

**Notes from the Quarterly Meeting of the
Technical Oversight Committee (TOC)
May 30, 2012**

**South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33406**

TOC Representatives:

Juli LaRock, Acting TOC Chair, SFWMD
Ernie Marks, FDEP (by phone)
Sean Smith, USACE

Melissa Martin, Refuge
Nick Aumen, NPS/ENP
John Barkett, Special Master (by phone)

Note: This meeting was recorded by a court reporter and copies are available for purchase; for more information, contact Florida Court Reporting (561-689-0999). Handouts and presentations are also available on the TOC website (www.sfwmd.gov/toc).

10:10 a.m. **Meeting called to order by TOC Chair**

Agenda Item 1. TOC opening business – Juli LaRock, SFWMD

Agenda Item 1A. Welcome and identification of those on the phone

Juli LaRock welcomed attendees and asked those on the phone to introduce themselves. She then asked for any general announcements.

Nick Aumen introduced Melissa Martin as the new TOC representative for the A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge.

Agenda Item 1B. Agenda modifications and documents available on the TOC website

Juli LaRock asked if any changes to the agenda (**Document 1**) were required. None were requested.

Agenda Item 1C. Approval of February 28, 2012 draft meeting notes and review of action items

Juli LaRock asked if the TOC members had any changes to the notes from the previous TOC meeting (**Document 2**). None were requested.

Associated online documents

1. [Agenda for May 30, 2012, TOC Meeting](#)
2. [TOC Meeting Notes from February 28, 2012](#)

10:15 a.m. **Agenda Item 2. Presentation of the Settlement Agreement Report** – Stuart Van Horn, SFWMD

Stuart Van Horn presented the Settlement Agreement Report for January – March 2012 (**Documents 3 and 4**). As part of the discussion following the presentation, Special Master John Barkett requested that data collected for the Phosphorus Rule's four-part test are made available for each quarterly meeting. Various members of the audience on the phone and in person asked that data from each area and not just the Refuge be shared.

→ **Action Item 1:** Juli LaRock will work with FDEP to develop a way to share the data collected for the four-part test each quarter.

Associated online documents

3. [Settlement Agreement Report, January - March 2012](#)
4. [Settlement Agreement Report Presentation, January - March 2012](#)

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10:50 a.m. **Agenda Item 3. Data usability document discussion**

Agenda Item 3A. Examples and actions – Stuart Van Horn, SFWMD

Stuart Van Horn presented four recent cases of qualified data used in compliance calculations (**Document 5**) and asked the TOC to decide whether to follow the District's recommendations regarding the use of these data.

The **TOC accepted the District's recommendations for Cases 1, 2, and 4**. The **TOC opted to not follow the District's recommendation for Case 3** (Re-sampled site due to preservation error at Shark River Slough, December 6, 2011) and instead exclude the resampled result from compliance calculations. The data from the re-sampled site can be considered in discussion if a compliance issue is evident at the end of the federal water year.

Associated online documents

5. [Recent Cases Involving the Use of Qualified Data for Compliance with the Settlement Agreement](#)

11:25 a.m. **Agenda Item 3B. Outlier analysis** – Ernie Marks, FDEP

Ernie Marks introduced two technical documents (**Documents 6 and 7**) about outlier analysis. After testing various processes, the FDEP defers to the TOC's preference to not have a process to automatically exclude outliers without discussion by the TOC.

Associated online documents

6. [Total Phosphorus Outlier Analysis and Proposed Alternative Screening Criterion: Distribution Independent Outlier Analysis - Introduction](#)
7. [Total Phosphorus Outlier Analysis and Proposed Alternative Screening Criterion: Distribution Independent Outlier Analysis - Report](#)

11:30 a.m. **Agenda Item 3C. Approval of revised cover memo and document** – Ernie Marks, FDEP

Ernie Marks presented the final draft of the proposed cover memo (**Document 8**) for the Process for Assessing Data Usability and asked for TOC approval. Language regarding outlier data was revised to express the TOC's preference to "take into consideration all data generated to determine compliance with the Settlement Agreement" and all references to appropriate statistical outlier tests in the Process are not applicable to compliance data.

The **TOC approved the memo**.

Associated online documents

8. [Memo Addressing Comments on the Process for Assessing Data Usability Document and Recommendations to the TOC](#)

11:40 a.m. **Agenda Item 4. REMAP update** – Dan Scheidt/Peter Kalla, USEPA

Dan Scheidt and Peter Kalla presented an overview of the Everglades Ecosystem Assessment: Regional Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Project (EEA REMAP) and an update on planning for Phase IV, to possibly begin in 2013 (**Document 9**). They also provided a list of reports and scientific papers that resulted from Phase III (2005) of the project (**Document 10**). Expenses for Phase IV are estimated to be \$2 million and the USEPA is looking for suggestions for items that could be cut or commitments from other agencies that can provide financial or in-kind support. Dan Scheidt asked that suggestions be emailed to him at Scheidt.dan@epa.gov.

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Associated online documents

9. [Everglades Ecosystem Assessment: Regional Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Project \(REMAP\) - TOC Briefing](#)
10. [Project Reports and Publications Resulting from the Everglades Ecosystem Assessment \(EEA\)/Regional Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Project \(REMAP\)](#)

12:15 p.m. **Agenda Item 5. Marsh vegetation data: Introduction to the Floristic Assessment Index**
– Donatto Surratt, NPS

Donatto Surratt updated the TOC on the progress the interagency team has made towards finding useful techniques for collecting and using vegetation data (**Document 11**). The Floristic Quality Assessment Index (FQAI) has been tested and has greatly reduced the amount of time needed to collect vegetation data. An SOP is being written and it may be available for the next TOC meeting. Dan Scheidt, USEPA, commented that similar data were collected for the Refuge for REMAP and it may prove useful for developing the FQAI.

Associated online documents

11. [Marsh Vegetation Data: Introduction to the Floristic Assessment Index](#)

12:45 p.m. **Agenda Item 6. Public comment**

Drew Martin, Sierra Club, asked if anyone is studying the effects on native Everglades wildlife from long-term exposure to high levels of mercury and predatory pressure by pythons. Juli LaRock commented that many scientific publications are available regarding the effects of mercury on wildlife in the Everglades. Nick Aumen responded that the purpose of REMAP is to collect the data, but other programs are using that information to study the impacts. As an example, Everglades National Park is examining the effects of python predation.

12:50 p.m. **Agenda Item 7. TOC closing business**

Discussion of proposed future TOC agenda items

Ways to provide data related to the four-part test to the TOC (Action Item 1) may be discussed. Nick Aumen also requested that more documents from previous TOC meetings be made available through the TOC web page.

TOC meeting dates

The next quarterly meetings will be held on **August 21, 2012** and **November 27, 2012**. Special meetings, if needed, are scheduled for **July 24, 2012**, **September 25, 2012**, and **October 30, 2012**.

Additional supporting documents available online:

[Refuge's Enhanced Water Quality Program Monthly Sampling, January - March 2012](#)

[Quality Assessment Report for Water Quality Monitoring, January - March 2012](#)