

Seagrass Protection and Restoration Steering Committee Meeting #3

February 4, 2014 3:15pm – 5:30pm

Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve Office

700-1 Fisherman's Wharf, Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931

Participants: Cheryl Clark (EBAP), Joy Hazel (FLSeaGrant), Eric Milbrandt (SCCF), Al Durrett (Fish-Tale Marina), Heather Stafford (CHAP), Bob Swett (FL SeaGrant), Cristina Denegre (Good Time Charters), Keith Laakkonen (Town of Fort Myers Beach), Thea Holting (UF), Robert Brooks (FL State Parks), Mindy Brown (CHAP), Karen Bickford (Lee County), James Douglass (FGCU)

Minutes

- Reviewed the purpose of steering Committee – to create a restoration and protections plan for seagrass in Estero Bay based on current data and to determining data gaps.
- Theas work allows her to map light attenuation throughout the bay. CHNEP data also available.
- Wulfert Flats seagrass is doing well according to Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF) monitoring data. USFWS LE said they are enforcing the zone and writing citations - the manatee zone in this area is also heavily enforced and this may contribute to compliance of the no motor zone.
- Bob – funding from Florida boating improvement fund. Monitor before and after marking seagrass areas. Look at grass as well as boat traffic using acoustic sensors or GPS trackers on boats (rentals?)
 - Acoustic sensors may not work – we should talk with researchers who are using them to find out more.
 - GPS would be used to look at traffic patterns not for enforcement and could assist in determining where signs should be placed.
 - Motion cameras may be an option. (theft was discussed as a concern)
- Education
 - Target boat rental facilities.
 - Look at information signs for seagrass areas
- Look at areas that were originally considered for the notice general permit as potential restoration and protection sites.
 - NICMZs already permitted under the NGP should be first priority.
 - Parts of restoration areas should be left to recover naturally
 - Shoe box method should be looked at for restoration
- Mapping
 - Prop scar data should be updated.
 - Overlay WQ, light and sediment data on current aerials with sign data
 - Thea did not find a correlation between light attenuation and sediments.
 - Dr Douglas looked into balloon survey method and it looks good but complicated – potential Grad student project.
 - MOTE has an oyster layer
 - Lee Co. has cost data for helicopter flights

- Water quality
 - Look at all data available
 - Rain event data for Lee Co.
 - Pull data together to look at gaps in parameters and location
 - Flow data are a known Gap – not all tributaries have flow data.
 - Theas work shows poorer water quality conditions in northern portion of the bay.

- Tasks
 - **Al** – Provide WQ data for Fish-Tale Marina
 - **Bob** – add Mote Oyster layer on FTP site.
 - **Cheryl** – Schedule March meeting, Add NGP for NICMZ's to ftp site, Create map for committee to look at potential restoration and protection areas. Provide list of meeting attendee's affiliations.
 - **Cristina** – filter feeder data
 - **Dr. Eric Milbrandt** - add shoe box methodology to FTP site.
 - **Heather** –Talk with Kelly Samek and Ellen Steer.
 - **Dr James Douglas** - Add FGCU, SeaGrant monitoring proposal to ftp site
 - **Joy** - Create list of people we need to educate, create a list of boat rental companies in Estero Bay including number of vessels and drafts.
 - **Karen** – WQ data for Estero Bay. Helicopter flight costs for aerial photography.
 - **Keith** – work with FMB public works to get Laguna Shores seagrass area re-marked according the permits.
 - **Robert** –Generate a list of land parcels in the watershed that should be purchased.
 - **Thea** – add light attenuation map and shape files on the ftp site. Share map of potential seagrass areas for restoration and protection
 - Rain event data for Lee Co _ will someone take this on?