

LAKE BELT MITIGATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Summary

South Florida Water Management District

3301 Gun Club Road, (B-1, Storch Conference Room)

West Palm Beach, Florida 33406

This meeting was conducted as a teleconference call at (561) 682-6700

Meet-me number (866) 433-6299 - Meeting ID #6752

Friday, June 29, 2012 – 9:00 AM

1. Call to Order by Terrie Bates, Acting Chair

- a) Meeting began at 09:00 AM.

2. Attendees

a) Committee Members

- 1. Terrie Bates, Vice Chair, SFWMD
- 3. Eric Hughes, USEPA (Teleconference)
- 4. Howard Hayes, BMMR (Alternate DEP - Teleconference)
- 5. Leah Oberlin, (Alternate USACE)
- 6. Jeff Rosenfeld, MDLPA, Ex Officio
- 7. Allen Webb, USFWS
- 8. Matt Davis, DERM (Teleconference)
- 9. Tim King, FFWCC (Teleconference)

b) Other meeting attendees

- 1. Ernie Barnett, SFWMD
- 2. Marjorie Moore, SFWMD
- 3. Anita Bain, SFWMD
- 4. Olga Serrano, SFWMD
- 5. Jeff Needle, SFWMD
- 6. Lourdes Elias, SFWMD
- 7. Steve Krupa, SFWMD
- 8. Michelle Quigley, SFWMD

9. Tom MacVicar, MDLPA
10. Joan Lawrence – USDOJ
11. Steve Coughlin, SFWMD
12. David Foote, SFWMD
13. Jayne Bergstrom, SFWMD
14. Raymond Sciortino, SFWMD
15. Brian Collins, SFWMD
15. Chris Blackwell, LLW

c) Other teleconference attendees

1. Alan Whitehouse, DEP
2. Calvin Alvarez, DEP
3. Idia Macfarlane- – Miami-Dade WASD
4. Bob Progulske, USFWS
5. Kerri Barsh, MDLPA
6. Tom Lodge, MDLPA
7. Cindy Burns, Titan
8. Roger Cobb, ADA Engineering

3. Review minutes from 2/24/12 Committee meeting – Terrie Bates

Minutes were reviewed and a motion was made to approve the minutes, with no changes. Motion passed.

4. Opening Comments – None

5. Update on Phase 1 of the L-31N Seepage Barrier Project – Tom MacVicar

Tom presented an update on Phase 1 of the L-31 Construction Project. He stated the slurry wall construction was meeting specifications, was almost finished, and was expected to be completed next week. Site restoration was expected to be completed in July. The project was on track to be completed within the approved budget and that several items (additional 50' length, additional 1' depth, and additional testing required by the Corps for levee reconstruction) would

be reimbursed under the approved 5% construction contingency. He said that the project documents, laboratory results, and photos were posted on the project website: www.L31Nseepage.org A copy of the status summary dated June 29, 2012 is included with these minutes.

6. Submittal of Invoices for Acceptance by LBMC – Marjorie Moore

Marjorie presented a spreadsheet of MDLPA-contractor invoices from the Dade-Broward and L-31N Phase 1 projects, which she had reviewed for consistency with Committee approvals and Terrie Bates signed off on, prior to being paid from the Greenberg Traurig escrow account. A motion was made, and approved, to accept the invoices for payment. A copy of the invoice spreadsheet dated June 18, 2012 is included with these minutes.

7. Status Update on the 8.5 Square Mile Mitigation Area – Terrie Bates

Terrie discussed the history of the proposed mitigation project and stated that the project is still on hold because of soil stockpiling/reuse issues and the County's current ordinances on soil stockpiling in the vicinity of the proposed project. The District has provided information on potential uses and a timeline for the soil that will be removed as part of the 8.5 Square Mile Area restoration project, but that the County Planning and Zoning Department wanted more defined information which the District is unable to provide at this point. Even if reuse locations could be identified, hauling costs could potentially significantly increase the already approved budget for the project. Therefore, the District is proposing an alternative project for Lake Belt mitigation and to take on responsibility for the 8.5 Square Mile Area as a land management activity, rather than a mitigation project at this point.

Matt Davis was concerned about not continuing with the 8.5 Square Mile Area project and discussed that Planning & Zoning and DERM had been merged into a new Department and that the new management may view the District's request differently at this point. In addition, the County has convened a Wetland Task Force to review current County ordinances and one of the recommendations that was being discussed was removing the soil stockpiling restriction from the ordinances.

8. C-139 Annex Mitigation Opportunity – Ernie Barnett

Ernie presented a summary of a potential Lake Belt mitigation project at the C-139 Annex. Copies of the PowerPoint presentation and restoration highlights summary are included with these minutes.

The project area was originally acquired for a water quality project for the C-139 Basin, adjacent to STA 5 and 6 and Compartment C, but was later found to contain numerous cultural resources that precluded converting the site to a water storage or treatment facility. Subsequent modeling indicated that only a small portion of the property was needed as a flow equalizing basin (2,875 acres) and District staff were evaluating whether to surplus the property when they were approached by the MDLPA to consider restoration of the remaining project area (14,437 acres) as a Lake Belt mitigation project.

The proposed restoration area was historically a combination of wet prairie, deeper depressional marshes, and cypress strands. Land use has included cattle pasture, sod production, and most recently citrus operations. The project goal would be to restore the historical wetland habitat and restore sheet flow (rainfall-driven system) to the project area. Based on a preliminary analysis, the environmental benefit of the project to the Everglades watershed would be large (approximately 9,000 -11,000 WRAP credits), with an estimated acquisition, restoration, and long-term management cost of approximately \$9,000 -\$11,000 per acre.

In response to questions, Ernie said that it was the District's preference to do all the restoration upfront (to get the Everglades watershed benefit sooner and also for cost effectiveness) and then be reimbursed over the long-term, but the restoration could also be done in phases. He also said that the District had no plans to restore the site, but had expected to either surplus it or continue leasing the property for agricultural use, and therefore this proposal was not supplanting any existing plans.

Committee members also discussed the desire to continue funding Pennsuco restoration and seepage projects; whether agro-chemical contamination at the C-139 Annex project could preclude mitigation; the effect of archeological sites on the project's restoration; concerns about

the distance between the Lake Belt and the project (which is in the Everglades watershed); other potential restoration projects in Miami-Dade County; and the need to show that this project was environmentally preferable to other projects that had been considered.

District staff discussed potential funding for Miami-Dade projects from the royalties from a Lake Belt mining lease the District has with White Rock Quarries; the previous efforts by the Committee to identify projects which were all small compared to the significant regional benefits provided by this project; that there already had been some preliminary coordination with the Seminoles and Miccosukee Tribes on the cultural resources; that the site had already been evaluated for contamination issues as part of the purchase due diligence; and that District staff were preparing a detailed design plan that would be sent to the Committee members prior to the next meeting.

Terrie Bates provided a summary of action items that would be prepared for or discussed at the next meeting:

- 1) Cash flow analysis (by Tom MacVicar) showing Lake Belt funding availability for:
 - a. Pennsuco land acquisition / mitigation opportunities that may come up
 - b. Completion of the L-31N and Dade Broward Levee seepage management projects
 - c. C-139 Annex restoration
- 2) Conceptual Mitigation Planning Report for C- 139 Annex and schedule field visit
- 3) Discussion / documentation addressing issue of why it is environmentally preferable to go outside the immediate Lake Belt area for this mitigation project (recognizing that completion of Pennsuco remains a priority).
- 4) Discussion / documentation regarding the District's intention / ability to commit revenue from the White Rock lease for other restoration projects in Miami-Dade County.
- 5) 8.5 Square Mile Area – conceptual land management plan to ensure publicly owned lands are appropriately maintained and identify funding source. Possibility that Miami-Dade County ordinances could be changing and that the original project could potentially be approved by the County.

9. Public comment – None.

10. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was scheduled for August 29, 2012 at 9:00 AM.

11. Meeting Adjourned

Action Items for the Next Meeting:

Action items – Terrie Bates' list at the end of the meeting minutes.