

MINUTES OF MEETING  
**August 7, 2006**

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its regularly scheduled meeting on 8/7/06, at the Nassau County Building in Callahan, Fl. There was a quorum of members and all present committee members.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Dean Woehrle called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m. The minutes from the July meeting was reviewed and with a quorum present, minutes were accepted with no edits. Treasurer Winifred Stephenson was present and reported \$9,653.34 in the account.

**DEP TMDL MTG for UNNAMED BRANCH**

Dean Woehrle, Chip Campbell, Paula Staples and Trish Gramajo attended the July 19<sup>th</sup> mtg in Callahan for this WBID (2156). Trish Gramajo updated the committee on why DEP wrote a TMDL report of the unnamed branch watershed and what their findings were. DEP reported at the meeting that although they had high impairments for both Fecal and Total Coliforms in Unnamed Branch (a tributary of Alligator Creek and to the Nassau River), they did not have any conclusive sources/causes for the impairments. Unfortunately there was not much landuse information for DEP to use (i.e. their nonpoint source information was limited to little if any data on failing septics in the area, etc..).

Dean questioned why there wasn't more reconnaissance gathering done to establish sources and thought there were some local landuse issues in the unnamed branch watershed that weren't evaluated. Dean contacted DEP with this type of information and was told by DEP that they would look into them. For more detailed information like DEP testing times, statistical findings and TMDL legislation changes, members were recommended to read the TMDL report that DEP emailed to the committee prior to the meeting.

**Atlantic Sturgeon Meeting (ASN)**

Chip informed the committee that USFWS has held a meeting to look into an ASN reintroduction project for the river. It would be an east coast pilot project that would benefit the river by not only having a fisheries component, but would also bring biological data for the river since fisheries habitat will need to be assessed. To date a scoping meeting has occurred which included a boat field trip on the river. Both state's and corresponding agencies were present and although the effort is in its preliminary stages, it looks like a promising project that the agencies would like to cooperate on.

There was substantial discussion on the hypothesis that some have regarding the DO trough in the 1980's and how that would have impacted the sturgeon populations in the river. USFWS is in particular asking for the committee's help in trying to find any historical data/sightings of the species over the last few years. Chip gave the committee a full background of what items were discussed at the scoping meeting like where the ASN stock could come from (Altamaha?), ASN tracking system, next steps, etc. Overall, the committee was interested in seeing this project move forward and will continue to have a liaison on the future meetings like Chip and Dean.

**WAV PRESENTATION**

Paula Staples did an interactive watershed presentation to the committee similar to presentations she is giving to various Nassau County class rooms. The presentations are aimed at showing students and residents how watersheds work and in particular, the impacts that landuse has on surface water quality. Paula also showcased the aquifer display which gives audience members a visual of how NPS runoff directly leaks into the aquifer. The committee enjoyed the interactive displays and thanked Paula for helping educate the community about runoff.

**EXOTIC SOUTH AMERICAN APPLE SNAILS in GA**

Chip Campbell informed the committee about the exotic apple snails in the Alabama & Satilla Rivers. DNR is trying to determine if the exotic apple snails are in the St. Marys. They currently don't know how the snails are relocating to new waterways (boats/aquarium releases?); what its impact will be in freshwater systems, and what its impact could be to the native Florida apple snail. Chip didn't know if there was an official DNR alert available to distribute but Trish Gramajo will find out and email to the group with pictures for snail identification. Members are asked to contact DNR Fisheries if they spot any such snails.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm. Next meeting will be held at Farm Bureau due to county elections.