



MEETING SUMMARY Habitat Restoration Subcommittee Agency on Bay Management

April 12, 2007

The April joint meeting of the Agency on Bay Management Habitat Restoration Subcommittee was held in the Council conference room located at 4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard, Pinellas Park, Florida. Mr. Peter Clark chaired the meeting. Those in attendance included the following:

THOSE PRESENT:

* = Subcommittee Member or Alternate

+ = ABM Member or Alternate

- * Mr. Peter Clark, Tampa Bay Watch, Inc., Chair
- Mr. Jeff Albanese, Green Armada Foundation
- Mr. Bill Allbright, FL Council of Yacht Clubs
- Ms. Shahra Anderson, Senator Bill Nelson
- * Mr. Tom Ash, EPCHC
- Mr. Dave Balut, Tampa Bay's 10 News
- Ms. Lori Belangia, SWFWMD
- Mr. Richard W. Cantrell, DEP
- Ms. Libby Carnahan, FDEP - Aquatic Preserves
- Mr. Shawn College Hillsborough County Planning Commission
- Mr. John Corey, Florida DEP
- * Ms. Karen Collins-Fleming, Manatee Co. EMD
- Mr. Al Davis, Gulfport Water Watch
- Ms. Cindy Davis, Gulfport Water Watch
- * Mr. Eric Gasch, US Army Corps Engineers
- + Mr. Roberto Gonzalez, FDOT/HAZMAT
- Ms. Janie Hagberg, SWFWMD-SWIM
- Ms. Cathy Harrelson, Coastal Task Force - Suncoast Sierra Club
- Ms. Pamela Harris, Williamsburg Environmental Group
- * Dr. Brandt Henningsen, SWIM-SWFWMD
- Mr. Iver Huincho
- Mr. John Iliff, NOAA
- * Ms. Sarah Josuns, City of Clearwater
- Ms. Andrea Kraystan, FDEP - Tampa Bay Aquatic Preserves
- Mr. Peter Kuaswick, Self
- Mr. Larry Lynch, Gulfport Water Watch
- Mr. Mark Macksimowicz, Green Armada Foundation
- Mr. Lloyd Mason, Gulfport Water Watch
- Ms. Marti McGuire, NOAA
- * Mr. Gus Muench, Commercial Fishing
- Mr. Martin Needleman, Citizen, Gulfport, FL
- + Ms. Nanette O'Hara, TBEP
- Mr. Gerry O'Regan, Gulfport Water Watch
- Mr. Jim O'Reilly, City of Gulfport
- + Ms. Jan Platt, Recreational Interests
- Ms. Linda Ray, Gulfport Water Watch
- Mr. Arthur J. Roth, HRK Holdings, LLC
- Mr. Randy Runnels, DEP - CAMA
- Ms. Janice Ryan, Gulfport Water Watch
- Ms. Jennette Seachrist, SWFWMD
- + Mr. Jim Spangler
- * Mr. Mark Sramek, NOAA
- + Commissioner Robert Worthington, City of Gulfport
- Mr. Mike Yakes, City of Gulfport
- Mr. Roger Young, FWC
- Mr. Roy Young, Gulfport Water Watch
- Mr. Sam Zamani, DEP
- Mr. Kurt Zuelsdorf, Kayak Nature Adventure
- Mr. Donald Conn, TBRPC
- Ms. Suzanne Cooper, TBRPC/ABM Staff

● CALL TO ORDER / WELCOME

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

● ANNOUNCEMENTS

● PINEY POINT PHOSPHOGYPSUM STACK AND FACILITY CLOSURE

● THE STATE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT ON TAMPA BAY

- **CLAM BAYOU - PUBLIC CONCERNS, THE STATE OF THE BAYOU, AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

In response to a request from Senator Bill Nelson's office, the subcommittee heard presentations on the public's concerns, the conditions in Clam Bayou, past and planned habitat restoration efforts, constructed and planned stormwater management projects, and a potential public access solution. Representatives of Gulfport Water Watch, the City of Gulfport, The Boca Ciega Bay Aquatic Preserve, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the City of St. Petersburg, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration were invited and requested to present.

Mr. Davis said he would like to see restoration of the bayou back to the 1950 level. He presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Clam Bayou drainage basin and the current conditions. He said the waters are impaired with nutrients, oxygen, and _____. There was a 9,000-gallon sewage spill from Madeira last week.

Several recommendations have been considered by Gulfport Water Watch: litigation, compel the City of St. Petersburg to stop dumping untreated stormwater, and assess a restoration (Clean Water Act, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) plan.

Mayor Yakes said that in 1995 the Nature Park was declared environmentally sensitive. The City is concerned that its waterfront is deteriorating. An agreement between his City, the City of St. Petersburg and the Southwest Florida Water Management District has not resulted in the desired improvements. He seeks assistance in restoration of the bayou.

Dr. Runnels noted that Subsection 258.396, Florida Statutes, states that owners can convey submerged lands to Aquatic Preserves. Clam Bayou is not an Aquatic Preserve because the City of Gulfport, the City of St. Petersburg and the Water Management District own the bottoms, as well as possibly some private individuals. Dr. Runnels' concern is the debris, not the sediments. The accumulation of sediments is a natural occurrence in response to the shoreline and watercourse alterations that have occurred in Boca Ciega Bay over the past 30 years. The habitats that have formed in Clam Bayou support native wildlife and sampling of the sediments reveals a natural array of invertebrates that support bird life and fish.

Dr. Henningsen provided a PowerPoint presentation on SWIM projects in general and the Clam Bayou project specifically. He said this is an ongoing project with the City of Gulfport, the City of St. Petersburg and SWFWMD. Eighty-seven acres were acquired for \$1.4M; the City of St. Petersburg spent about \$2.0M on land acquisition. They are now at 100% of the plans and permitting is expected in the spring of 2007. Fifteen acres have been cleared of non-native plants and five acres have been planted with native plants.

Ms. Hagberg noted that Clam Bayou has over three square miles of watershed. Approximately 765 acres are drained by a canal; and the water goes into a pond behind the post office. Approximately 1700 (?) acres are drained by another canal. At 34th Avenue South 150 acres are treated with a skimmer and discharged to the restoration site. All the ponds will include skimmers; perhaps redundantly, to catch trash. The City of St. Petersburg has yet to acquire the land for the #3 alum pond to be constructed behind 38th Street.

Of the \$8.22M in funds allocated for the project, \$2.M was spent by the City of St. Petersburg.

Representatives of the Green Armada described their recently-established partnership with the City of St. Petersburg to remove litter from Clam Bayou in an on-going basis.

Mr. Iliff of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration discussed the importance of community-based restoration projects. He suggested that his agency may be able to help with the trash problem by providing stormdrain markers. He also said that NOAA can help write grant proposals; and the agency has a small grant program.

General comments from the audience:

- "The rate of sedimentation has changed."
 - "Sedimentation has accelerated in the past 24 months."
 - "Could the Gulfport outfall be partially responsible?"
 - "In 2005, red tide impacted the bird life in the bayou."
 - Stormwater management equals an unfunded mandate.
 - The Department of Transportation may actually own the outfalls (NPDES permit).
- (No data was presented)

Ms. Harrelson described the natural value of mud flats and their ability to fight stormwater pollution.

Mr. Ash remarked that the projects underway in Clam Bayou, funded by over \$8M, represent one of the most aggressive water quality management efforts in the Tampa Bay area and applauded the participants for such an effort. He expressed his wish that other parts of the Bay would receive such attention.

Ms. Seachrist said that partnerships are needed in any successful environmental project.

Chairman Clark summarized the items presented during the presentation and discussion of this agenda item:

- Stormwater issues including water quality degradation and trash accumulation;
- Habitat restoration projects and needs;
- Navigational interests; and
- Circulation changes.

Chairman Clark thanked those who participated in the presentations and discussions. He said that there is a tremendous amount of attention being given to Clam Bayou by a wide variety of agencies. It appears that many agencies are focusing resources on the problems in Clam Bayou and using science-based approaches to solving those problems. The committee members have not expressed a need to take a different approach beyond what is planned. He expressed his belief that this had been a fruitful airing of concerns and discourse between the parties, and offered the Agency's assistance as deemed appropriate in the future. He recommended support for community-based activities.

● **OTHER ITEMS**

● **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 P.M.