

FINAL

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

November 1, 2013

The regular meeting of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council (Council) was held at 9:05 a.m. on November 1, 2013 at the Lake County Board of County Commissioner Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida.

Members Present

Skip Goerner, Vice Chairman
Sid Grow
Don Nicholson
Keith Truenow
Lloyd Woosley (Telephone)

Members Absent

Hugh (Dave) Davis, II, Chairman
Roberts (Bob) Johnson
Edward Schlein, M.D.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Goerner called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

Vice Chairman Goerner called the roll. Chairman Davis, Councilman Johnson and Councilman Schlein were absent. Councilman Woosley was present by telephone.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Council approved the October 4, 2013 meeting minutes.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments from the public.

6. PRESENTATIONS / ACTIONS

A. The Council, Dennis Renfro, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), and Steve Fitzgibbons, St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) reviewed and discussed the draft of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council 2013 Annual Report. Mr. Fitzgibbons stated that the report included the revisions he received since the October meeting.

In review of Section 3.4.1 (Sport Fish Stocking), Mr. Renfro discussed the size of Phase I and II fish, fingerlings, and advanced fingerlings. The Council agrees to state the measurement of fingerlings in both inches and millimeters. Mr. Renfro verified the size of advanced fingerlings to be three to four (not four to six) inches in length; Mr. Fitzgibbons changed this in the annual report, accordingly.

Council members Nicholson and Grow recommended a footnote of the sampling protocol used by FWC. Vice Chairman Goerner wants more discussion on sampling protocol.

Vice Chairman Goerner referenced an e-mail from Mike Allen, University of Florida (UF); he believes with regard to the economics and B.A.S.S. fishing tournaments that Mr. Allen is not accurate in his information and summation of that information. Vice Chairman Goerner noted that the Council is supposed to objectively evaluate the projects and report the findings to the Legislature.

The Council recognizes that FWC's Lake Griffin stocking study was limited in success and needing additional time for the fingerlings to reach catchable size. Vice Chairman Goerner clarified that the stocking of lakes Griffin and Dora was not simultaneous; Councilman Woosley confirmed that UF transferred wild adult fish to Lake Griffin during 2004-2007 and to Lake Dora during 2007-2010. Councilman Woosley made a motion for the use of direct citations from Dan Canfield's (UF) report, in lieu of paraphrasing. Councilman Grow seconded the motion (Council members Woosley, Grow, and Nicholson, voted yes. Vice Chairman Goerner and Councilman Truenow voted no). The motion passed. The Council believes that the stocking of hatchery raised and wild adult-bass can bring economic benefit to the surrounding communities that exceed the costs of the stocking program. They concluded that stocking adult bass bring immediate benefits and that these fish, most likely, spawn in the lakes after transfer, and the true cost of stocking hatchery-produced fingerling, advanced fingerling and wild-adult bass is an important issue that fishery resource managers must address.

Council members Woosley and Grow agreed to the inclusion of scientific facts presented to the Council and inclusion of the Council position in a separate paragraph at the end of the report. Councilman Woosley recommends leaving Mr. Thompson's (FWC) information as written, stating that the Council feels that the sampling methodologies used in the study do not truly represent the fishery resource, and future sampling in the marshes and canals to better represent the resource. Council member Grow believes the information should be included because Mr. Thompson reported the information to the Council but he wants to include a statement that the Council wants to further investigate and will have a conclusion in next year's report. Councilman Nicholson wants to exclude the information due to the way Mr. Thompson delivered it and would give him another opportunity to present in a more civil manner. Councilman Truenow wants to remove the information if it does not add anything to the annual report. Vice Chairman Goerner wants to exclude it; he believes it does not represent Lake Griffin. He explained that it is not known if bass move freely between the lake and canals, does not believe that observed catch rate trends represent the entire fishery nor that improvements in aquatic habitat continue to drive the entire Lake Griffin bass fishery (lake and canals). He believes that habitat is in the reconnected marshes and the Council worked very hard to ensure reconnection. Councilman Nicholson made a motion to delete the paragraph in the report that referenced Mr. Thompson's presentation to the Council. Councilman Truenow seconded the motion (Council members Nicholson, Truenow, and Vice Chairman Goerner voted yes. Council members Woosley and Grow voted no). The motion passed.

Mr. Renfro confirmed that no cameras are installed at the Emeralda Marsh; he explained giving a presentation on the potential installation of cameras and that there are cameras at Apopka and other areas. Vice Chairman Goerner supports the installation of cameras. Councilman Grow reports going there two months ago and that he was unable to fish due to thick covering of spatterdock and peppergrass in the Emeralda Marsh areas. Councilman

Truenow questioned placement of the game camera report in Section 3.4.1 (Sport Fish Stocking). Council member Woosley stated that this should remain in the section with an introductory transition that reads as “Recognizing the limitations of current fisheries assessment methodologies, FWC is evaluating alternative methods of data collection.”

The Council recommends funding to FWC to broaden monitoring to all lakes in the HCOL.

The Council discussed FWC’s use of pellet raised hatchery fish. FWC proposes an attempt to stock wild reared advanced fingerlings in Lake Apopka citing successful stocking of wild reared fingerling at Lake Talquin; budgeted funding exceed \$600,000 (funds appropriated for restoration). The Council believes that this is a research project and recommends reappropriation of the restoration funding to support habitat restoration and lake access in Lake Apopka.

Councilman Nicholson made a motion to approve the draft of the Harris Chain of Lakes Restoration Council 2013 Report. Councilman Truenow seconded the motion and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

7. COUNCIL & AGENCY QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

There were no Council or agency questions or answers.

8. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

C. Comments

There were no comments by the Council members.

D. Discussion of Next Scheduled Meeting:

Kraig McLane, SJRWMD reviewed the Council’s 2014 meeting calendar. He confirmed reservations for the meetings in the Lake County Board Room.

The Council agreed to cancel the December 2013 and January 2014 meetings; they will reconvene in February 2014. The Council requests presentations and discussion on the cost of large mouth bass stocking by Dan Canfield and the hatchery manager, FWC.

Councilman Grow stated appreciation to Mr. Fitzgibbons for working with the Council in preparation of the report.

Councilman Nicholson stated that Councilman Powers resigned and the Council desires to honor him with a plaque for his dedication. Mike Perry, Lake County Water Authority will provide the plaque.

Mr. Renfro, FWC reported that Mr. Dale Jones, FWC resigned in August. FWC designed research on 18-quarter acre sites in Lake Griffin for the use of brush versus plastic fish attractors.

The Council congratulated Mr. Walt Godwin, SJRWMD on his retirement in December 2013.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m.