

Big Cypress Watersheds Restoration Coordination Team

Friday, January 13, 2006 Meeting
Rookery Bay – Buttonwood, 9:30 – 12:30

AGENDA

1. Welcome/Call to Order – Sarah Davis
2. Introductions of BCW RCT members
3. Approval of minutes – Sarah Davis
4. BCW RCT Webpage Hydrologic Update – Bob Sobczak
5. **Guest speaker:** Jeffrey Schmid, Kathy Worley and David Addison, The Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Naples Bay Past and Present: A Chronology of Disturbance to an Estuary.
6. **Guest Speaker:** Dr. Mike Savarese, Phd. FGCU
Naples Bay Oyster Reef Restoration –
7. **Guest Speaker:** Margaret Bishop, Collier County Stormwater Management
Gordon River Water Quality Park
8. Breaking News Update – Sarah Davis
9. Adjourn

Big Cypress Watersheds Restoration Coordination Team Members

January 13, 2006 Meeting Rookery Bay 9:30-12:30

Those in bold were present at the meeting.

Organization	Member	Alternate
Army Corps of Engineers	TBA	
Audubon	Jason Lauritsen	Ed Carlson
Big Cypress Basin	Clarence Tears	Ananta Nath /Tim Howard
Big Cypress Nat'l Preserve	Bob Sobczak	Paul Murphy
CH-C RCT/ CHNEP	Lisa Beever	Catherine Corbett
City of Naples	Mike Bauer	Katy Fuhr
Collier County - Nat. Res.	Bill Lorenz	Mac Hatcher
Conservancy of SW Florida	David Addison Jennifer Hecker	Ian Bartoszek
CREW	John Murray	Brenda Brooks-Solveson
Estero Bay - ABM	Ellen Lindblad	
Everglades National Park	Tom Schmidt	
Florida DEP - S. District	Rick Cantrell	Karen Bickford/ Jennifer Nelson
Florida DEP - Estero Bay	Heather Stafford	Sherry Furnari
Florida DEP - Fakahatchee	Greg Toppin	Mike Owen
Florida Division of Forestry	Hank Graham	Sonya Durrwachter/ Charles Denney
FFWCC	Jim Beever	Joe Bozzo
FGCU	Mike Savarese	Sarah Davis
Hendry County	Ron Zimmerly	
Lee Co Dept of Nat Res	Roland Ottolini	Tony Pellicer
Lee Co Smart Growth	Wayne Daltry	
Regional Planning Council	David Burr	
Rookery Bay NERR	Mike Shirley	Gary Lytton
SFRESTORE Task Force	Carrie Beeler	
SFWMD	Liz Abbott	Janet Starnes, Mike Duever
TTI & Panther Refuge	Lane Hamilton	Ron Popowski
UF IFAS	Ed Hanlon	Sanjay Shukla
USDA	Tony Polizos	
US EPA		
US Fish and Wildlife	Daryl Thomas	Art Roybal / Kim Dryden
USGS	Eduardo Patino	Mike Byrne
WilsonMiller		
Individual Restoration Ecologist	David Ceilly	
	Robert Schroeder	

Guests: Will Wellman (Corkscrew Intern) and Joel Schultes (Conservancy Intern)

Sign Interpreters Dawn and Amy

Guest speakers: Jeff Schmid and Tom Spriggs

1. **Welcome/Call to Order**

- ◆ Sarah Davis the BCW-RCT executive assistant called the meeting to order at 9:50 AM, Each member then introduced themselves and who they represented as well as their favorite flavor of ice cream and their current projects.

2. **Minutes approved**

- ◆ The minutes from October 7, 2005 were approved.

3. **BCW-RCT Webpage Hydrologic Update**

- ◆ Bob Sobczak introduced the group to the new Website now online at www.fgcu.edu/bcw. This website will post the hydrologic graphs and charts that Bob normally sends out via email. He will still prepare a summary and email it as a reminder to access the website for the new graphs. The website is a collaboration between BCW-RCT and FGCU IT department. Other parts of the website are still under construction, but eventually you will be able to access Southwest Florida e-news, site photos and other areas and reports of the Big Cypress Watersheds.
- ◆ Ananta mentioned that we should link his monthly report to the website. Bob indicated that there are large blank spots on the Hydrologic Conditions Update main map, and that these spots need to be filled in with similar hydrographic summaries for other necks of the Big Cypress Watersheds area. Target areas for adding new hydrographic summaries to the webpage include Corkscrew Swamp, Lake Trafford, Gordon River, Picayune Strand, and others. Bob indicated that having all these hydrologic conditions up and running and all on one page will really bring the pulse of the watershed to our fingertips.
- ◆ Bob showcased a newly revised hydrographic summary for sheetflow conditions in Big Cypress National Preserve. Bob emphasized that all this hydrologic data is made available through the cooperative agreement between SFWMD and Big Cypress NP, and that the SFWMD recently paid to have all the stations put on telemetry. Bob indicated that the status of sheetflow is graphically shown according to a generalized coding (dry, patchy, shallow sheetflow, September sheetflow, high water, and extreme high water) and by water depth at each station. The advantage to using both coding categories is that the generalized code normalizes all the stations to the same unit of measurement (comparing oranges to oranges) and the depth categorization provides site specific information for each station to anyone interested in that greater level of detail.
- ◆ Updates to the Lake Okeechobee and WCA-3A hydrographic summaries were discussed. The updated WCA-3A graph now includes a depth comparison on the map on the right-hand side of the graph. Bob also discussed the new format for showing rainfall in the Lake O and WCA-3A hydrographic summaries. The format allows the user to easily decipher rainfall amounts to upstream and downstream watersheds of these areas. Bob also discussed how the web-user can easily click to hydrologic calendars see historic data relevant to select sites on the hydrographic summaries. Bob mentioned that this doesn't tell you everything under the

sun, but at a quick glance it provides the end-user an opportunity to catch up to speed on where the resource is hydrologically.

- ◆ Bob provided an update on the new format that rainfall is presented on the web page. Before there were several buttons to press to get to different rainfall graphics, but Bob streamlined all of this to fall under one button. A new rainfall feature under this that Bob thought would have good applicability to group members and the interested public is the weekly chronology of rainfall for the 14 major watersheds of South Florida and 12 areas throughout southwest Florida. Bob indicated that at a quick glance the colorized bubble graphs for rainfall allow one to easily compare rainfall from one part of the watershed to another, and even across south Florida. For example, the graphs very nicely show rainfall intensity patterns that resulted from Wilma. Bob emphasized that all this data is made available by the SFWMD-weather division. The new rainfall data is shown in intervals of 30, 90 and 365 days. The 7-day interval was dropped since from a watershed standpoint it isn't as relevant as the monthly, seasonal, and yearly summaries, and that by the time the graphics get posted half the week is over anyway. Bob indicated that since Wilma passed over the peninsula in late October there has not been much rain.
- ◆ Daily temperatures can also be accessed via the website.
- ◆ Liz Abbott commented that maybe that the range of rainfall black color (65-100) for the 365 days section maybe too wide of a margin and may need to be more graduated to depict differentiations.

4. Naples Bay Past and Present: A Chronology of Disturbance to an Estuary

Guest Speaker Dr. Jeff Schmid, PhD., Conservancy of Southwest Florida

- ◆ Jeff Schmid presented the Conservancy of Southwest Florida's research on Naples Bay that provides a chronological account of human development of the bay and maps the estuarine habitats to quantify changes. Humans began altering the areas surrounding Naples Bay in the 1880s and major hydrologic alterations occurred in the late 1950s. The Conservancy's study mapped the bay using historical accounts, aerial photography, bottom sampling and current GIS technology highlighting different types of substrates and habitats. "Seagrass and oyster habitats have been reduced by 80-90% due to dredging, for creation of waterfront property and maintenance of navigational channels. Additionally, over 70% of the fringing mangrove shoreline of Naples Bay has been converted to residential developments. The perimeter of the bay has increased 53% and the water surface area 23% due to the construction of canal systems in residential areas. Naples Bay also receives a seasonal pattern of excessive freshwater inflow because of human-induced changes to the watershed, and this may prove to be problematic to restoration efforts as proper salinity patterns are critical to estuarine functions. Further quantitative studies are needed to determine the effects of inflow alterations on biological activities in Naples Bay (Schmid abstract)."

5. Oyster Reef Restoration and Substrate Conditions in Naples Bay

Guest Speaker: Dr. Mike Savarese, PhD Florida Gulf Coast University

- ◆ Mike Savarese presented his work with oyster reefs and restoration within Naples Bay. Oysters are very sensitive to hydrologic changes and a good indicator and measurement of habitat quality. Naples Bay has excessive freshwater due to stormwater management flows originated principally from the Golden Gate Canal. Oysters are sensitive to changes in salinity and thrive in Southwest Florida at 15-20 ppt and are most productive in an intertidal environment. Also excessive sedimentation on an oyster reef affects recruitment, growth development, and ability to fight off diseases. Oysters serve as a biomonitor of health of an estuary. They need firm and raised substrates, however, much of Naples Bay has been severely dredged and altered destroying any ancient reefs and potential substrate for new oysters. The restoration project involves the planting of oyster substrate or cultch to foster reef development. With the help of many students and volunteers, biodegradable mesh bags are filled with cleaned fossil oyster shells; these were then placed in two locations in Naples Bay with different salinity conditions. This substrate should allow the recruitment of new oysters and the development of healthy oyster reefs. These reefs will be seeded with oyster spat later this month and the success of the project will monitored over the next 12 months.
- ◆ Another project Mike is working on in collaboration with scientists from Texas A&M at Galveston is the mapping the subtidal substrate and the subsediment geomorphology of Naples Bay. He shared some of the imagery of this process; the data will be analyzed further this winter to delineate specific sedimentary substrate types and to identify interesting structures in the subsurface for further study

6. Gordon River Water Quality Park Collier County Stormwater Management

Dr. Tom Spriggs, PhD, CH2M Hill, Inc

- ◆ Tom Spriggs from the consulting firm CH2M Hill, representing Margaret Bishop of Collier County Stormwater management presented the design plans and project details for the Gordon River Water Quality Park. This project will develop a stormwater management facility to be located on North side of Golden Gate Parkway at the intersection with Goodlette Frank Road. It will intake stormwater and flow it through a series of ponds and wetlands treating it before flowing into the Gordon River. "The Gordon River Water quality Park Project consists of a 50 acre natural water quality treatment facility which will provide flooding relief and tertiary treatment of stormwater runoff from the Gordon River Extension Basin. Based on the application of an interconnected system of multi-depth ponds, polishing marshes, and wetlands, the man made park will function as a natural filtration system similar to the Everglades. The project will combine wetlands, habitats, trails, boardwalks, fishing piers, educational

facilities, extensive landscape and hardscape within a passive park setting that will intrigue and educate nature enthusiasts. Project progress will be documented in engineering and environmental reports to keep the public abreast of the latest developments. More information can be found at www.colliergov.net (CH2M Hill Project Newsletter March 2005).”

7. **Breaking News**

- ◆ We ran out of time and did not cover breaking news.
- ◆ Sarah questioned the group as to potential topics for speakers next meeting. Liz Abbott suggested Ananta to present some of the Lake Trafford research. Mac Hatcher suggested hearing a more in depth look at the feasibility. .

8. **Next meeting Friday April 21, 2006, at a site in the northern upstream part of the watersheds, TBD. Confirmation of next meeting will follow. .**

9. **The meeting adjourned around 12:20 PM**

Big Cypress Watersheds Restoration Coordination Team

Friday, April 21, 2006 Meeting
Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, 9:30 – 12:30

AGENDA

1. Welcome/Call to Order – Sarah Davis
2. Introductions of BCW RCT members
3. Approval of minutes – Sarah Davis
4. BCW RCT Webpage Hydrologic Update – Bob Sobczak
5. Guest speaker: Jason Lauritsen
Regional Update on Woodstork Nesting and Foraging
6. Guest Speaker: Mike Duever
Historical Hydrology Overview of the Corkscrew Watershed
7. Naples Bay Watershed Initiative Update – Liz Abbott
8. GEER Update
9. Other Watershed News – Sarah Davis
10. Adjourn

Big Cypress Watersheds Restoration Coordination Team Members

April 21, 2006 Meeting Rookery Bay 9:30-12:30

Those in bold were present at the meeting.

Organization	Member	Alternate
Army Corps of Engineers	TBA	
Audubon	Jason Lauritsen	Ed Carlson
Big Cypress Basin	Clarence Tears	Ananta Nath /Tim Howard
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SFRESTORE Task Force	Carrie Beeler	
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USDA	Tony Polizos	
US EPA		
US Fish and Wildlife	Daryl Thomas	Art Roybal / Kim Dryden
USGS	Eduardo Patino	Mike Byrne
WilsonMiller		
Individual Restoration Ecologist	David Ceilly	
	Robert Schroeder	

Guests: Joyce Masourek (USFWS Biologist, Calusa RCT), Joel Scholtes (Conservancy Intern) and Courtney Wallace (Conservancy Intern)

1. Welcome/Call to Order

- ◆ Sarah Davis the BCW-RCT executive assistant called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM

2. Introductions of BCW RCT members

- ◆ Each member then introduced themselves and who they represented.

3. Minutes approved

- ◆ The minutes from January 13, 2006 were approved.

4. BCW-RCT Webpage Hydrologic Update www.fgcu.edu/bcw

- ◆ Bob Sobczak updated the group to the new features on our website. He walked us through the E-news link already online and the photo guide, soon to be online.
- ◆ The e-news posts summaries of news articles concerning our watersheds. Each link will connect you to the full article on the newspaper's website. These links should not go sour as promised by the Naples Daily News.
- ◆ The photo guide will allow users to view area projects and hydrology sites. The photos are aerial photos and you can view the different directions of the site.
- ◆ The watershed summaries have been updated to reflect water levels in respect to habitats. This will allow comparisons across the watersheds. Bob walked us through the process of accessing these graphs and what areas to click to get historical landscape and water level data.
- ◆ We are hoping to add Corkscrew monthly rainfall and water levels in respect to landscapes.
- ◆ Lisa Beever commented on the value of this measure in that it gives a good picture over time. Mike Duever commented that vegetation types are fairly standard in their elevation.
- ◆ Ananta shared that around 80 stations with real time data, such as Gordon River, Picayune, etc. Bob commented that we should be able to cluster some of these stations to describe other areas of our watersheds. John Murray commented on adding CREW to these graphs.
- ◆ Bob also shared that FGCU is looking into various discussion software that we may be able to tap into and use for discussion on hydrologic topics or project discussions.

**5. Regional Update on Woodstork Nesting and Foraging
Guest Speaker Jason Lauritsen, Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary**

- ◆ Jason Lauritsen presented an update on Corkscrew science mainly focusing on the status of Woodstork nesting and foraging. They review development projects, direct acquisitions of land, monitor water levels and continue monitoring wood stork nesting which was begun in 1959. They are initiating a pilot study and then a larger assessment of foraging habitats for Woodstorks in SWFL. Identifying the temporal and spatial availability of wetlands suitable for foraging for birds nesting at Corkscrew will be the centerpiece of the study. They hope to develop a tool to rank existing wetlands based on their importance to nesting storks which will aid in directing mitigation, restoration and land acquisition in the region for

the purposes of wood stork recovery. He noted the parallel between loss of November and December foraging habitat and the trend of a delay in nesting from November and December to January or February, and how delayed nesting has resulted in greatly reduced productivity. They are looking at nests in the Panther Preserve, Collier and Hendry Counties, Corkscrew and in the Caloosahatchee. They will be assessing Woodstork status and developing strategies to protect wetlands at the appropriate time for nesting success.

- ◆ Lisa Beever shared that Daryl Thomas is working on proposed acquisition plans for some of the nesting areas highlighted in the presentation. She will email the coverage to Jason.
- ◆ Jim Beever mentioned how the Peace River and Myakka are very close and may also be critical foraging sites for Woodstorks.
- ◆ Jason Lauritsen is also interested in developing Citizen Science Watch for Woodstorks foraging reports with assessments and times. They will be counting nesting sites from Collier County to Sarasota from April 23 through May 5, 2006. Please forward any information you have to Jason.

6. Historical Hydrology Overview of the Corkscrew Watershed Guest Speaker: Mike Duever South Florida Water Management District

- ◆ Mike Duever presented a historical perspective of the Corkscrew watershed and some of his early work in the 1970s. He outlined his research in installing wells, looking at organic soils and their importance, DBH and soil depth. He discussed the threshold of water manipulation, its compatibility with adjacent land uses and isolation surface water from the groundwater, hydro period, water level, flow rates, water level fluctuations and water quality. He charted many of the differences and how development changes can severely affect the watershed on many levels.

7. Naples Bay Watershed Initiative Update Liz Abbot, South Florida Water Management District

- ◆ Liz Abbot gave a brief presentation on the Naples Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) Plan Reconnaissance Report. They will be linking the report to the district website and will be looking for public input late this summer. This report characterizes the Naples Bay Basin, past and present, and reviews information pertinent to the development of the SWIM Plan. It is an inventory of monitoring data, modeling efforts, studies, projects, plans and programs within the Study Area. The intent of the report is to provide a meaningful resource for the development of the Naples Bay SWIM Plan. Information pertaining to the Naples Bay Basin was documented, reviewed and summarized in order to assess the Study Area in terms of current water quality, water quantity, and ecological features. In general, this scope of work consists of a review of existing studies and data, work group meetings, GIS mapping of land use and other data, and problem identification (Naples Bay SWIM Report 2006).

- ◆ She discussed some of the project funding appropriations waiting for final approval.

8. **GEER Update**

- ◆ Bob Shared that he, along with Sarah and Brenda will be presenting the web site at the poster presentation section and will be also leading a session on the watersheds summaries. Other members will be presenting include Mike Duever, Wayne Daltry, Daryl Thomas, Lisa and Jim Beever and Mike Bauer. More information can be found on the GEER website.

9. **Other Watershed News**

- ◆ In the interest of time Sarah decided not to cover e-news and directed members to the website
- ◆ The Caloosahatchee River has been designated as the 7th most endangered river.
- ◆ Lisa Beever brought up the need for a Regional RCT meeting to discuss regional issues, compile charter task, and prepare for annual report for the working group. Carrie Beeler expressed the importance of this meeting. Bob Sobczak shared that the BCW-RCT is interested as long as it falls on the same date of our quarterly meetings.
- ◆ The group decided to hold the next RRCT meeting on July 21, Lisa Beever suggested it be held at FGCU.
- ◆ Mike Bauer needs Apple Snails, report occurrences to him.
- ◆ Also the City of Naples is looking for a Grants Writer.
- ◆ Jim Beever and Joyce Masourek discussed the use of habitat units in the Picayune strand and the C-43 canal projects.

10. **The meeting adjourned around 12:44 PM The next meeting is scheduled for Friday July 21, 2006, at FGCU, Whitaker Hall, room 101. Confirmation of next meeting will follow.**

Southwest Florida Regional Restoration Coordination Team

Friday, July 21, 2006 Meeting
Florida Gulf Coast University, 9:30 – 12:30
Whitaker building Room 101

AGENDA

1. Welcome/Call to Order – Sarah Davis
2. Introductions of RRCT members
3. Brief RCT updates
 - Big Cypress Watersheds RCT– Sarah Davis
 - Calusa RCT – Liz Donley
4. Revisit Restoration and Science Priorities
5. Watersheds Successes – discuss other projects relevant to the Working group
6. Develop and Outline Working group presentation – Sarah Davis
7. Other Watershed News – Sarah Davis
8. Public Comment
9. Adjourn

1. Welcome/Call to Order

- ◆ Sarah Davis the BCW-RCT executive assistant called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM

2. Introductions of BCW RCT members

- ◆ Each member then introduced themselves and who they represented.

Those in Attendance included:

Jason Lauritsen Audubon of Florida
Bob Sobczak Big Cypress National Preserve
Liz Donley Charlotte Harbor NEP
Mac Hatcher Collier County
Ian Bartoszek Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Kristina Benoit Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Kathryn Turner Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Kathy Worley Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Brenda Brooks-Solveson CREW Land and Water Trust
John Murray CREW Land and Water Trust
Erin Dykes DEP
Jennifer Nelson DEP
David Ceilley Florida Gulf Coast University
Sarah Davis Florida Gulf Coast University
Mike Savarese Florida Gulf Coast University
Roland Ottolini Lee County Division Natural Resources
Steve Bortone SCCF Marine Lab
Carrie Beeler SFRestore
Liz Abbott SFWMD
Ananta Nath SFWMD
Jim Beever SWFRPC
John Cassani SWFWC
Michael Jones City of Moore Haven
Katie Fuhr City of Naples
Ed Hanlon UF/IFAS

Jeremy Cox Naples Daily News

3. Brief RCT updates

Big Cypress Watersheds RCT– Sarah Davis

- ◆ Sarah reviewed the minutes from the last meeting and the group approved them.
- ◆ The GEER conference was successful. Carrie Beeler relayed that there was a lot of positive feedback for the sessions and for the website. Roland Ottolini commented that there were some great break-out sessions. David Ceilley shared that the refuge session was very good. Mike Savarese shared that they were to produce

documents summarizing GEER discussions, He will forward when back to his office. Apparently they are to publish summaries of the session high points. Carrie Beeler to follow-up with this and forward the group the links for accessing these summaries

Calusa RCT – Liz Donley

- ◆ **Lower Charlotte Harbor Reconnaissance report is complete,** hard copies are available.
- ◆ Southwest Florida Feasibility study alternatives being updated, can present to working group. Two teams completed GIS map, 500 projects, logical 89 groupings linked to an access database.
- ◆ **Coastal conservation Quarterly plan,** convened committee for latest update, Nature conservancy to host website, Meetings in fall, data to finalize GIS, post Jan.
- ◆ **Babcock Ranch**
Sierra club reached settlement agreement. 2000 conservation easement, Northern most area will assist wildlife, additional restriction on use of land, limit any night time activity, pesticides and fertilizers, buffers on roadways, four wildlife underpasses, green building standards, decrease energy use, 30%energy reduction. Pledged to work together, transportation issue, limit access on I-75 or no access
- ◆ **Lee county moving ahead with mitigation plan.**
Roland Ottolini updated us on the two projects - flow way project and filter marsh project. This includes an additional four million and next year 7 million for water quality.

4. Revisit Restoration and Science Priorities/Watershed

Successes and Outline Working group Presentation

The group decided it was more efficient to look at last year's presentation slide by slide and revisit priorities, determine successes and finalize presentation for this year. Sarah Davis will compile the notes and forward out to the RRCT for final comment in August.

SWFRRCT Charter and By-laws

- ◆ Sarah and Carrie gave an overview of the charter, our purpose as a group and guidelines for meetings. If there are additions or changes that the group feels need to be made such as updates to the membership section, they should email Sarah (sdavis@fgcu.edu). Sarah showed the group where they can access the bylaws and charter on the SFRESTORE website (www.sfrestore.org). The working group is scheduled to meet October 19-20, 2006, during this meeting Bob and Lisa will present the SWFRRCT priorities.

- ◆ Jim Beever shared that there was a reason for developing the bylaws, so that there would not be loading of votes from one agency over another.
- ◆ Any changes to the charter will be presented to the working group.
- ◆ Ananta questioned the boundaries of the RCT to Shark River slough, Bob shared that the boundaries are accurate.

Science Group versus Working group

- ◆ Restoration priorities versus science priorities
- ◆ Carrie explained the structure of the Science group and their purpose. They are coming out with an updated science plan, original draft available online. Lisa Beever sits on the science group. Carrie stressed that the RRCT needs to present their science priorities, having the direct experience out in the field.
- ◆ Majority of managers and scientists attend the science group
- ◆ Jim Beever shared that four conceptual models were reported to the science group developed in the feasibility study.
- ◆ David Ceily suggested having the science group present at an RCT meeting to get a better picture of how they play into policy.
- ◆ Carrie Beeler offered if anyone would like to be on the distribution list for the science group, they should email her (cbeeler@sfrestore.org). She is also glad to set up meeting for briefing once they have their updated plan and have perhaps Bob Doren and Lisa Beever present what they are doing, to better understand their role.

Critical Restoration Needs

The following is a list of the priorities for the four watershed areas within the RRCT. The group reviewed each item presented to the Working Group in 2004 and made the following revisions.

Charlotte Harbor

1. Yucca Pens/Charlotte Harbor Flatwoods
Loss Yucca pens, ½ of land 2 pre-greenway, Of lands available acquired still land available in Yucca pens
2. Charlotte Harbor State Buffer Preserve
½ land buffer preserve, urbanization near buffer preserve
3. Hydrological restoration of Sanibel causeway effects
no progress on causeway
4. Restoration of Historic Oyster Bars
5. Nile Monitor Lizards

Comment [p1]: Bob I need some help on this section...

Comment [p2]: Not sure if group agreed to have this as 5th priority

Caloosahatchee River Basin

1. Water Quality treatment areas
 - a. C43
 - b. Other discharges urban/Agriculture
2. Linden Pens/Caloosahatchee ecoscape
 - a. Urban retrofits
 - b. Agricultural land holding waters
3. Urban and Agricultural Stormwater Management system improvements
 - a. follow-up with database entries
4. Restore Lake Hicpochee

Move Babcock to success

Estero Bay Basin

1. Agripartners Acquisition and Restoration - no progress on agri-partners
2. Corkscrew Woodstork Flow-ways Acquisition and Restoration - no progress on wood storks
3. Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Acquisition and Restoration - CREW progress mitigation, Ave Maria, Barron Collier corporation, no intention for development, bring 300 acres into fold next to sawgrass marsh
Jim Beever 2 big threats, water retention areas on CREW and roads through CREW lands
4. Restoration of Natural Tributaries to Estero Bay – Urban Storm water Management System improvements

Big Cypress Basin and Naples Bay

1. Northern Golden Gate Estates Wetlands
2. Urban Stormwater management system improvements including primary canal systems
3. Belle Meade – decrease freshwater flow to coastal bays
4. Camp Keais Strand Protection and Restoration
5. Naples Bay Restoration Initiative
6. OK Slough
7. Tamiami and Loop Road Culverts

Lake Trafford Restoration and Southern Golden Gate Estates Restoration will be presented as successes

Science Priorities

1. Estuarine flows and mixing models
2. Regional/sub regional water and nutrient models
3. Functional ecology of ephemeral wetlands
4. Hydrological flow models (web site)
5. Algal Blooms

Successes

- ◆ Web-based model data interface for ecosystem coordination
- ◆ Regional Science and Restoration Plan Database
- ◆ Babcock
- ◆ Lake Trafford
- ◆ Southern Golden Gate Estates

The presentation to the working group will be about 30 minutes. This will allow 5 minutes for successes, 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion

5. Other Watershed News

- ◆ In the interest of time Sarah decided not to cover e-news and directed members to the website
- ◆ Ian Bartoszek shared that they are just wrapping up a study in Southern Golden Gate estates and will be willing to present their findings in an upcoming meeting.
- ◆ Jim watershed de-list Bald eagle, down list manatee not effective awaiting management plan, many people misunderstood, reduce eagle zones, eagle still not off list
- ◆ Bob article extension, Fort Myers Naples By-pass, N Lake Trafford

6. Public Comment

- ◆ The floor was open for public comment, no comments were made.

7. The meeting adjourned at around 12:30 PM. Bob Sobczak and Lisa Beever will present our priorities to the Working Group at their next meeting, October 19-20, 2006.

Comment [p3]: Can you flesh this out?

Big Cypress Watersheds Team

Friday, November 3, 2006 Meeting
Rookery Bay 9:30 – 12:30

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome/Call to Order

The meeting was opened at 9:37 AM.

2. Introductions of members

- ◆ Members introduced themselves. In attendance were:

Mike Bauer City of Naples
David Ceilley FGCU
Sarah Davis BCW/FGCU
Ed Hanlon UF/IFAS SWFREC
Mac Hatcher Collier County ESD
Keith Laakkonen Rookery Bay
Vicki McGee Rookery Bay
Paul C. Murphy Big Cypress NP
Chris Panko Rookery Bay
Bob Sobczak Big Cypress NP
Mike Shirley Rookery Bay
Jeff Schmid Conservancy of SW FL
Tom Schmidt Everglades NP
Daryl Thomas USFWS

- ◆ We reviewed the minutes from the summer meeting. Daryl Thomas briefed the group on the working group presentation. He and Lisa Beever presented the priorities for restoration and science for the area that the RRCT discussed at the summer meeting at FGCU. Priorities for the Big Cypress area include NGGE wetlands, Belle Meade, Camp Keais Strand, OK Slough, Tamiami Culverts, and Naples Bay. Mike Bauer indicated that the Working Group is a coordinating body, and not a funding source, and that while it's a worthwhile exercise to periodically update the Working Group, that we should not allow that periodic task to detract from our local efforts to coordinate among ourselves and more local agencies. http://www.sfrestore.org/rrct/swfl/documents/swfrrct_report_oct_2004.pdf
- ◆ Ed Hanlon brought up his concerns about the Northern Golden Gate Estates wetlands. Ed and Mac Hatcher led a discussion about these wetlands and how they have been severely altered and are not functioning as wetlands. Most of them are owned privately. Conservation Collier is on hold at the moment for purchasing the Unit 54 and Winchester Head area.

- ◆ Daryl Thomas went ahead and gave an update on the feasibility study, relaying that it is on hold by the Army Corps of Engineers at there is no indication of when it will start up again. There was discussion over concern that the extended time line and continually ongoing status of the Feasibility Study may not make it the best restoration hope for every and all restoration project in our area, especially the small scale ones.
- ◆ Mike Shirley provided an overview of the Gulf Alliance initiative, and how that energy and information unfolding in that effort could complement the downstream estuary and coastal issues with upstream watershed issues that our group focuses on.

3. Watersheds Conditions Overview

- ◆ Bob Sobczak updated the group on the latest updates to the website and reviewed the watershed conditions for the Big Cypress, Everglades, and Lake Okeechobee areas. Bob unveiled a watershed summary for the Corkscrew and Okaloacoochee Slough areas that he is collaborating on with agency reps from those areas. Bob indicated that most of our watersheds are tracking at 5 year lows, but we still aren't as rain-deficient as the severe drought year of 2000. The group discussed ways to improve the web site as a forum for exchanging information and bringing vital watershed information at everyone's fingertips.

4. Watershed Research in Focus

- ◆ **Vicki Mcgee –Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Water Quality Monitoring Program.**

Vicki Mcgee gave the group an overview of water quality monitoring program at Rookery Bay. The System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) provides long term environmental monitoring through YSI data loggers that collect information on water quality. Seven loggers are deployed at select locations within the Rookery Bay estuary. They currently monitor four different bays within the reserve in the following bays Fakahatchee, Faka Union, Blackwater and Henderson Creek. Dissolved oxygen, temperature, salinity, pH and turbidity are recorded every 30 minutes. The data is downloaded and reviewed for quality control, analyzed, and reported seasonally. They also look at juvenile fish populations in these areas. They look at changes in salinity and monitor events and nutrient sampling. They are seeing trends in the duration of hypoxia in several of the bays. The SERC-FIU program monitors 15 sites within the reserve and has developed a long term data set and criteria. They are able to take their water quality data and see correlations with their fisheries monitoring. The data has been used to improve water management policies and to guide restoration plans. The data has also been used to investigate fish kills in rivers with monitoring stations and assess effects of catastrophic storm events.

- ◆ **The Influence of Altered Freshwater Inflow on the Relative Abundance of Stenohaline and Euryhaline Oyster Reef Crab Populations – Christina Panko Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.**

Chris Panko presented to the group on the ongoing bio-monitoring program within the reserve. They look at the salinity levels and crab response to the altered freshwater flows in five estuaries Henderson, Blackwater, Faka Union, Fakahatchee and Pumpkin bays. Chris discussed the following conclusions from the study: The Picayune Strand Restoration is part of the Everglades Restoration. The Restoration and Henderson Creek weir management are opportunities to redistribute watershed sheetflow and restore the natural freshwater inflow into the Reserve's estuaries.

- ◆ The ratio of stenohaline to euryhaline crabs provides a useful tool to monitor the biological response to altered freshwater inflows in estuaries and to set targets for freshwater inflow into the Reserve's estuaries.
- ◆ Salinity change patterns and other events (rain, storms) are important for assessing the short-term biologically significant events that occur in an estuarine habitat.
- ◆ Controlled laboratory studies will allow examination of the observed salinity change patterns (types, duration of exposures, biological thresholds) to determine what events significantly affect the survival of the larval, juvenile and adult stages of estuarine crabs.
- ◆ Additionally, monitoring other important estuarine fauna (sharks, fish, benthic assemblages) strengthens our ability to assess the ecology of the area and to develop performance measures.

5. Other Watershed News

- ◆ Ed Hanlon mentioned to the group the idea discussed at the hydrology subteam of dealing with the unnatural water flows to the coast and possibility of some kind of offshore water storage facility. The group discussed this idea of moving water into the Gulf and contained outside of the estuarine system and brainstormed a few implications and challenges.
- ◆ In the interest of time the group decided to table discussion of the SWFRRCT charter until a spring meeting.
- ◆ **The next meeting will be at Rookery Bay on Friday, February 9, 2007 9:30 – 12:30**

6. The meeting was adjourned at 12:11 PM