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## South Florida Water Management District

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### Public Meeting to Discuss Regulatory Matters

February 17, 2016

10:00 a.m.

South Florida Water Management District - B-1 Auditorium  
3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406

### MEETING MINUTES

#### Staff Present:

Jill Creech, Director, Regulation Division  
Anthony Waterhouse, Assistant Director, Regulation Division  
Charles Walter, Regulation Service Center Administrator, Orlando Service Center  
Melissa Roberts, Regulation Service Center Administrator, Fort Myers Service Center  
Jesse Markle, Section Leader, Okeechobee Regulatory Office  
Simon Sunderland, Section Leader, Water Use Bureau  
Barb Conmy, Section Leader, Environmental Resource Bureau

#### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jill Creech at 10:00 a.m. Mrs. Creech reviewed the purpose of the meeting and requested that all comments be regarding Regulatory issues and introduced the staff at Headquarters and the Service Centers. There was two member of the public present at District Headquarter, six members of the public present at the Lower West Coast Service Center and no members of the public present at the Okeechobee or the Orlando Service Centers.

#### 2. Applications of Public Interest Pending Final Action

##### **Application 150410-5/150410-5 SR7 Extension from Okeechobee Blvd to North Lake Extension**

Public Comment: Kristin Bennett (Tetra Tech), representing the Loxahatchee Mitigation Bank, reminded staff of a letter previously sent to the District on August 6, 2015, (a copy of this letter is available on e-Permitting under the application number), listing several concerns with regards to this project. The comments are limited to the mitigation plan. Ms. Bennett is concerned with the use of Pine Glades Natural Area for 3rd party mitigation. Ms. Bennet commented that Pine Glades

Natural Area was previously restored and intended to be used exclusively for Palm Beach County projects.

Public Comment: Drew Martin with the Sierra Club was concerned with the effect to wetlands and the Grassy Water Preserve from this project.

### **Application 150126-17 Turkey Point Cooling Canal Augmentation**

Public Comment: Drew Martin is concerned that this project is not meeting the environmental standards for withdrawals and discharge that may be contaminating Biscayne National Park.

### **Application 090107-1 Crosstown Parkway Extension (Bridge over North Fork SLR)**

Public Comment: Drew Martin was concerned with the location of this bridge going through a protected wetland and a state park.

## **3. Applications of Public Interest Concern Not Complete**

### **Application 150728-3 Kanter 23-1**

Public Comment: Amber Crooks with the Conservancy of Southwest Florida expressed the Conservancy's opposition to this application for drilling for oil in Water Conservation Area 3. The Conservancy is concerned with the impacts to the surrounding wetlands and flow ways. Ms. Crooks also expressed concern with regard to the use of freshwater for this purpose, the amounts of water currently requested for this project and the amount of water that will be needed in the future. She is concerned about the potential adverse impact to the Biscayne Aquifer. The Conservancy requests that the District deny this permit. (Comments have been added to this application online.)

### **Application 120622-9 Eden Oak**

Public Comment: Amber Crooks spoke on behalf of 6,000 families affected by this project. Ms. Crooks expressed concerns related to the destruction/harm of wetlands, mangroves, wildlife and aquatic life through direct and indirect secondary impacts. The Conservancy objects to this project due to the location and impacts to a multitude of resources and requests that the project be denied. (Comments have been added to this application online.)

Public Comment: Warren Smith asked about the coordination of the different stakeholders and agencies involved, and the safety of evacuation during a hurricane and environmental concerns. Mr. Smith also expressed concern for water quality in relation to the proposal of a water culvert that would be built under Shell Point Road for the transfer of water related to the tide. Mr. Smith is concerned with the approval of this proposal, that it will set a precedence for future building and rezoning.

Public Comment: Rae Ann Wessel (Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation) objected to this application due to direct and indirect impacts to the wetlands. Ms. Wessel commented that home site and boat slips in the wetlands have direct impacts on open water mangroves, and salt marsh wetlands. She continued to explain that trading off productive wetlands and open water habitat for development in some of the most significantly exposed areas of the county along our mangrove shore lines is a bad idea. Furthermore she commented that the direct impacts to mangrove wetlands are detrimental to many features they provide. Healthy mangrove seagrass and estuary

habitats are vital to the overall health, biodiversity and the integrity of the J.N. Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge, the Sanibel Island community and the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary. Their objection to this project is that it doesn't meet the standards for avoidance and minimization of wetlands impacts and the impacts to these habitats and the functions they provide, the adverse secondary impacts to water quality, storm water, and contamination to the Caloosahatchee. They are concerned this will set a precedent for Mangrove Development.

Public Comment: Susan Hill, concerned citizen, objected to this project for all the reasons stated by the previous speakers. Ms. Hill is concerned with a disruption to wildlife specifically the sawtooth fish, eagles, and the flooding impacts this project may cause. She asked the project be denied.

Public Comment: Mardi Parker, concerned citizen, objected to this project. This project would affect the environment, mangroves, and wetlands in the area and for those reasons, should be denied.

Public Comment: Mary Tracy Sigman, concerned citizen, objected to this project. Ms. Sigman was concerned with the secondary wetland analysis comments that previous development having taken place allows future development. Ms. Sigman believes that since development has taken place, no further development should be allowed. Ms. Sigman is concerned with the water quality and the disruption to habitats and animals by the removal of the mangroves. Increased boat traffic is also a concern and its effect on the wildlife in the area. Ms. Sigman also read letters from neighbors who are concerned with the effects this project will have on the area.

Public Comment: Drew Martin, (Sierra Club), is opposed to this project. Mr. Martin is concerned with algal blooms in the area, the removal of mangroves, the effect on the fish habitats and the effects on wildlife. Mr. Martin is concerned that the mitigation money being put somewhere else does not solve the issue. Mr. Martin wants water quality to be a higher issue and the quality of life for the neighborhood be considered.

### **Application 080103-6 Town of Big Cypress**

Public Comment: Amber Crooks informed staff about updated site boundaries that have been submitted to Collier County that include additional acreage not previously requested by this application. Ms. Crooks inquired if they have made similar request in this application.

### **Application 141020-12 Corkscrew Crossing**

Public Comment: Amber Crooks is concerned with the location and the footprint of the project specifically in relation to the effects that it could have on flow ways, wildlife corridors and wetlands, as this includes the panther crossings in the area.

### **Application 140327-7 Argo Manatee**

Public Comment: Amber Crooks commented regarding the applicant's improvements by removing a boat ramp and parking lot that would have impacted manatees. However, there are still concerns with regards to wildlife movement in the area. Ms. Crooks stated that 5 panthers have been killed on US 41 nearby the site and there is a concern with an increase of possible wildlife vs human interactions due to this project. Ms. Crooks also inquired regarding how water would be discharge from this site.

### **Application 141009-9 Alton Tract B- Community Recreation & Fitness Facility**

Public Comment: Drew Martin is concerned that there are inadequate efforts being made to protect the environment on this project.

### **Application 140902-5 Ocean Ridge Restoration Project**

Public Comment: Drew Martin inquired regarding the status of this application.

#### **4. Public Comment on other Pending Permit Applications**

Public Comment: Drew Martin asked if the District is aware of any projects in the Ag Reserve Area. Mr. Martin asked that the Sierra Club be informed of these projects.

#### **5. Public Comment on General Regulatory Issues**

Public Comment: Drew Martin commented that any project that involves the removal of mangroves or wetlands be marked as an item of public interest.

Public Comment: Drew Martin stated his opposition to mitigation that sacrifices one part of the environment to benefit another part of the environment.

Public Comment: Drew Martin commented on the dangers of sea level rise and storm surge due to the removal of mangroves.

#### **6. Adjourn**

Staff reminded the attendees that information for all applications and permits is available online using e-Permitting and that training is available for using this webpage.

Staff will be available to answer questions once the meeting is adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.