

**NEWS Emailed July 13, 2022**

**Re: News from the SWFL Regional Resiliency Coalition**

**Sent to all those engaged in the alliance's development since the concept's inception**

Hi Folks,

It has been a while since I've reached out with an email to a larger audience relating the status of the Southwest Florida Regional Resiliency Coalition (note we are a coalition, rather than a compact; an explanation is forthcoming). I'm sending this to all those involved in previous gatherings and conversations.

We now have a website; please visit: <https://www.fgcu.edu/swflresiliencycoalition/>.

Here's a brief summary of what has transpired . . .

On Friday, May 27, 2022, after months of negotiation assisted by the FCRC Consensus Center, the SWFL Regional Resiliency Coalition held its second organizational meeting. Thirteen of the 15 jurisdictions were represented (all but Marco Island and Punta Gorda; Punta Gorda, in a phone conversation with our FCRC facilitators, agreed in principle to the group's design features outlined here; Lee and Collier Counties sent observers).

At the meeting, we agreed that the group should move forward while operating with an informal structure: all jurisdictions are welcome, but none have voting or decision-making authority. We also agreed that calling the group a "Compact" implied more authority than intended, so the group agreed to relabel us a "Coalition." (Meeting minutes and related documents are available at the new web site.) These two decisions are not substantive and do not change the character of the MOU. That said, the MOU's language has changed slightly. Consequently, a modified MOU (with stricken language and red highlighted additions) is posted at the web site. A formal reconsideration of the MOU is not, in the group's opinion, needed.

Collier and Lee Counties, through respective actions of their Boards of Commissioners, have elected to take a hiatus from the Coalition and will reconsider their formal relationship sometime in the future. Despite this, and given the informal design of the group, Collier and Lee are always welcome and will be included on all correspondence.

The PowerPoint, at the website, describes the tenets of the agreed-upon design (see slides 2 & 3). The Coalition will begin its efforts, hopefully before the end of summer, with a "needs assessment", identifying what priorities individual jurisdictions have. When priorities are shared, and if interest exists, these would be efforts for coalition "alignment" – those needs that are addressed by the alliance. We will continue to operate at no-cost to local government. The Water School at FGCU will continue to provide a modest budget for administrative needs until outside funding is successfully obtained. The Water School will also serve as the facilitator of whatever technical or scientific resources needed (i.e., building teams of professionals to help with the aligned projects).

Many of you are wondering how other, non-governmental entities are to be involved. It is difficult to say at this juncture, but some sense of clarity should be reached as the group moves forward. When the "Compact" was viewed, erroneously, as a governing body, there was much resistance to involving other groups. The newly defined "Coalition" clearly will operate in an informal capacity. I suspect other voices will be welcome as we move forward. In the meantime, it was acknowledged that NGOs, agencies, and civic groups have much talent to offer, and that the coalition will reach out to these folks as an agenda for the group is developed.

At the close here, I want to thank you all for the time and effort you've dedicated to the development of this alliance. It has been a difficult slog at times and with many unanticipated turns. Nonetheless, we exist and have an opportunity to do some good.

I will continue to update the website and send informational emails as the group moves forward. Please do let me know if you'd like to be maintained on our listserv.

Sincerely,

Mike Savarese