



2012 Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan Update- Public Comments and Final Plan

**Northern Everglades Interagency
Meeting – December 14, 2011**

Pinar Balci, Ph.D., Office of Policy and Coordination, South Florida Water Management District



Recent Milestones



- Released draft 2012 Caloosahatchee River Watershed Protection Plan (CRWPP) update for public comments on Oct. 21, 2011
 - *Included as Appendix 10-2 of the 2012 consolidated South Florida Environmental Report*
- Currently incorporating public comments into the Final CRWPP update



CRWPP Update Highlights

- FDEP's adoption of tidal estuary TMDL in 2009; freshwater TMDL is under development
- FDEP's Basin Management Action Plan Development
- Agricultural Best Management Practices – ~210,000 acres (44%) under implementation
- Includes 36 local water quality/storage and habitat restoration projects
- Activities to support regulatory nutrient source control program development
- Storage and Treatment Initiative- \$19M identified to design/construct facilities



CRWPP Update Highlights

- Dispersed Water Management Program expansion
 - 131,539 acre-feet in Northern Everglades; 5,625 ac-ft located in Caloosahatchee Watershed
 - Implementation of water farming pilot projects
 - Utilization of publicly owned lands for interim water retention until large regional projects are built in Caloosahatchee Basin
 - Nicodemus Slough project initiated
- Spanish Creek/Four Corners Initiative
- C-43 Water Quality Treatment and Demonstration Project
- Alternative Technologies
- Research and Water Quality Monitoring



Outreach Activities

Meetings held:

- Northern Everglades Interagency
 - 5 meetings (May, July, August, September, November)
- Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC)
- Individual Stakeholders





Comments Received on Draft CRWPP Update

- Lee County
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program





Public Comments Categories



- Source Control
- Research and Water Quality Monitoring
- Others



Public Comments/Responses- Source Control



- **BMP implementation rates/assumptions- unrealistic**

Response:

- BMP implementation rates for planning purposes- 80% near-term rate only applied to S-4, West and East Sub-watersheds where the current implementation rates are between 55-76%
- FDACS BMP implementation assurance process is in place for compliance
- Revisions to the 40E-61 SFWMD Regulatory Source Control Program will further strengthen BMP implementation and compliance



Public Comments/Responses- Source Control



- Delay in proposed revisions to the regulatory programs

Response:

- SFWMD 40E-61: Completed key technical activities; Coordinate with OFARR regarding rule development initiation in the near-term
- FDEP proposing Statewide Environmental Resource Permit Legislation
- Northern Everglades Basin Rule - no longer proposed



Public Comments/Responses- Source Control



- Lack of progress regarding Comprehensive Planning and Growth Management

Response

- DEP/SFWMD are committed to continue providing technical and regulatory guidance for local and regional planning activities consistent with legislative changes in growth management area



Public Comments/Responses- Research and Water Quality Monitoring



- Need more robust sampling and analysis-upstream of S-79 to define the sources and magnitude of nitrogen reaching the estuary

Response

- District's nutrient source control program conducted synoptic monitoring
 - Identified the need for permanent flow sites
 - Efforts will continue based upon funding availability



Public Comments/Responses- Research and Water Quality Monitoring

- Water quality monitoring-3 main issues are raised
 - SFWMD's non-participation in the CHNEP's monitoring network
 - Bias in the fixed station sampling
 - Numeric nutrient criteria (NNC) compliance- use of CHNEP's data

Response

- District conducted evaluations of its monitoring network through re-engineering effort - *fixed stations meets the District needs; increased from 4 to 7 stations*
- Interested in seeing analyses demonstrating bias in fixed sampling in the Caloosahatchee Estuary
- NNC for Caloosahatchee Estuary is the TMDL measured at San Carlos Bay where District has fixed water quality station



Public Comments/Responses- Research and Water Quality Monitoring



- Representation of Minimum Flow and Level (MFL) compliance and associated graphics

Response

- MFL compliance is not an explicit goal of the CRWPP
- Lower West Coast Water Supply Plan includes the information on MFLs and recovery strategy



Public Comments/Responses- Research and Water Quality Monitoring



- Use of Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) shoot density in assessing estuarine conditions

Response

- Agree that increases or decreases in shoot density of SAV do not necessarily provide an accurate measure of SAV productivity or improved estuarine condition
- Analyses only includes fluctuations in shoot density to variation of discharges



Public Comments/Responses- Others



- Coordination on TMDL/BMAP – Development and Need for Greater SFWMD Involvement

Response

- SFWMD has been and will continue to be fully engaged in TMDL/BMAP process
- Work very closely in aligning the Caloosahatchee RWPP and BMAP processes and streamlining reporting



Public Comments/Responses- Others

- Inclusion of local governments and special districts as part of Coordinating Agencies

Response

- Agree that local governments and special districts play a key role in achieving CRWPP goals.
- Additional text is added to draft plan to highlight the role and importance of local governments and special districts





Public Comments/Responses- Others

- Accounting of the Caloosahatchee Water Reservation as regulatory activity

Response

- Text is added to draft plan to capture the Caloosahatchee Estuary water reservation effort
- Also, captured as a regulatory activity in the near-term implementation table





Public Comments/Responses- Others

- Identification of plan implementation priorities

Response

- CRWPP identified preferred plan including projects that meet the storage and water quality goals
 - NE Annual Work Plan
 - District's strategic planning and budget process
 - Stakeholder process for identification of projects





Public Comments/Responses- Others

- TMDLs/BMAPs-
 - Accounting of Lake O flows
 - Load reduction allocation to MS4 permit holders and non-point sources(nps)- suggest striking nps
 - Accounting of agricultural component in the assessment of pollutant sources

Response

- TMDL for tidal estuary addressed total loads at the estuary-Lake O loads are not considered as natural background
- Sentence is revised as.."All of the load reduction allocated to MS4 and agricultural sources"
- TMDL accounts for all loads including those from agriculture





Public Comments/Responses- Others

- Overall, a great update to the Plan! Many valuable projects put forth.

Response

- Thank you for your input and support!!





Next Steps



- Present the Final 2012 CRWPP Update and Comments
 - WRAC- January 5, 2012
 - Governing Board Meeting- January 12, 2012
- Submit the Final 2012 CRWPP Update to the legislature
 - Mid-January 2012



Questions?



<https://my.sfwmd.gov/northerneverglades>

sfwmd.gov