

**SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SFWMD)
WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMISSION (WRAC) ISSUES WORKSHOP
2014 LOWER KISSIMMEE BASIN WATER SUPPLY PLAN**

April 16, 2014, 1:30 p.m.
SFWMD Okeechobee District Service Center

MEETING SUMMARY

Item 1. Welcome, Introductions, and Today's Topics – Mark Elsner, Section Administrator, Water Supply, SFWMD

Mr. Elsner opened the workshop, welcomed participants, and had attendees introduce themselves. The purpose of water supply plans was presented. Public input is necessary to the planning process to ensure the plan reflects the needs of the planning area. It was noted that the LKB Planning Area is new as a result of the Central Florida Water Initiative taking place and covering the northern region of the Kissimmee Basin.

Questions/Comments

How do we link the water management activities going on in the CFWI with the Lower Kissimmee Basin given that it is all part of the same basin? Many of the staff working on the LKB Water Supply Plan are also supporting the CFWI initiative. A water reservation is needed for the Kissimmee River Basin; this is on the District Priority List for 2015.

Item 2. The Lower Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Plan Process – Cynthia Gefvert, Section Leader, Water Supply Development, SFWMD

Ms. Gefvert explained the basic requirements of what must be included in a water supply plan according to Florida statutes. The LKB Planning Area which includes portions of Okeechobee, Glades, and Highlands counties, has the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) – Brighton Reservation, six public water supply (PWS) utilities, and agriculture is the main water user. Accurate data is key to the development of the plan and District staff has been involved in data collection and verification over the past months. Collaboration on this effort with stakeholders is necessary to ensure the data used is appropriate. In future water supply plans, FDACS will be developing agricultural demand projections for all water management districts. Prior to this workshop, District staff have met with agricultural stakeholders several times to review current and projected crop data and incorporated comments into the current projections. Staff has also met with STOF and PWS representatives. Ms. Gefvert concluded her presentation

with a summary of what is included in each chapter of the LKB Plan document and appendices.

Questions/Comments

Do the 6 PWS utilities in the LKB Planning Area include the Tribe? Yes.

Is the Lake Wales Ridge in the plan? No, it is in the SWFWMD.

Is FDACS just supplying the future agricultural projections, or will they complete the plans as well? SFWMD will continue to create the water supply plans. FDACS will supply agricultural data and projections that SFWMD will consider. This will be done in the same manner that the University of Florida Bureau of Economic Business Research provides population projections that are used by all water management districts and many other agencies.

As a PWS we do water audits and complete SFWMD's WASUP reporting annually. SFWMD staff has been great to work with and it is nice that the data is utilized.

For permits that have much higher capacity beyond currently utilized capacity, how is that evaluated? In the planning process we look at the crop planted in 2010 and what the projections indicate will be planted in 2035 and use these in determining the demand projections. Staff does look at the permitted maximums.

Are you looking at carbon sequestration? No.

Item 3. Overview of Accomplishments and Changes since the 2005-2006 Kissimmee Basin WSP – Chris Sweazy, Lead Hydrogeologist, SFWMD

Along with the change to the planning area discussed by Mark Elsner in Item 1, Mr. Sweazy presented the additional changes to and accomplishments in the planning area since the previous plan. These included the ongoing repairs to the Herbert Hoover Dike, LORS 2008, Lake Okeechobee water shortage management plan, water resource development projects, water supply development projects, dispersed water management projects, year-round landscape irrigation rules, and the update to the steady-state LKB groundwater model. Additional factors that impacted the demand projections included the inclusion of irrigated pasture as a crop category, citrus diseases, and introduction of new crops.

Questions/Comments:

Regarding Lake Okeechobee structure replacement, we understand the USACE is retrofitting them for “dual purpose”. How will this affect the ability to move water

into Indian Prairie Basin. District staff present do not have an answer but will talk to the appropriate people and have an answer for the next workshop.

Dispersed water management projects should not be included as a water resource development project. District staff agrees that these projects are not primarily for water supply but rather for retaining peak flows in shallow impoundments.

Aren't STA's more users of water than water resource projects? These as well as the dispersed water management projects should be listed as other projects rather than water resource projects.

Item 4. Goals and Objectives – Chris Sweazy, SFWMD

Mr. Sweazy reviewed the draft goal and objectives for the 2014 LKB Water Supply Plan. There were no comments and participants were asked to send any suggestions to Chris Sweazy.

Item 5. Population Demand Projections – Mark Elsner and Cynthia Gefvert, SFWMD

Mark Elsner gave an overview of macro-economic trends affecting water use in the LKB Planning Area. Cynthia Gefvert discussed how population projections are developed in the plans and presented the projections for each demand category.

Questions/Comments:

Do you consider the change in the number of head of cattle now compared to the future? Yes, projections of water use for each agricultural sector are calculated and will be reported in the plan.

In the Lake Okeechobee Service Area, reliability has dropped from 1:10 to 1:6. Given the projected increased water demands, how can we supply new demands without first fixing the 1:10 issue? In LOSA portion of the planning area, the level of certainty for surface water users did decrease to 1-in-6 with the change to LORS 2008. Some users in this planning area have added a groundwater source as a back-up during times of low rain or low water in Lake Okeechobee.

Are the changes in crop acreage just reflecting rotational uses? If so, the water demand may be accommodated by an existing permit. The question we need to look at is whether there are new acreages being put into use that will require new water supply sources. Based in the preliminary projections, it seems we need to find quite a bit more water (37 MGD). Projections were developed considering information from a variety sources, including permitting knowledge, on future crops, growth and irrigated acreages. The projections do not take permitted acreages and allocations specifically into account but look at the analysis and what we think the crops are that will be grown. We did assume the irrigated pasture would remain stable and that is the permitted

acreage. In our review of the permits, we feel that the increased demand can generally be accommodated within existing permit allocations.

Item 6. Next Steps – Chris Sweazy

Mr. Sweazy gave an overview of the next steps of the LKB Plan. Using input from today and other meetings with stakeholders, SFWMD will prepare a draft LKB Water Supply Plan. This will be distributed in late May or June. A second public workshop is tentatively planned for June to present the plan. The draft plan would be presented to the Governing Board in July. Stakeholder comments would be requested by late July. The current schedule is to present the final Plan document to WRAC in August and to the SFWMD Governing Board for approval in September.

Information on the plan process, meeting agenda and summaries, and the plan documents, when they are available can be found at: www.sfwmd.gov and then type in search box: “Lower Kissimmee Basin Water Supply Plan”.

Item 7. Public Comment

Consider adding a slide in comparing current and projected demands compared to permitted volumes.

There were no further public comments.

Item 8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:11 PM.