shrimp and jelly fish
- Filter feeders could be helpful
 - o Look at success of oyster restoration
 - o Focus on solitary filter feeds like pen shell clams
- Caloosahatchee flows go as far south as Hell Peckney Bay
- Filter marshes on tributaries (Ten mile canal and Imperial River)
- Outreach needs to be a large component
 - o Later in the process there should be a community meeting
- Deliverables from this group should include a table showing restoration, protection, and education
 - o Chart "Most Important Actions that need to Happen..."

Other people to include:

- Jennifer Carpenter – FDEP South District
- Karen Bickford - Lee Co.
- Roger Strelo – Estero Community Leader
- Bonita Bay, Pelican Landing, Lexington...
- Steve Sentis
- Sam Lee – Lee Co. GIS (ask for presentation later in process)

Tasks to be completed:

Bob

- Get data on the success of the oyster restoration in Estero Bay from Dr. Aswani Voleti.
- Have his staff type up notes from the Stakeholder meeting
- Chart "Most Important Actions that need to Happen..."

Cristina

- Research filter feeders.

Cheryl

- Setup ftp site.
- Look into getting the WQ data submitted to DEP by developments and businesses surrounding the Bay.

Heather

- Talk with Kelly Samek regarding Florida Coastal Management Grant
- Create doodle poll for meeting next month (Friday afternoons are good)

Judy

- Put WMD side scan sonar reports on ftp site
- Send links for Caloosahatchee flow modeling

Keith

- Create spreadsheet to enter data about reports included on the ftp site.

Robert

- Generate a list of land parcels in the watershed that should be purchased.

Thea

- Send shape files from her work with list of parameters that can be mapped