



AGENCY ON BAY MANAGEMENT

4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard #100 · Pinellas Park, FL 33782

727.570.5151 Ext. 40

<http://www.tbrpc.org/abm>

MEETING MINUTES

ABM's Natural Resources/Environmental Impact Review Committee

August 10, 2022

1:00 - 3:00 PM

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

1. Call To Order / Welcome

Alana Todd called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM

2. Introductions

Alana Todd, TBRPC

Aubree Hershoring, USACE

Peter Clark, Tampa Bay Watch

Amy Butler, TECO

Ann Paul, Hillsborough County At-Large

Bill Fehring, Friends of Weedon Island

David Glicksberg, Hillsborough County

DJ Strott, Joe Island Clams

Mike Ornella, USACE

Amelia Missavage, FWC

Amy Siuda, Eckerd College

Brad Furman, FWRI

Bryan Merrill, USACE

Chris Cooley, Port Tampa Bay

Chris Pratt, EPCHC

Chris Fellerhoff, Hillsborough County

Coleen Weaver, Pasco County

Comm. Jack Mariano, Pasco County

Cynthia Grizzle, Pritchett Steinbeck Group

Dan Fitz-Patrick, SeaPort Manatee

Dan Huber, University of Tampa

Juliana Matiz, USACE

Kevin Shelton, Wood

Maya Burke, TBEP

Mark Sramek, NOAA

Mark Rachel, Audubon Society

Melissa Madden, FDEP

Melissa Charbonneau, Pasco County

Nancy Sheridan, FWC

Nancy Stevens, Sierra Club Tampa Bay Group

Bob McConnell, Tampa Bay Water

Rich Brown, Friends of the Hillsborough River

Ross Dickerson, Hillsborough County

Santino Provenzano, Mosaic

Sally Thompson, Tampa Bay Conservancy

Sarah Caper, Hillsborough County

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this meeting, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council at (727) 570-5151 Ext. 10 within three working days of the meeting.

Sarah Brehm, Tampa Bay Watch
Serra Herndon, Tampa Bay Watch
Shawn College, Hillsborough County
Planning Commission
Terry Fluke, Tampa Bay Pilots
Association
Tiffany Lane, USFWS
Tom Pride, Kisinger Campo &
Associates
Troy Green, Hillsborough County
Whit Remer, City of Tampa
Vicki Parsons, Bay Soundings
Mike Neves, USACE
Heather Maggio, City of Tampa
Ed Sherwood, TBEP
Melanie Weed, Pinellas County

George Henderson, Pinellas At-Large
Patrick Blair, Port Tampa Bay
Jose De Jesus, Port Tampa Bay
Steve Conger, USACE
Allison Conner – FDOT
Jon Simon Suarez, USACE
Barbara Nist, USACE
Anna Laws, FWC
Martha Gruber, Pritchett Steinbeck
Group
Matt Schrader, USACE
Herbert Donica, Donica Receivership
Services, LLC
Carrie Moore, Hillsborough County
Rick Gorsira, Jacobs

3. Public Comment

4. Collaboration on Beneficial Uses for Dredged Material from Tampa Harbor – *Aubree Hershorin, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, kicked off a 3-year study to consider navigation improvements in Tampa Harbor. The study will consider deepening and widening, and there is the potential for future construction (in the 5-10 year timeframe) to result in significant volumes of dredged material. USACE would like to further coordinate with stakeholders to prioritize restoration opportunities that may require dredged sediments.

USACE presented the potential Beneficial Use of Dredged Material sites ([link to presentation](#)) and facilitated the prioritization of sites via Google Jamboard ([link to Jamboard results](#)).

The beneficial use opportunities include: Egmont Key beach placement, Egmont Key Island restoration, Alafia Bank Sanctuary Islands, Hardbottom Creation Site, Sand Source Replenishment, MacDill AFB habitat restoration, placement for SAV habitat resilience, Island Restoration/Creation (Pine Key), Dredged Holes, Manbirtee Key restoration, East Bay Port expansion, and Manatee County Boat Ramp.

Comments:

The TBEP is currently working with the City of St. Pete to remediate a remnant artificial reef of tires near Pinellas Point. They are looking for material that will provide better fish and wildlife habitat.

The sand source replenishment BUDM opportunity (placement of sand, or silty sand, in previously ID'd sand sources utilized for beach nourishment projects for future use) is different from the Offshore Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS). The potential sand placement locations (areas in yellow on presentation map) have not been used before and would serve as interim storage sites for coastal resiliency/renourishment.

Feedback for unconfined habitat replenishment (elevation of seafloor with silty sand material to support seagrass habitat in current or future areas too deep for SAV growth) discouraged placement of unconsolidated sediment, fines and silts, for future SAV habitat due to the high risk of potential sediment migration to adjacent SAV habitat from boat wakes, storms, and other high energy events. Recent seagrass losses make this option especially risky. Looking to the future, there may be a need to consider benthic elevations to support future seagrass habitats in the context of sea level rise and climate change considerations. Guidance on materials and appropriate sediment to use may be helpful. It would be best to lead these efforts with a pilot project/proof of concept and clear management outcomes.

- A potential option to explore in the future is a mixture of materials, like using larger rocks to create an offshore sill and finer sediment behind the sill for the recruitment or planting of seagrasses. A weir or offshore structure would be needed to contain the smaller sediment.

Two years ago, Pasco County considered removing a spoil island off the coast to create more habitat for seagrass and they were discouraged by USACE. Commissioner Mariano questioned whether this rationale has changed and will be contacting USACE about the creation of more seagrass habitat.

Any leftover material will be placed at the ODMDS site.

Egmont Key island creation, Alafia Bank Sanctuary island creation, and hardbottom habitat creation had favorable support. Sand source replenishment was prioritized lower in favor of other habitat creation opportunities; it was clarified that this would occur after placement at Egmont Key. MacDill AFB shoreline restoration/SAV habitat creation also received wide favorability as restoration efforts need to be completed; potential partners include Mark Sramek (NOAA/NMFS) and Brendan Myers (MacDill/USFWS).

There are several considerations to account for with island creation, including sea level rise/coastal resiliency, containment to prevent deterioration, strategic placement to protect vulnerable shorelines, and salt marsh restoration. Many comments discouraged the use of material at private islands, favoring public property and habitat restoration. USACE typically refrains from placement that would only benefit a private entity, but they are exploring whether this option is possible if it the least costly, environmentally acceptable route and the only other option is the ODMDS site.

Placement at the ODMDS was not favored. If that site supports high quality habitat now, then placement of dredged material should be avoided there. Mark Sramek recalls conversations in 2011 between EPA and USACE which determined that there wasn't merit in using ODMDS for future port expansion activities. It is now considered an area "of beneficial use" due to a newer coral reef that has developed there, called the "briar patch." A benthic survey of the area should be done before the ODMDS is considered.

- USACE has a management plan for the ODMDS that outlines how the site would be used, avoiding the briar patch area. There are some activities that would need to take place during the pre-construction/engineering design phase to be able to use the ODMDS.

5. Hillsborough County Greenways Master Plan Update – Sarah Caper, Hillsborough County

Hillsborough County is undergoing an update to its Greenways Master Plan, originally adopted in 1995. The Master Plan Update includes a range of greenways facilities, including paved and unpaved trails that can be used by people walking, biking, or on horseback; blueways (recreational waterways) and launch sites where people can access blueways; and natural corridors, such as wildlife corridors. The update is a year-long process that will result in both a vision plan and action plan that is focused on connectivity. [Link to presentation](#)

Comments:

Sarah Caper polled meeting attendees on what makes an ideal greenway. Features that received the highest number of votes included, "safe from traffic," "close to nature," "amenities," "shade," and "social equity." Wildlife corridors also received vocal support. Another poll asked about the opportunities and challenges for greenways in Hillsborough County; results are included at the end of the [presentation](#).

The public can stay involved at publicinput.com/greenwaysMP; future workshops will be hosted in Fall 2022.

Sally Thompson, ABM member and chair of the Hillsborough Greenways Committee, highlighted the need for Hillsborough County to connect with the state-wide network of greenways and trails.

6. Committee Strategic Planning & Leadership

Attendees will discuss revitalization of the Natural Resources/Environmental Impact Review Committee, including leadership positions.

Comments:

The value of this committee – when there are proposals for development-type projects with potential impacts to natural resources, this committee provides a forum for the region to come together with one voice and candidly discuss what is best for the watershed – an opportunity each member organization wouldn't have individually. More development proposals should come to this committee to then make recommendations to the full Agency on Bay Management.



AGENCY ON BAY MANAGEMENT

4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard #100 · Pinellas Park, FL 33782

727.570.5151 Ext. 40

<http://www.tbrpc.org/abm>

If the chair represents a regulatory agency, they are somewhat restrained by the positions of that agency. The committee should be making recommendations about what is best for Tampa Bay and not necessarily a position that is bound by the politics or economics of the current moment. Anyone who volunteers for chair should be willing to put themselves in this kind of role and have comfort operating in these spaces. The full ABM should vote to accept the nomination.

7. Announcements

All participants should feel free to share information or events that are pertinent to the NR/EIR Committee.

Comments:

City of Tampa will be starting a habitat restoration program, and they are working with Tampa Bay Watch to identify offshore restoration areas. In addition, they are interested in spring restoration, oyster habitat areas, and other opportunities near Bayshore Blvd. They are currently seeking partners and grant funding.

8. Other Items

- a. Next meeting date
- b. Bay Soundings article ideas

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:56 PM

