

Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District
4505 George Blvd.
SEBRING, FLORIDA 33875-5837

LAKE ISTOKPOGA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

June 14, 2007 Minutes

CTO 0910 by Clell Ford

1) Introductions and Call to Order

Committee Members Present:

Environmental Community – Paul Gray
Lorida Community – Gary Albin
Highlands Co. Lakes Assoc. – Dick Reaney
Highlands Co. Homeowners Assoc. – Jack Richie
Istokpoga Marsh Watershed – Paul Phyphers, Jr.
Friends of Istokpoga – Ray Gaiefsky
Fish Camp Owners – Ray Schirtz

Staff Present:

FDEP – Erica Van Horn
FWCC – Rob Burns
FWCC – Beacham Furse
FWCC - Jim Reed
FWCC – Steve Gornak
SFWMD – Paul Ritter
Highlands County – Clell Ford
Highlands County – Erin McCarta
Highlands County – Carl Smith
Highlands County – Vicki Pontius

2) Discussion of minutes; no revisions.

Mr. Phyphers entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2007 meeting as presented. Second by Mr. Richie. Motion passed unanimously.

3) Review of Outstanding Action Items:

Outstanding Action Item (Dec 2006): (Clell) Have the SFWMD present the proposed Water Level Fluctuation plan to the BCC, reminding that it is only a draft and that the final plan will probably be different. (as presented at the October 19th stakeholders meeting) – ***This action will be held until the BCC has a more appropriate time available to hear the proposed plan.***

Outstanding Action Item (Dec 2006): (LIMC and Clell) Dr. Gray moved to have LIMC recommend to the BCC that they write a letter in support of the USGS cooperative water quality study. Mr. Collins 2nd, motion passed. (December 14,

2006) – Action taken: Clell will have a letter completed by the end of June to be forwarded to the BCC.

Outstanding Action Item (March 2007): (Erin, Steve, Erica, Carl) Create universal notification system for weed spraying activities such as a website or web link where everyone can see where and when spraying has occurred or is going to occur. – Action taken: Begin working on a system of reporting so that Erica can get the info on the DEP website, and/or the HSWCD website. SOS is in the process of posting some info on their website.

Outstanding Action Item (Dec 2006): (USACE – Chuck?) Report to the LIMC the proposed operation schedule of the new S-67 structure on the Istokpoga Canal. Have ready to present at the next meeting, if possible.

Outstanding Action Item (Continuing): (Paul Ritter) Continue reporting on Arbuckle Creek monitoring data from SFWMD. Update at September meeting.

Outstanding Action Item (Continuing): (Clell and Erin) Continue to mail out and email meeting announcements and other info to all members and interested parties.

4) Committee Membership: There was brief discussion on possibly having Jim Reed be a member of LIMC as a citizen.

5) Istokpoga Watershed Management Master Plan – Workshop notes reviewed; baseline data is being acquired from agency representatives to help with setting goals; the next workshop for the subcommittee will be **July 26, 2007**.

- Meetings were held in April and in May; discussions included baseline data from DEP and SFWMD as well as land use around the lake and a briefing on Chironomid activity.

Action Item 0614 A: (Erin/Paul Ritter) Compile map(s) of land use in the Istokpoga Basin – possibly for the July workshop

6) Water Quality Updates

a. Erin's Presentation on the Rutledge Canal

- Suggested to check out water quality at Hickory Branch as comparison data for ridge seepage

b. TMDL's: Arbuckle Creek regulations and Kissimmee Basin TMDL development will be discussed at a DEP TMDL program meeting in Lake Wales on June 19. The public is welcome and Erin will attend. She will provide and update from that meeting.

7) Project Updates

a. Aquatic Plant Management Activities

1. DEP (Erica): Hydrilla treatment update – the plan was to treat 1,000 acres but the result was closer to 2,000 acres; Aquatholl K stays in the water only 10 days and breaks down by microbial action

- Another treatment is planned for a total of 750 acres east of Big Island, at the south end near Eagle's Nest, and near Windy Point. This is scheduled for June 25.
- cost is approx. \$267 per acre (Chemicals and Helicopter)
- Ray Schirtz is concerned that the helicopter treatment was not as precise as expected and that the pilot should be more aware of where the liquid chemical is going due to wind impacts.

Action Item 0614 B: (Carl/Erica) Talk with helicopter pilot about height above water during application; also retain a GPS track of actual helicopter route.

2. FWCC (Steve): update on revegetation projects around the lake:

- Peppergrass on Bumblebee island
- Eel grass is making a comeback in some areas
- harvesting work will be done on Big Island Channel, also opening up some fishing areas
- Cattail regrowth along western edge (Royce Ranch): some management will be done here, possibly by helicopter
- Planned burn on Big Island via ping pong ball method (very cool!)
- These projects are on the FWCC website

b. Lake Okeechobee Watershed Team – no report

c. Spring Lake Improvement District – have been invited to every meeting but no response at this time

d. Residential Canals Update: clerical error slowed the process; the bid package is ready to send out; possible future discussion of lake dredging to provide access during low water times – approval for this will probably take years.

Action Item 0614 C: (Clell and Erin) Invite the DEP Dredge and Fill staff to attend our meetings

8. Items from Committee Members - none

9. No Public Comments

10. Announcements:

Next Management Plan Workshop will be held July 26 at the AG-Civic center in conf. room 3, at 10 AM.

Next regular LIMC meeting: September 13, 2007

Meeting adjourned at 1156.

Minutes recorded by Erin McCarta

**Please note that action items will now be referred to by date and order in agenda.*