



REGIONAL COMMUNITY INSTITUTE OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA, INC.

Water Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 10, 2017, 2pm

NEFRC

100 Festival Park Avenue

Jacksonville, FL 32202

Meeting Summary

Chair White introduced himself and staff and asked participants to introduce themselves. The Chair noted that public input is always welcome. He reviewed the summary of the April 12 meeting, including the ideas that might be considered as the committee thinks about recommendations. He reminded the group what questions it asked related to today's subject, Quality: How can data help and what is missing?

- Water quality measurements -Coordination of monitoring
- Potable water and ecosystem needs shifts in demand
- What quality is needed by people and systems? Are they using good quality water when reuse would do?
- Determining estuarine water needs
- Effectiveness of MFLs

There was discussion on what monitoring and coordination happens now. The WMD may no longer be monitoring sea grass. The City of Jacksonville monitors the St. Johns River main stem and the Timucuan every other month. There is a monthly conference call to discuss who is doing what. There is an annual BMAP meeting. Jacksonville EQD puts the data together and holds an annual environmental symposium. Data is shared at the annual Environmental Symposium. The WMD has 5 data stations and places the data on STORET. In Georgia, the EPD is monitoring as is USGS. The USACE is setting up a monitoring array for the entire St. Johns. The Chair observed that there is a fair amount of monitoring but not much coordination. The City of Jacksonville observed that if there are multiple entities monitoring, we need to coordinate to maximize resources. There is a lot of information on oyster beds in Florida. The GTM NERR has 10 years of monitoring data and weather data. COJ has not been able to get approval to re-open oyster beds because there is not a certified lab locally to use that would allow for signoff. In 2012, meetings started on how to monitor the St. Marys. There is a new station at Traders Hill that is co-funded by Florida and Georgia.

As far as shifts in demand, in Georgia the use of ditches contributes to fast water runoff. It was suggested they need to do a better job at using retention ponds. The requirement for them to retain water on-site is relatively recent in Georgia. The City of Jacksonville is looking at the monitoring requirements for retention ponds and may be recommending changes to the process. The USACE modeled land use around the St. Johns when they did modeling related to the proposed deepening, and used 1995 data.



When it comes to reuse, JEA is doing a pilot study to take waste water and make it potable. The technology exists to do this, and JEA is sampling for pharmaceuticals and personal care products.

Determining estuarine water needs is an issue. The Savannah River Clean Water Fund is looking at doing this.

MFLs are a gross over-simplification. Changes are dependent on rainfall, short term and long term changes. It was stated that the WMD has a better way for doing MFLs-and this committee's report should recognize this. The USACE has more finely tuned performance measures developed for the Everglades based on the health of species. The point was made that measures like these do not reflect how nature really works. Some species will thrive sometimes and not others, and this may not be related to water. It was stated that we have already exceeded the capacity of the aquifer, yet WMD is still issuing permits.

It was noted that water use in Northeast Florida has been flat since 1985. JEA serves 30,000 more customers and uses 20% less water. Household use has gone down 20% since 1999. The average allowable water use associated with a development may result in a 6%-8% reduction of MFLs. There is a need for more flexibility than just MFLs provide. Think about taking out less, but also putting water back into the aquifer. Agriculture is a large water user and can result in water pressure loss to residences. Technological advances and conservation should be supported.

Staff is noting ideas that come up, to be considered as the committee considers recommendations at the end of the process:

- There are places that need to be monitored that are not. Identify them and find a way to get them monitored
- Coordinate sampling to maximize use of resources
- Create an "R" code to share with the NERR
- Develop a way to coordinate and collaborate on both monitoring and analysis. It is hard to get the data out of STORET. JEA needs to be included as they sample at water discharges.
- Have a regional approach as to what questions are asked and what quality data means
- Get the folks with data together regularly to share samples and data
- Do direct potable reuse
- Consider the Everglades performance measure approach instead of or in addition to MFLs
- Recognize the WMD's better way of doing MFLs



- Expand tiered pricing for water
 - Fix the lower tiers so each household has a minimum cheap allocation. Over 2,000 gallons a month, tiered and expensive pricing take over
- Support comp plan policies that support water conservation in agriculture and encourage innovation and partnerships to do it

The Chair asked for public comment and there was none. The next meeting will be June 14 in Georgia, venue to be determined. The meeting ended at 4pm.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: 6/14, 7/12, 8/9 and 9/13