

Notes from the Quarterly Meeting of the Everglades Technical Oversight Committee (TOC)

November 2, 2021

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

TOC Representatives:

Julianne LaRock, TOC Chair, SFWMD
John Barkett, Special Master
Daniel Crawford, USACE

Lori Miller, Refuge
Ed Smith, FDEP
Donatto Surratt, ENP

Note: *This meeting was conducted in person, online, and by phone, and was recorded by a court reporter. Copies of the transcript are available for purchase; for more information, please contact Florida Court Reporting (561-689-0999). Handouts and presentations are available on the TOC website (<https://www.sfwmd.gov/our-work/toc>) and a recording of the meeting is available online at <http://sfwmd.iqm2.com/Citizens/Media.aspx>.*

10:00 a.m. **1. TOC Opening Business** – Julianne LaRock, SFWMD

1A. Welcome, Announcements, and Identification of Participants

Julianne LaRock called the meeting to order.

1B. Agenda Modifications and Documents Available on the TOC Website

Julianne LaRock reviewed the agenda and the list of files recently posted on the TOC website. There were no requests to modify the agenda.

1C. Approval of Meeting Summary for August 10, 2021

The TOC approved the August 10, 2021, meeting summary with no requests for changes.

Associated Online Documents:

- [Final Agenda for November 2, 2021](#)
- [Draft Meeting Notes for August 10, 2021](#)

10:09 a.m. **2. Second Quarter 2021 Settlement Agreement Report** – Chelsea Qiu, SFWMD

Chelsea Qiu presented the 2021 second quarter Settlement Agreement report, which includes results of TP monitoring in the Refuge, Shark River Slough, and Taylor Slough and Coastal Basins through June 2021. Results for Shark River Slough were calculated using provisional flow data and are preliminary. Final results for Shark River Slough for federal WY2021 will be presented after USGS provides final flow data for the S-12 structures through September 30, 2021.

Refuge 14-station geometric mean TP values for April, May, and June 2021 were below the computed long-term levels. Stage was not high enough for all 14 stations to be sampled for each of these months. The average monthly TP geometric mean concentration over the 36 months ending in March 2021 was 7 ppb, which is 3 ppb below the 36 -month average long-term level of 10 ppb. The last excursion in the Refuge occurred in September 2020.

Preliminary geometric mean TP concentrations for July through October 2021 are below their respective long-term levels.

Preliminary TP FWMC for Shark River Slough (SRS) for the 12-month period ending in April 2021 (7.6 ppb) tracked below the long-term limit, however the preliminary TP FWMC for the periods ending May and June 2021 (both 7.9 ppb) tracked above the long-term limit (7.6 ppb). The percent of sampling events greater than 10 ppb was below the guideline during the second quarter of 2021. A look-ahead for inflows to ENP's SRS in federal WY2021 through September 2021 was presented. Periods with higher stage and flow tended to be associated with lower TP FWMC, and, conversely, periods where stage and flow were low tended to be associated with higher TP FWMC similar to observed patterns in previous years. Overall, the provisional annual TP FWMC for federal WY2021 is lower than the previous water year, but with higher overall flow volume entering SRS, the provisional results indicate the TP FWMC (8.2 ppb) is higher than the long-term limit (7.6 ppb). Details on provisional results for WY2021 will be presented at the next quarterly meeting. However, presentation of final WY2021 results for Shark River Slough is expected in the subsequent meeting (typically May) pending receipt of the final quality assured USGS flow at the S-12 structures.

TP FWMC values for Taylor Slough and the Coastal Basins for the 12-month periods ending in April, May, and June 2021 tracked well below the long-term limit of 11 ppb, and the observed percent of sampling events greater than 10 ppb was far below the guideline.

Questions, Comments, and Discussion:

Although the TOC does not have purview over the COP (Combined Operations Plan), Donatto Surratt noted that as part of COP operations some things being considered are adaptive management strategies with respect to operations for S-333 and responses to conditions in WCA-3. One focus of the COP adaptive management team has been the stage of 9.2 ft NGVD29 at the headwater of S-333 because at stages below that line, TP concentrations tend to be elevated above desired levels at the headwater of the S-333 structure.

Associated Online Documents:

- [Settlement Agreement Report, April–June 2021](#)
- [Settlement Agreement Report, April–June 2021 Presentation](#)
- [Quality Assessment Report for Water Quality Monitoring, April–June 2021](#)
- [Quality Assessment Report for Water Quality Monitoring, April–June 2021 Data](#)
- [Refuge TP Compliance Table, 2007 through Second Quarter 2021](#)
- [Provisional Shark River Slough TP Tracking Report, Second Quarter 2021](#)
- [Taylor Slough and Coastal Basin Tracking Report, Second Quarter 2021](#)

10:33 am **3. Public Comment**

Mike Elfenbein asked what effect it might have on COP operations and procedures going forward if it is confirmed there are no more sparrows in Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow subpopulation A.

Nyla Pipes, One Florida Foundation, expressed concern about sending water south until there is more infrastructure in place to ensure appropriate water quality.

Newton Cook noted the water going into the park looks good in terms of phosphorus levels but believes the management and movement of the water is not so good, and believes there

will be problems all the way up the system, including Lake Okeechobee and the estuaries, until the gate at Tamiami Trail is opened to allow more natural drainage.

Tom Van Lent, Everglades Foundation, commented that there needs to be an investigation into solutions for the sediment issues in the canal near S-333, and would like to see discussion of short-term and long-term remedial actions that can be done to address the problem.

10:41 a.m. **4. TOC Closing Business** – Julianne LaRock, SFWMD

The TOC confirmed the next quarterly meeting for Tuesday, January 18, 2022.

Julianne LaRock requested that the TOC representatives provide their agenda items for the next meeting as soon as possible.

10:45 a.m. Julianne LaRock adjourned the meeting.