

Seagrass Protection and Restoration Steering Committee Meeting #8

September 8, 2014 3:00pm – 5:00pm

Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve Office

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

Participants: Paul Julian (DEP, Office of Ecosystem Projects), James Douglass (FGCU), Jon Meyer (Florida State Parks), Al Durrett (Fish-Tale Marina), Cheryl Clark (DEP, Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve), Rob Modys (Soul Mate Charters), Mark Combs (Fish-Tale Marina), Chuck Listowski (WCIND), Dr. Eric Milbrandt (Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation), Dr. James Douglas, Althea Hotaling (University of Florida), Heather Stafford (DEP, Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves, Mindy Brown (DEP, Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserves), Mike Campbell (Lee County).

- Educational Signs for Seagrass and Aquatic Preserve
 - o Chuck would like us to look at MOA between WCIND, Sea Grant, State and other stake holders moving forward with the grant application to WCIND. (Chuck will send a copy to Cheryl)
 - Look at History, Science and Law (Chuck)
 - Identify partnering agencies and what each of us can do to assist moving forward (Group)
 - Resolution of support
 - o Contact Pearl Graphics for quote (Mike will provide Cheryl w/ contact info)
 - Add educational handouts and mailing to cost
 - Branding
 - Website for seagrass maps and other information to be located
 - o Review FWC waterway marker guidelines and contact additional information (Cheryl)
 - o Contact USCG Miami (Cheryl – Mike will provide contact information)
 - o QR codes on waterways may not be a good idea
 - Navigation hazard
 - People bumping and tying up to piling will reduce lifespan of the sign and piling.
 - o Chuck will speak with WCIND board at September 12th meeting to address this committee's interest in perusing signage for Estero Bay/Seagrass and applying for funding through WCIND.
- Counters
 - o Committee discussed the pros and cons of putting counters at tributaries and/or passes to identify areas with greatest
 - Information would allow us to prioritize areas for education and outreach
 - Data needs to be manually collected and downloaded
 - Parks are using them already and may be willing to assist with data collection if we move forward with this in the future.
- NICMZs
 - o James is drafting a monitoring plan
 - o Mike and James suggested putting educational signage around NICMZ to assess the effectiveness of educational signs compared to enforceable signage which would be implemented later.
- Channel Markers

- o Cheryl and Mark spent ½ day on the water looking at areas in Estero Bay where boaters have trouble navigating and identified potential locations for additional signage.
 - Areas near passes could benefit from additional navigational markers
 - The intent is not to put signs everywhere
 - In some places the number of signs could be reduced
- o Lee County maintains many of the channel markers in Estero Bay (including federal markers)
- o Many of the Markers leading into the tributaries and private communities are privately maintained.
- o Work with Lee County to identify areas that can be marked to protect seagrass and keep boaters in the channels (Mike, Mark, Cheryl)

Please remember to put any information you have to share with the group on the ftp site <ftp://ftp.dep.state.fl.us/pub/incoming/CAMA/EBAP/> and materials can be viewed at http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/CAMA/Estero_Bay/.

Please submit a spreadsheet with metadata so we can effectively track materials being added and provide appropriate credit. http://publicfiles.dep.state.fl.us/CAMA/Estero_Bay/EsteroBaySeagrassDatabase_BLANK.xlsx