

Minimum Flows and Levels Prevention / Recovery Strategy Development Public Meeting

May 26, 2011

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Sanford City Hall Commission Chambers
300 N. Park Ave., Sanford

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions –Tom Bartol, SJRWMD

Tom Bartol, Division Director of Water Supply Management, welcomed all attendees, recognized elected and appointed officials, introduced key SJRWMD staff, and reviewed the agenda.

MFLs Overview – Tom Bartol, SJRWMD

Materials: PowerPoint Presentation

Highlights:

- Mr. Bartol described MFL P/R strategy development as bridging between the District Water Supply Plan (DWSP) process and the MFL assessment process.
- Mr. Bartol reviewed what MFL's are, why they are developed, how they are established, and where they have been adopted. He further reviewed how MFLs are evaluated using ground water flow and surface water budget models, and how prevention and recovery strategies may affect the MFL water bodies.
- Mr. Bartol presented a timeline for strategies to be developed through mid-2013. Information was provided on how interested parties can get involved, along with times and places for future meetings.
- Reference was made to public water supply utility stakeholders who are already participating in processes that can facilitate strategy development. Examples given included utilities in Volusia County and utilities in north Florida that form a coordinating group.

MFLs Prevention/Recovery Strategy Approach – Jim Gross, SJRWMD

Materials: PowerPoint Presentation

Highlights:

- Jim Gross, Assistant Division Director of Water Supply Management, SJRWMD, proceeded with describing proposed approaches to development of MFL prevention

and recovery strategies. He defined what strategies are, including their components, using references from Florida Statutes.

- Mr. Gross summarized the MFL prevention and recovery water bodies and their strategy development areas in the District. He outlined a general strategy development approach that begins with District Water Supply Plan (DWSP) projects, current Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) rules, and technical evaluation tools.
- Mr. Gross’s suggested approach provides for District staff support to a stakeholder team to be formed through the strategy development process. Stakeholder teams will be formed for each of the four (4) strategy development areas (SDA).
- The stakeholder team will collaboratively evaluate proposed strategies, select those most feasible, and work in cooperation with District staff and all stakeholders to implement them.
- The presentation was concluded and the meeting was then opened to public input.

Public Input

Question	Response (provided by District staff)
How “close” are we to the aquifer’s sustainable limit with regard to these MFLs, e.g. a little, or very close?	Based on the technical tools employed, the aquifer’s limit is close to being reached now in many sub-regions of the District and resources have already been impacted in some instances. These technical tools have been shared with stakeholders in the past and will be presented at future meetings. They are not exact predictors of resource conditions but are the best tools available, and have been developed through a rigorous technical and peer-review process.
Since some strategy development areas seem to overlap, how will adjacent SDA’s be affected?	All MFL SDA meetings will be open to everyone and District staff will provide the inter-area information exchange where appropriate.
Why is the south Lake and west Orange area separate from the Seminole and north Orange area? Why aren’t we looking at our aquifer as “one aquifer?”	SDA were formed based on a logical clustering of MFL water bodies and the need for strategies to be project-driven. However, SDA’s are only loosely defined at this time and shouldn’t be used as a sole determinant on whether or not to attend a SDA meeting. SDAs can be consolidated depending on input from stakeholders. It is also recognized that most strategies will have an aquifer effect beyond the immediate SDA and this can be evaluated through use of technical tools.
How will other WMDs be engaged in this process?	Through this SDA process. Water users and suppliers from outside SJRWMD will be involved. It is recognized that some public supply utility stakeholders are in more than one WMD. It is also recognized that the Central Florida

	Coordination Area (CFCA) (now known as the CFWI - Central Florida Water Initiative) is on a complementary and parallel track for development of strategies in response to regional resource constraints.
How will long term rainfall climatology be incorporated into this process?	Climate change is not a component of the MFL assessment process nor will it be part of the strategy development process. Historic data forms the basis for technical evaluation. Ground water models are steady state but transient models are being developed to expand the technical opportunities for further evaluation.
How will rulemaking be avoided if CFCA sunsets in 2013?	Rulemaking will likely be required to implement strategies, along with regional agreements and other guidelines.
How will long term rainfall climatology be incorporated into this process?	Climate change is not a component of the MFL assessment process nor will it be part of the strategy development process. Ground water models are steady state but transient models are being developed to expand the technical opportunities for evaluation.
How will the validity of models be vouched for where they're being used as technical tools in this process?	For surface water hydrologic assessment, long periods of record are sought to capture dry and wet spells, to serve as a basis for analysis. For ground water modeling, large state-level models are utilized and are constantly under development, but regional models will continue to be heavily relied upon for technical analyses.
How will the "carrying capacity" of the state of Florida be considered? It seems we keep addressing the same constraint issues over and over, with nothing being done.	MFLs are based on water resource values that are to be protected. The District's governing board has stated its desire to make this effort a priority. This strategy development work will result in projects that will required for implementation.
Will re-assessment of MFLs be part of this process?	The water bodies with adopted MFLs will be of primary focus, although some of the MFLs are in re-evaluation and more may be identified to be re-evaluated. It is noted that re-evaluation involves extensive field work.
What about water bodies without MFLs?	MFLs will continue to be developed for selected water bodies that do not have them. This strategy development process will proceed concurrently with other District technical efforts, such as the continual program of MFL assessments.
How will the Harris Chain of Lakes MFLs (by 2014) be affected by this process? What about Lake Apopka?	For any water body, which has a new MFL, if a prevention or recovery strategy is needed, they will be incorporated into this process. Strategies developed now could, and likely will, address constraints that new MFL water bodies

	have later. MFLs for Lake Apopka are in process of being established and it is not yet known whether prevention or recovery strategies will be needed.
A domestic self supply (DSS) study identified certain Lake County lakes as being adversely affected by ground water withdrawals, but the District's ground water models do not include DSS or irrigation wells, why not?	The District's ground water models do include DSS wells, and some private irrigation wells. Incorporating all such wells into a ground water model is problematic due to the inability to estimate flows. To the extent that DSS and irrigation wells exacerbate MFL constraint issues, educational outreach for example on water conservation becomes an increasingly important tool/strategy to address this.
For the 37 MFL water bodies that have been identified, what are some of the more common causes for them being in need of a prevention or recovery strategy?	It is recognized that climate is a primary driver of aquifer levels, so low rainfall can be a common cause. Ground water use is the next major common cause of low MFL water body levels. This strategy development work will focus on the influence of ground water use.
Will the strategy development work consider withdrawals from the surface water, for example, homeowner and citrus grove irrigation pumps?	Yes, it will. There are best management practices for agricultural and landscape irrigation that should be employed by water users, whether they draw from ground water or surface water.
When the regional SDA meetings are held, are there preconceived notions of how strategies will be formed? Will proximity to an MFL water body be considered? In south Lake County where alternative water supply projects are limited, would importation of water be supported?	From a general perspective, strategy development should start with existing projects that are underway or proposed. Potential strategies should consider the magnitude of the problem, and the larger influences, for example, how much below the MFLs are the water bodies and how far away from the water body are the ground water withdrawals. With regard to Lake County, yes, SJRWMD is open to solutions involving importation of water.

Closing Comments by SJRWMD

In closing, Tom Bartol reviewed the highlights of the presentation, reiterating that strategies must be implementable, and that their effectiveness must be measureable in relation to the affected MFL water bodies. He emphasized the District's message that all stakeholders should engage themselves in this process. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12 noon.

Meeting handouts, presentations, and supporting information are available online: <http://floridaswater.com/minimumflowsandlevels/prevention-recovery.html> For more information, contact Scott Laidlaw, slaidlaw@sjrwmd.com, or 386-312-2388.

Attendees

St. Johns River Water Management District

Sign-In Sheet

PRINT CLEARLY

Date: 5/26/11

Event: MFL P/R Strategy Kick Off Meeting (Central)

Location: City of Sanford, 300 N. Park Avenue, Sanford, FL 32771 - Sanford City Hall City Commission Chambers (First Floor)

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