

FINAL

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

October 7, 2011

The regular meeting of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council was held at 9:00am on October 7, 2011 at the Lake County Board of County Commissioner Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida

Members Present

Skip Goerner, Chairman
Hugh (Dave) Davis II, Vice Chairman
Don Nicholson
Richard (Rick) Powers P.G., Secretary
Jon VanderLey (left at 11:15 am)

Members Absent

Edward Schlein, M.D
Lloyd Woosley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Skip Goerner called the meeting to order at 9:06 am.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Nicholson gave an invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

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

Chairman Goerner called the roll. Councilman Schlein and Councilman Woosley were absent.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- June 3, 2011 meeting minutes were approved by unanimous vote.
- Dennis Renfro, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), had 5 corrections he requested be made to the September 9, 2011 minutes: 1) on page three, section four, he requested to correct the presentation title to 'Fisheries Management Activities Update September 2011'; 2) on page three, section four, line eight, after 'three year project' add in the words 'in cooperation'; 3) the word *floridanus* should be italicized; 4) page three, section four, line eighteen. He stated the PowerPoint presentation referenced an incorrect amount regarding 50 fish per day bag limit, it is actually 25 fish per day bag limit; and 5) page four, line seventeen, the FWC's amended rule is 68-5.002.
- The September 9, 2011 meeting minutes were approved by unanimous vote with the corrections added.

5. PRESENTATIONS / ACTION ITEMS

- 1) Chairman Goerner mentioned that Nathalie Visscher, FWC, would not be presenting her presentation on the vegetation mapping of the Harris Chain of Lakes today, they will have the presentation at a future meeting, after November 2011.

- 2) Chairman Goerner called for a review and discussion on the second draft of the 2011 annual report.
- Ms. Policastro, Wildwood Consulting, Inc., discussed with the Council the comments that were received on the second draft of the annual report. She informed the Council that they did obtain permission from Bassmasters to use their pictures on the front cover. Dennis Renfro, FWC, has the approval email. She also reminded everyone to have their edits and comments for the 3rd (and final) draft sent to her by the end of the day on October 14, 2011.
 - Chairman Goerner questioned David Walker, St. Johns River Water Management District, (SJRWMD) on the October 2011 Apopka update report that he sent to the Council, regarding the North Shore Restoration Area (NSRA). Chairman Goerner wanted to know where the location was of phase 6 that showed safe levels of pesticides in fish. In addition, if the pesticides levels in fish are not dangerous in that area, could that be an indication that some of the NSRA could be connected to Lake Apopka.
 - Mr. Walker explained that all phases are in the old Zellwood properties. He stated the area that the NSRA covers is everything from the Marsh Flow-Way, to the old Zellwood properties, which includes Duda, Marsh West, and the Sand Farm areas. Mr. Walker said all future updates provided would include the right names. He explained that currently reconnecting the NSRA to Lake Apopka is not possible, but over time it may be, and the Marsh West area of the NSRA would most likely be the area that would be reconnected to Lake Apopka first. He informed the Council that reconnecting at the present time would allow pesticides to get into the food web because of the deeper water habitat. Mr. Walker spoke about the pesticide levels that are safe for fish and wildlife is higher than the levels that are considered safe for human consumption. In addition, the focus is on emergent wetlands, with the reflooding, and the wetland restoration.
 - Dale Jones, FWC, informed the Council that FWC would continue the current management plan for hydrilla in the Harris Chain of Lakes (HCOL) until a new hydrilla management plan is in place. Mr. Jones discussed that FWC needs to consider stakeholders input, and fiscal considerations before any new hydrilla management plans are made for the future.
 - Mike Perry, Lake County Water Authority (LCWA), stated to the Council that he would send Marcy Policastro the current numbers on the inflow and outflow of the Nutrient Reduction Facility, for the annual report.
 - Mr. Renfro requested clarification from the Council on the information they requested that was written in the September minutes on page three, section four, the second bulleted paragraph, regarding the kind of fishery that was supported in the past compared to the present, and the goal that is being set now. He did provide a paragraph on the fish attractor project to Marcy Policastro, Wildwood Consulting, Inc. for the second draft, and he asked if that was the information that the Council requested.
 - Chairman Goerner agreed it was additional information regarding FWC's fish attractor project that they wanted included in the annual report, and Ms. Policastro has included it in the draft.

6. COUNCIL & AGENCY QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Dale Jones, FWC, informed the Council the FWC has not received a response yet regarding a company in Texas they contacted for an estimate on the cost of genetic testing of large mouth bass that are imported into Florida. The test is needed to determine if the bass possess any genes of the northern bass, which will harm the genetics of the Florida bass (*floridanus*). Mr. Jones explained to the Council that there is some staff at the FWC that does genetic testing, but it is not done on a cost estimate basis. He stated there are not many places that do this type of genetic testing on fish, and most labs only do genetic tests on hatchery brood stock. He explained that because of the large size the Florida bass grows to, bass fishing in Florida brings in \$1.25 billion per year, which is why the FWC is trying to protect the *floridanus* species. Mr. Jones spoke about how mixing the genes of the smaller northern bass with the larger Florida bass will over time decrease their large growth potential. He commented that north and west of the Suwannee River there is already a mixing of the genes, that is why the rule for importing any largemouth bass into the State of Florida, or transport them within locations south and east of the Suwannee River (and its drainage area) is in place to protect the Florida bass gene pool.
- Kraig McLane, SJRWMD, introduced the new Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council's website, which can be found at <http://harrischainoflakescouncil.com>. He explained it is live now, and the previous website (operated by the University of Florida) has a redirect enabled, which will automatically send visitors to the new web address.
- David Walker, SJRWMD, commented he might be able to give a brief presentation to the Council at the November meeting on the proposed reduction of discharge at the HCOL. He explained that because of the dry weather predicted again for this coming winter season a similar flow reduction will need to be done as last year.
- Dan Canfield, University of Florida (UF), suggested lowering the water table in Lake Apopka, to avoid the effects on the HCOL that the predicted dry weather for this winter will cause. He recommends SJRWMD flood the Marsh area in the NSRA, store that water, and release it slowly to refill the lakes.
 - David Walker, SJRWMD, explained to the Council that there would be opportunity in the future to store a lot of water in the NSRA, however currently there is not. Mr. Walker spoke about the infrastructure for reflooding a good portion of the NSRA has not been completed yet, but once completed it can be used as a tool to help restore Lake Apopka. He stated the staff of SJRWMD would not currently support further reduction in Lake Apopka water levels.
- Chairman Goerner questioned Dennis Renfro, FWC, on how the fish recruitment was on the 2011 spring spawning season since the flow reduction in the HCOL last winter. Mr. Renfro stated the largemouth bass did very well, but he does not have information on the black crappie.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments

8. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

A. Comments

- Chairman Goerner commented on: 1) the September 9, 2011 meeting minutes were not as detailed as he requested; 2) the annual report is going to include recommendations from the Council to the Legislature no matter what the FWC rules and policies might be. He explained that the Council's recommendations are determined by the best information available and what

the Council believes will be successful; and 3) he informed Kraig McLane, SJRWMD, that Richard Royal requested to be kept on the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council (HCOLRC) email list.

- Councilman Powers commented he might not be able to attend the next meeting on November 4, 2011, and he asked if an electronic vote would be allowed.
 - Chairman Goerner stated he does not believe that there is a provision allowing for electronic voting, but he would like the legal department of SJRWMD to look into it. He commented that there must be a quorum present at the November 4, 2011 meeting to approve the annual report.
- The Council Members commented that Marcy Policastro is doing a great job on the annual report.

B. Motions

- Councilman Nicholson made a motion to authorize plaques be given to former Councilman Royal and former Councilman Farner for their service to the HCOLRC. Councilman Powers seconded the motion. All Council Members approved, and the motion carried unanimously.
 - Chairman Goerner asked Mike Perry, LCWA, to have the plaques made for Richard Royal and Keith Farner.

C. Discussion of Next Scheduled Meeting: November 4, 2011

- Chairman Goerner discussed the importance of having a quorum at the next scheduled meeting. He stated the annual report (by law) must be received by the legislature by the deadline of November 25, 2011. And if there is no quorum to approve the annual report at the November 4th meeting, then the Council will need to hold additional meetings in November until a quorum is in attendance.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 am