

St. Marys River Management Committee

P.O. Box 251 Folkston, Georgia 31537

MINUTES OF MEETING

August 2, 2010

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its regularly scheduled meeting on August 2, 2010, at the Nassau County Building in Callahan, Florida. Committee members and visitors in attendance are listed at the end of the minutes. A quorum of members was present.

Call to Order

Co-Chairman Dean Woehrle called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Introductions were made of those present. A new Baker County representative, Greg Sheppard, was recently appointed by the Baker County Commission and was present at the meeting. The meeting agenda was reviewed and approved. The meeting minutes from two previous meetings (June 7 and June 28, 2010) were reviewed and approved. Committee Treasurer Winifred Stephenson was absent, so the Treasurer's Report was not presented.

Septic Think Tank / 319 Grant Proposal Update

Merrill Varn, Charlton County, informed the committee that the 319 grant application for Georgia did not receive funding for 2010. Varn said the think-tank group decided not to move forward with the Florida 319 application until the funding issues have been resolved. The septic tank working group (Walter Fufidio, Laurie Fowler and Merrill Varn) met in mid-July and are in the process of finalizing a data set sheet, which Varn will present at the SMRMC September meeting.

Regionally Important Resource designation for the St. Marys River

The committee heard presentations/explanations from Florida and Georgia representatives concerning the possible future designation of the St. Marys River as a Regionally Important Resource (by the state of Georgia).

Brian Teeple, Executive Director with the Northeast Florida Regional Council, distributed (and explained) paperwork detailing the process of identifying Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the state of Florida. He explained that the St. Marys River is already identified and officially recognized as a (Florida) Natural Resource of Regional Significance.

Chris Emmer, Environmental Planner with the Georgia Coastal Regional Commission (CRC), explained that the CRC is in the process of developing a Regional Resources Plan that will include a map and listing of Regionally Important Resources within the CRC boundary. The draft Regional Resources Plan will be submitted for review and approval by the Department of Community Affairs. Although the St. Marys River will be included on the draft list of Regionally Important Resources because of its flow volume, the CRC would appreciate the support of the St. Marys River Management Committee for the listing of the St. Marys River. The CRC would like for the committee to officially nominate the river as a Regionally Important Resource. Nominations are due by the end of August, and Laurie Fowler, Odum School of Ecology at the University of Georgia, has agreed to complete the nomination form on behalf of the committee.

Questions were raised by several committee members about the possible impacts (both positive and negative) of such a designation. Brian Teeple explained that, in Florida, the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (where items are designated as Natural Resources of Regional Significance) is a planning tool that does not affect the permitting process. Chris Emmer agreed that Georgia's Regionally Important Resources Plan would also be a planning tool.

There was discussion about whether the nomination of the St. Marys River should come from a Camden County resident, or from the St. Marys River Management Committee as a whole. It was agreed that the committee, as a whole, should make the nomination.

Ken Hase, Camden County, made a motion for the committee to move forward with the nomination process/application. The motion was seconded by Dean Woehrle, Nassau County. The committee voted and agreed to accept the motion, with one member in opposition (Earl Tindall, Nassau County).

Camden County member vacancy

There was discussion about the vacant committee position for Camden County. It was determined that the vacant position is for a "property owner." Merrill Varn, Charlton County, suggested it might be good to have a representative from the North Shore group on the committee. Chip Campbell, Charlton County, said he believes that North Shore is affiliated with Waterfront, LLC, and agreed to contact them.

Committee Member Reports

Dean Woehrle, Nassau County, discussed the dam in Lake Hampton (in east Boulogne) and shared how he is being impacted (financially and in time-frames) by permitting costs and engineering plans.

Merrill Varn, Charlton County, and Melinda Granlund, administrative assistant, provided an update and overview of the water quality subcommittee meeting, which was held earlier in the evening (minutes from that meeting will be posted separately).

Chip Campbell, Charlton County, informed the committee that the Sturgeon monitoring project had hit a snag because the National Marine Fisheries organization is opposed to the project's "stocking" provision. Campbell said the Sturgeon group is going to have to rework the project's parameters in order to maintain funding from the National Marine Fisheries organization.

Merrill Varn, Charlton County, informed the committee that Bill Melville, with the Environmental Protection Agency, told her that the St. Marys River is on the list for a confirmed D.O. study in 2011.

Melinda Granlund, administrative assistant, informed the committee that she was having technical difficulties with her computer at home, due to recent storms, and was unsure when she would be able to post the minutes from the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

**St. Marys River Management Committee
Attendance Log – August 2, 2010**

Baker County Members

Gordon Crews, Commissioner
Kevin Shell
Greg Sheppard

Nassau County Members

Walter J. Boatright, Commissioner
Earl K. Tindall
Dean Woehrle

Camden County Members

Karen Chisholm
Ken Hase

Charlton County Members

Russell Barber
Chip Campbell
Merrill Varn

Non-voting Members

(none)

Visitors

Steve Nance
Chris Emmer, Georgia Coastal Regional Commission
Brian Teeple, Northeast Florida Regional Council

Administrative Assistant

Melinda Granlund