

**FINAL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
Of the  
HARRIS CHAIN OF LAKES RESTORATION COUNCIL**

**June 4 2010**

The regular meeting of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council was held at 9:00am on June 04, 2010 at the Lake County Board of County Commissioner Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida

**Members Present**

Skip Goerner, Chairman  
Richard (Rick) Powers P.G., Secretary  
Keith Farnar  
Richard Royal

**Members Absent**

Hugh (Dave) Davis II, Vice Chairman  
Edward Schlein, M.D  
Jon VanderLey  
Don Nicholson

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Skip Goerner called the meeting to order at 9:08am.

**2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilman Richard Royal gave an invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

**3. COUNCIL ROLL CALL; REMINDER FOR OTHERS TO SIGN IN**

Chairman Goerner announced that there was not a quorum, so voting was not permitted.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Goerner called for a postponement to approve the April 2, 2010 and May 7, 2010 meeting minutes until the next meeting, due to the lack of a quorum.

**5. PRESENTATIONS / ACTION ITEMS**

1) Chairman Goerner called on Nancy Christman, St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) to discuss the district contract to develop the Council's annual report.

- Nancy Christman, SJRWMD, provided information on Wildwood Consulting, Inc. She stated their representative would be coming to meetings from July through November, according to their contract. They will work with the Council members to obtain position statements for the draft report. The Council will receive the first draft in the September agenda package.

2) Council Discussion – Improvement to the operation of the NuRF (Nutrient Reduction Facility)

- Chairman Goerner discussed obtaining funds for a backup generator and pumps, to avoid the flow of untreated water in case of power failure at the NuRF. He would like to hear from the Lake County Water Authority (LCWA) for recommendations on a backup system. He also suggested asking the Department of Environment Protection (DEP), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Committee (FWCC) and the Legislature for funding the backup system before the 2010 storm season activity begins.
- Council Members discussed what type of equipment would be best suited to handle a power failure and the cost. They agreed on asking Lance Lumbard, LCWA, for his recommendation.

3) Establishment of a minimum size limit for the harvesting (catching and keeping) of crappie.

- Jason Dotson, FWCC – provided a presentation on the evaluation of the black crappie fishery at Lake Griffin and implications for fisheries management. The presentation slides are viewable on the website at <http://sfrc.ifas.ufl.edu/harrischaincouncil/Minutes.htm>. The presentation and discussion by the Council Members included: 1) factors that influence a fish population; 2) the historical and

current black crappie harvest on Lake Griffin; 3) fishing mortality and management; 4) overfishing and regulation changes; and, 5) ongoing research. Mr. Dotson stated the harvesting of small fish causes growth overfishing; the lack of a size limit creates high exploitation causing recruitment overfishing. This decreases the number of adults spawning (2-3 years old). Data from 1975 to 2009 shows the fish population has declined, from approximately 35 fish per acre down to approximately 4 fish per acre due to over-harvesting. Thirty-two percent of the adult population is being harvested annually. The primary harvest is 3-5 year old fish averaging 8" to 12", with the common harvest of 10" (4 years old). Research has shown that to protect the fish population there needs to be a regulated minimum size limit rather than having the current no-size limit. Currently the daily allowance is 25 fish per day of any size length. Protecting fish until they are 9-10" will reduce recruitment overfishing. Mr. Dotson commented that making a specific regulation for only Lake Griffin and not the other lakes in the chain could cause potential conflicts with law enforcement and anglers. The FWCC does not have specific data on the other lakes in the chain to be able to regulate them as well. The FWCC is currently researching surveys from anglers regarding size limits, doing a creel survey and tagging study, and working on a population model. After all the data is analyzed in about 2 months, the FWCC will then make a decision on the best way to proceed with management of the black crappie fishery at Lake Griffin.

- Chairman Goerner requested Mr. Dotson come back with his final report on the data collected and give his recommendations. He also wants the Council Members to make a recommendation to the FWCC and to include this information in the annual report.
- Dan Canfield, University of Florida (UF), suggested looking at what has happened in other areas with size regulation before anyone makes a recommendation.

## 6. **COUNCIL & PUBLIC QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Agency Updates, including reports received with agenda package**

- Mike Perry, LCWA, updated the Council on: 1) The Lake Beauclair restoration project and the dredging at the Apopka-Beauclair Canal (A-B Canal). The bid is out and due back by July but they do not have a permit yet.; 2) Evaluation on the budget for LCWA shows a reduction of about \$400,000 for the next fiscal year, due to the lower property values in Lake County. LCWA may need to trim some money from the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council; and, 3) He stated the dredging of Lake Beauclair is for navigational purposes to prevent accumulative material from being stirred up by boats and wind activity.
  - Councilman Royal requested information for the next meeting from Mr. Perry regarding: 1) having the NuRF operate at a higher flow, for less hours per day to save money; and 2) a comparison of Lake Beauclair dredging project's cost per cubic yard to remove sediments versus the cost of the NuRF to remove the same amount of sediments (with the same moisture level). Mr. Perry commented he would try to get the cost comparison.
    - Councilman Powers commented there is dissimilarity in the functions of the two projects. Sediments are removed in Lake Beauclair and the NuRF removes phosphorous. He believes the cost comparison will not be a fair evaluation.
    - Dan Canfield, UF, commented dredging does not solve phosphorus problems and there is no reason to divert money from the NuRF. The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for Lake Beauclair is at 32 micrograms per liter ( $\mu/L$ ) which is accomplished by the NuRF. He reminded the Council that the lake is not being dredged because of phosphorous, but for navigation.
- Nancy Christman, SJRWMD, stated that written reports by SJRWMD were provided with the agenda package for Lake Apopka North Shore Restoration, the Marsh Flow-Way Project, Emeraldal Marsh, Shad Harvesting in the Oklawaha River Basin (ORB) and Lake Apopka, and Lake Griffin Water Quality. The reports are also on the website at <http://sfrc.ifas.ufl.edu/harrischaincouncil/Agenda.htm>.

- Christianne Ferraro, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) gave an update on the May 20, 2010 Environmental Regulation Commission meeting. They adopted changes to the surface water classification system by establishing a new limited Class III classification. It applies to waterbodies with significant alterations to habitat. No water bodies will automatically go into that classification; stakeholders have to petition for the waterbodies to be put into that classification. It will also need to have approval by the EPA before it would become effective in the state of Florida.
  - Chairman Goerner asked Ms. Ferraro if funding is available for: 1) a demonstration project on Lake Apopka for Magnolia Park, and 2) any available funding for the NuRF project. Ms. Ferraro stated there were section 319 Grant funds but the deadline to apply ended in May. The other funding available is for TMDL projects, which the LCWA can discuss with the FDEP regarding those funds for operating the NuRF. However, she believes it may only be available for construction projects.
- John Benton, FWCC, updated the Council Members on: 1) Lake Carlton bass stocking; the number of bass has been reported by a recent 60-day survey. Analysis shows they are growing well and eating shad fish. They will do another assessment in the fall and next spring; and 2) a creel survey analysis was completed for Lake Apopka, Lake Griffin, Lake Dora, Lake Beauclair and Lake Carlton. The data are currently being analyzed but so far show Lake Dora had the best year for crappie fishing and Lake Apopka is showing good quality fishing. Mr. Benton stated this year should be the best year for stockfish and black crappie due to the clearer and higher water levels.
- Dan Canfield, UF, updated the Council Members on: 1) large wild adult bass stocking in Lake Dora. They stocked over 5000-tagged adult bass over 10 inches and the fish have been reported moving into other lakes by tag returns that anglers have called in. UF will continue to evaluate Lake Dora until September 2010; 2) the Harvester is currently being used by the City of Umatilla in one of their lakes. Mr. Canfield mentioned he is looking for a machine shop to build the parts that will be needing replacement soon; it will be more cost effective than buying new parts. He also stated there are many people requesting its use; 3) the artificial reefs at Deer Creek Point and Buzzard Bay are being installed. To date, twenty 5x5x2 artificial reef habitats each containing 1.5 tons of material have been placed in the water and the nuphar will be planted later in the summer. They will continue to place the artificial reefs into different areas, primarily focusing on shoreline habitats; and 4) because of the Council's recommendation, the recent legislative session has requested Mr. Canfield do a demonstration project at Lake Apopka using the Clean to Green dredging system and Genesis dewatering solution. The Legislature wants to know the cost per yard to dredge and if the cost can be reduced by resale or reuse of the dredged material. The demonstration is to determine if the process has possible use in other lakes with limited areas of disposal, if plants will establish in the lake after dredging and if material from other areas of the lake will settle in the hole. The funding of about \$500,000.00 was allocated to the FWCC Lake Restoration Trust Fund (out of two million dollars) for the demonstration that will be held at Magnolia Park. Mr. Canfield stated that this fall there would be a chance to apply for the remaining funds that were given for the FWCC Lake Restoration Trust Fund.
- Marty Hale, FWCC, commented how fortunate we are to have the volume of data on Lake Griffin and how extensive the data is on black crappie fisheries from the 1970's to 2010. His department will be working very closely with Jason Dotson's department at the FWCC, to come up with regulation proposals. Mr. Hale updated the Council with information on: 1) the sunshine bass stocking in Lake Apopka. After analyzing samples from a recent 2010 creel survey, no fish from the 2004 fish stock survived the 2008 fish kill, but the 2009 stock is very good. The FWCC will not be stocking Lake Apopka in 2010, but plan large scale stocking in 2011; and 2) the sunshine bass stocked in 2009 into Lake Harris are growing well and recently 35,000 bass were put into Lake Eustis.

7. **OTHER PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- Ann Griffin, citizen, stated she is pleased with the Legislature's decision to fund the demonstration and study of the Clean to Green dredging system and Genesis dewatering solution. She agrees with dredging Lake Beauclair but disagrees on the disposal of the dredged toxic sediment into the West Marsh. She wants an alternative solution that would not harm the environment. She believes permitting should not be granted for this project and if a permit is granted, she will write a legal letter of objection. Ms. Griffin commented that for the past 5 weeks, there has been a smell from Lake Dora and she believes something is wrong with the micro-system. She would like to compliment SJRWMD on the improvement of Lake Apopka at Winter Garden. The plantings looked beautiful. Ms. Griffin stated she does not want SJRWMD to lease out the West Marsh land to LCWA.

8. **COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS**

**A. Comments**

- Councilman Powers stated he would prefer to hold meetings with a quorum present and a full agenda. He suggested if no quorum is present and the agenda is short, the meeting should be cancelled or rescheduled and the monthly agency updates could be e-mailed.
- Councilman Royal agrees with Councilman Powers' suggestion.
- Chairman Goerner stated: 1) the next meeting would be canceled if requirements were not met; and 2) he requested Nancy Christman, SJRWMD, place a legal ad for the replacement of a Physician and Engineer to fill the required Council positions.
- The Council stated that the Consultant could obtain information for the draft annual report by researching previous minutes and annual reports.

**B. Discussion of Next Scheduled Meeting: July 9, 2010**

- Chairman Goerner called on Nancy Christman, SJRWMD, to include the following on the agenda for July: 1) Jason Dotson, FWCC, to discuss his findings and recommendation for regulating fishing of black crappie in Lake Griffin; and 2) input from the Council to the Consultant developing the annual report.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42am

Respectfully submitted by:

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Chairman Skip Goerner

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Secretary Rick Powers, P.G.