



UPSTREAM DOWNSTREAM

Spring 2013

“Preserving the Nature Coast”



WOW !

W.A.R., Inc. Receives Major Grant

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W.A.R., INC. is proud to announce that we are the recipient of a significant grant from the Felburn Foundation.

In 1978, the Felburn Foundation was created by Yankeetown residents Ethyl and Phil Felburn because of their interests in environmental and natural resource preservation. Subsequently the foundation’s land grants, financial awards and sponsorships have benefited such diverse projects as Trumpeter Swan habitat conservation in the Northwest U.S., Citrus County land grant of 137 acres (Barge Canal trail and fishing piers), and The Homosassa Wildlife State Park (Felburn Wildlife Care Center – 2008). Locally, the foundation’s headquarters are located in Ocala.

The grant will cover a majority of the cost for phase one of a study of the lower Withlacoochee River.

Dr. Robert Knight through his company will initiate a plan to determine why the river lacks aquatic plant growth and the depleted state of the river’s game fish population. In short, why is the river dead and how can we restore it? W.A.R., Inc. believes that a major cause of this disaster has been the toxic herbicides used to control plant growth in Lake Rousseau. The State has refused to respond to our requests to eliminate or significantly reduce the quantity and frequency of herbicide treatments to the Lake. The proposed study will examine this issue as well as other potential causes.

We need the help of the community to complete this important study. This is a Florida Outstanding River that has been completely ignored. Just a few benefactors will make a major difference. The Felburn Foundation has many requests for grant assistance and gives careful scrutiny to applicants and their goals. I hope the fact that they chose to help us will motivate more organizations and Nature Coast citizens to contribute to this project.

W.A.R., Inc. is very excited that we have received grant support from Felburn to kick off Phase 1 of this project. We will be needing to raise additional funds to complete the project but this grant goes a long way toward getting us started! For more information on this important project, or to make a contribution please contact us at warinc.directors@gmail.com. Contributions may also be made online using PayPal at www.warinonline.com

John Fuchs

Our Mission

To implement civic action and to promote the common good of residents of the community with a focus on public awareness and responsible stewardship of regional water sources, the basis for all the natural systems that define /Florida's Nature Coast

Denial Is a River That Runs Through Brooksville

The article following, is used by permission of author Brad W. Rimbey. Subsequent to this writing, SWFWMD, on Feb. 28, 2013 adopted Minimum Flow and Levels (MFLs) which would contribute to the further degradation of the spring-fed Homosassa and Chassahowitzka Rivers. On 3/28/13 SOS NOW filed a petition with the FDEP requesting a hearing pursuant for remedy in response to the adopted MFLs. (See also the article "Stormy Weather" and the Press Release by SOS NOW both elsewhere in this issue.)

In 2010, Southwest Florida Water Management District's (SWFWMD) staff recommended Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) of 11% and 5% of their "natural flow" reductions, respectively, for the Chassahowitzka and Homosassa Rivers. On October 30, 2012, SWFWMD's Governing Board (GB) directed staff to initiate rulemaking that would set the MFLs for both the Chassahowitzka and Homosassa Rivers at 3% of their "natural flows". SWFWMD's GB also directed staff to develop a framework for a Water Use Caution Area (WUCA) for Citrus and Hernando Counties. The proposed Springs Coast WUCA is expected to be discussed at the June 25, 2013 GB meeting.

SWFWMD defines "natural flow" on our Springs Coast rivers as the flow which would exist if there was no human impact from groundwater pumping. SWFWMD tells us that setting MFLs which limit reductions to only 3% of "natural flow" will provide the most protective MFLs in the District. However, SWFWMD's staff also tells us that only 1% of the "natural flow" has been pumped away from the Chassahowitzka and Homosassa Rivers to date. Therefore, taking 3% of the "natural flow" represents a threefold increase in "natural flow" reduction over what has already being taken over the last 100 years.

On January 15, 2013, SWFWMD held a hearing after Martyn Johnson of Homosassa formally objected to the wording of the proposed Chassahowitzka and Homosassa MFL rules as they were published in the Florida Administrative Register on November 26

and corrected on November 30, 2012. Mr. Johnson found the proposed published MFL rules, to be incoherent and unenforceable. To date, the results of that hearing are unknown.

One thing that became abundantly clear during the January 15 hearing is that the agricultural industry intends to fight establishing a Springs Coast WUCA. A Springs Coast WUCA would make it more difficult to obtain water use permits in our spring sheds in the future. This is exactly what our rivers need. The only surprise is that a Springs Coast WUCA was not triggered by the Weeki Wachee MFL when SWFWMD determined that only 1% more of the "natural flow" could be taken by continued groundwater pumping. Perhaps the proposed WUCA shows they are starting to "get it".

The Chassahowitzka River Restoration Committee is working with Homosassa River Alliance, Rainbow River Conservation, Save the Manatee Club, and Withlacoochee Area Residents to protect our Springs Coast rivers and Outstanding Florida Waters throughout the State. Collectively, we are SOS NOW (Save our Springs, Natures Original Wealth).

SOS NOW has retained John R. Thomas, Esq. and legal action is pending.

The title of this article paraphrases John Moran's quote "The longest river in Florida is the River of Denial that flows through Tallahassee". If anyone questions what we are fighting to protect, a link to Mr. Moran's presentation to the St. Johns Riverkeepers follows http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=NninVcnjI18.

Brad W. Rimbey, PE for the Chassahowitzka River Restoration Committee



Stormy Weather

Special to the Chronicle

Stormy days are ahead my friends and coming in the form of growing debate about Florida's stewardship of our most valuable resource, water. It is an argument over a fundamental part of our needs centered on economics. Tallahassee v. The People.

If you have followed the news over the last few years you might be aware that great legal debate has occurred and remains ongoing, over the issue of nutrient pollution in Florida's waters, or better said, your waters. The waters of the State are your waters, jointly and severally.

Nutrient pollution is not the only game in town unfortunately. The Pandora's Box of pollutants in our water is a lengthy list and their effects are varied. Some, like nutrients, lead to algal blooms in our waters and some varieties are toxic to humans. Others are more insidious, leading to consumption restrictions on fish or attacking one's central nervous system. A fair number are carcinogenic, such as dioxin, N-Methylformamide and so forth. If you are so young that "dioxin" does not trigger fear, do a computer search on the costs to the taxpayers over the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. If you know nobody afflicted by that herbicide, consider yourself lucky.

Of the vast number of lakes, rivers and streams in Florida, a shocking percentage are listed as Impaired Waters in the State's Integrated Water Quality Assessment Report which the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FEDP) forwards to the US EPA bi-annually. Since the creation of FDEP and the State's water districts, the list has gotten longer, not shorter. It prompts the question, "Why?"

That would be the million dollar question, or perhaps the billion dollar question. In answer, a brief explanation of one small facet is in order.

Several years ago the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) began technical review for formulating Minimum Flows and Levels recommendations to its Governing Board for the Chassahowitzka and Homosassa Rivers; both listed as Outstanding Florida Waters, and both on the Impaired Waters List. Both rivers are significant contributors to the Citrus County economy despite obvious degradation within the span of 30-40 years. Both rivers originate as springs, thus their flow originates from ground water within their respective basins. At the onset, SWFWMD staff was prepared to recommend average flow reductions of 11% and 5% respectively. However, the People stepped forth in stakeholder forums and by direct discussions with staff. Subsequently the recommendations were pared to 9% and 3% respectively. Staff noted in their recommendations that current use of water from these basins is but 1% of the historic average.

The SWFWMD has maintained a standard of 15% of habitat destruction in such systems as the threshold of "significant harm", that being the benchmark set forth in Florida Statute. Significant harm is not defined by the Florida Legislature, nor has the SWFWMD adopted the 15% habitat destruction criteria as a rule within Chapter 40-D Florida Administrative Code. It is in effect, a word of mouth standard.

The SWFWMD does not apply antidegradation provisions of the Clean Water Act when contemplating such things as MFL rules, but maintains such things

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Stormy Weather (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

are part of the permit review for Water Use Permits (WUP). If such administrative policy worked and actually protected our waters you would not be reading this. You see, despite federal and state law, their administration is fraught with loopholes at best, and often provisions of the law are simply ignored or waived. Too, there are many problems with the performance of hydrologic computer models used by the water districts in context of resolution and boundaries that are set arbitrarily for jurisdictional reasons. The short version of that assertion is the water districts, and by extension those applying for large volume WUPs, make unfounded assumptions about the impacts of withdrawal from the aquifer for beneficial use and perhaps more significantly, what will result from discharge of water after its use.

If that's not unsettling enough, there are provisions in Florida law that allows some large scale water users to claim exemption from antidegradation provisions of law and pollute our aquifer until, please forgive, we puke.

So, with all that said, a group of local non-profit organizations have banded together under the banner of Save Our Springs, Nature's Original Wealth (SOS NOW) and carried the argument to the legal system in behalf of The People. Its contention is very simple. Florida must apply antidegradation provisions of the Clean Water Act to all agency actions, including both WUP review and rule development. Not "or", but "and". The only reason to do this is found in the idea that our waters are of great value, far greater in fact than any other economic activity in the state. It costs little to keep our water clean but the costs of restoration are....insane.

See the text of the 3/28/13 Press Release by SOS NOW elsewhere in this issue. - Ed.

Press Release - SOS NOW 3/28/13

SOS NOW, a coalition of non-profit organizations and private individuals, has filed a formal Petition with FDEP requesting a hearing pursuant to Section 373.114(2)(a) Florida Statute. The petition asks for remedy in response to SWFWMD's recent adoption of Minimum Flow and Levels (MFLs) which would contribute to the further degradation of the spring-fed Homosassa and Chassahowitzka Rivers. Both rivers are classified as Outstanding Florida Waters. Florida Law requires the highest level of protection to be provided to Outstanding Florida Waters and no degradation of water quality is to be permitted in Outstanding Florida Waters.

The Petition asserts SOS NOW's position that the Federal Clean Water Act's and Florida's Administrative Code's antidegradation policy must be applied to all regulatory actions on Outstanding Florida Waters. SWFWMD's staff has stated "Florida's antidegradation policy does not apply to water quantity decisions such as minimum flows and levels." SOS NOW substantially disagrees.

The process of setting MFLs for these two rivers began nearly five years ago and was subject to many discussions and meetings between staff members, environmental organizations, and residents. By coincidence, the SOS NOW petition was filed just in time for "Springs Protection Awareness Month" (April 2013) as recently proclaimed by Florida's Senator Charles Dean. SOS NOW awaits FDEP's response to their petition which demands full protection of these spring-fed rivers and all other Outstanding Florida Waters covered by the Clean Water Act.

Noted St. Petersburg environmental attorney, John R. Thomas, Esq., filed the Petition with FDEP on behalf of SOS NOW. For more information, contact Dan Hilliard at 352-447-5434 or Dr. Katie Tripp at 407-539-0990.

Ed. Note: The SOS NOW petition is worth a read. A copy is posted at

[www.warinonline.com/content/file/Petition%20to%20DEP%20to%20Review%20MFLs%20\(Final-3\).pdf](http://www.warinonline.com/content/file/Petition%20to%20DEP%20to%20Review%20MFLs%20(Final-3).pdf)

What Do You Bring to the Table?

W.A.R., Inc. is an organization of The People – An organization with intent of caring for our common interests in our community and local area. We come from diverse backgrounds and various experiences in life, both of which are underpinnings of our strength.

As demonstrated by Congress, leaders who ignore the guidance of their constituency are on a Fool's Errand and serve no good to the public interest. With that said, there is a certain requirement that "The People" make their views known. In this regard, there is no difference between the W.A.R., Inc. Executive Board and higher (?) legislative authorities. We can not serve adequately if we do not hear your views.

W.A.R., Inc. has dealt with many issues over the term of its existence. Most of these have been related to water resource management and protection, and we continue to pursue such issues. Some of these issues may or may not have resonated with you.

We are involved at present with the pending Lower Withlacoochee River baseline study and the Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) rule development for the Withlacoochee River by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) among other things. Please see articles explaining these issues and why they are important to us throughout this issue!

The questions we put to you now are, "What issue(s) simmer in your thoughts? What do you think deserves our attention? Are you interested in being involved in the issues that are already on our plate, and, if so, how?"

Our next quarterly members' meeting is scheduled on 15 May 2013 and we would very much like to have you attend for a very simple reason: You need to tell us your thoughts.

What will you bring to the table?

Water Withdrawals, Use, and Trends in Florida, 2005

Ed. Note: This analysis of water trends in Florida remains the most current in the sense it is the most recent accounting. It is not likely to be updated another until 2015 or later. It is not the basis for any particular decision but can be referenced by applicants for water use permits insofar as historical record is concerned.. It is reprinted here to provide a perspective of the volume of water use in the state..

By Richard L. Marella

Prepared in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Scientific Investigations Report 2009-5125, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey

Abstract

In 2005, the total amount of water withdrawals in Florida was estimated at 18,359 million gallons per day (Mgal/d). Saline water accounted for 11,486 Mgal/d (63 percent), and freshwater accounted for 6,873 Mgal/d (37 percent). Groundwater accounted for 4,247 Mgal/d (62 percent) of freshwater withdrawals, and surface water accounted for the remaining 2,626 Mgal/d (38 percent). Surface water accounted for nearly all (99.9 percent) saline-water withdrawals. An additional 660 Mgal/d of reclaimed wastewater was used in Florida during 2005. The largest amount of freshwater was withdrawn from Palm Beach County, and the largest amount of saline water was withdrawn from Pasco County.

Fresh groundwater provided drinking water (public supplied and self-supplied) for 16.19 million



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Water Withdrawals, Use, and Trends in Florida, 2005 (cont.)

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people (90 percent of Florida's population), and fresh surface water provided drinking water for 1.73 million people (10 percent). The majority of groundwater withdrawals (nearly 60 percent) in 2005 was obtained from the Floridan aquifer system which is present throughout the entire State. The majority of fresh surface-water withdrawals (59 percent) came from the southern Florida hydrologic unit subregion and is associated with Lake Okeechobee and the canals in the Everglades Agricultural Area of Glades, Hendry, and Palm Beach Counties, as well as the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries in the agricultural areas of Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee Counties.

Overall, agricultural irrigation accounted for 40 percent of the total freshwater withdrawals (ground and surface), followed by public supply with 37 percent. Public supply accounted for 52 percent of groundwater withdrawals, followed by agricultural self-supplied (31 percent), commercial-industrial-mining self-supplied (8.5 percent), recreational irrigation and domestic self-supplied (4 percent each), and power generation (0.5 percent). Agricultural self-supplied accounted for 56 percent of fresh surface-water withdrawals, followed by power generation (20.5 percent), public supply (13 percent), recreational irrigation (6 percent), and commercial-industrial self-supplied (4.5 percent). Power generation accounted for nearly all (99.9 percent) saline-water withdrawals.

Of the 17.92 million people who resided in Florida during 2005, 41 percent (7.36 million people) resided in the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), followed by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) with 25 percent each (4.46 and 4.44 million people, respectively), the Northwest Florida Water Manage-

ment District (NFWWMD) with 7.5 percent (1.34 million people), and the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) with 1.5 percent (0.32 million people). The largest amount of fresh-water withdrawals was from the SFWMD, which was one-half (50 percent) of the State's total freshwater withdrawals, followed by the SJRWMD (19 percent), SWFWMD (16 percent), NFWWMD (10 percent), and SRWMD (5 percent).

Between 1950 and 2005, the population of Florida increased by 15.15 million (550 percent), and the total water withdrawals (fresh and saline) increased 15,700 Mgal/d (600 percent). More recently, total withdrawals decreased 1,790 Mgal/d (9 percent) between 2000 and 2005, but the total population increased by 1.94 million (12 percent). Between 1990 and 2005, saline-water withdrawals increased 1,120 Mgal/d (11 percent), whereas between 2000 and 2005, saline-water withdrawals decreased 470 Mgal/d (4 percent). Between 1990 and 2005, freshwater withdrawals decreased 710 Mgal/d (9 percent), whereas between 2000 and 2005, freshwater withdrawals decreased 1,320 Mgal/d (16 percent).

The use of highly mineralized groundwater as a source of supply, primarily for public supply, also has increased in Florida. This water, referred as nonpotable water, increased from just less than 2 Mgal/d in 1970, to 142 Mgal/d in 2005. Nonpotable water is treated to meet drinking-water standards and is mostly used along the east and west coasts of central and south Florida. The use of reclaimed wastewater increased from 206 Mgal/d in 1986 to nearly 660 Mgal/d in 2005. About one-half of the reclaimed wastewater flow in 2005 was used to reduce potable-quality water withdrawals for urban irrigation, agricultural irrigation, and industrial use, but one-third of the reclaimed wastewater was returned to available water supplies as aquifer recharge.

New Video!

The Killing of the Lower Withlacoochee

Fun and informative—check it out even if you don't usually do Youtube!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOrwS-PQAIO>

W.A.R., Inc. Annual Meeting 2013

The Annual Meeting of W.A.R., Inc. was held January 26, 2013 at the Yankeetown Inglis Woman's Club. Approximately 45 people attended. Dan Hilliard announced that Jack Schofield was elected President of W.A.R., Inc. by the Executive Board on January 11.

2013 Pledge Challenge

Newly elected President Jack Schofield challenged attendees and members to join him in pledging \$500 in 2013 contributions to support the efforts of W.A.R., Inc. in 2013.

Keynote Speaker—Dr. Robert L Knight of the Howard T. Odum Florida Springs Institute spoke to the group on the "Regional Drawdown of the Floridian Aquifer".

Dr. Knight's presentation was technically based but delivered in a highly understandable manner, educating all present on the way the water balance in the aquifer works and the consequences of more

pumping, which include dry wells, more sinkholes, saltwater intrusion, lower spring flows, dry rivers, and harm to wildlife and recreation.

Dr. Knight said measures that can be taken to protect the Aquifer include raising public awareness in the short term and, in the long term, voting out politicians who do not support spring and aquifer protection. He also mentioned citizen legal action in cases such as the Adeena Springs proposal, and encouraging local newspapers to publish information on daily aquifer levels and rainfall.

TARMAC: The Continuing Saga

We were informed on April 1st by the Army Corps of Engineers that release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Tarmac LLC application to mine lime rock in Gulf Hammock has been delayed until the May/June timeframe; continuing updates provided as they occur.

Withlacoochee Area Residents, Inc.

Preserving The Nature Coast
a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization

Membership Application

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

Please Print

Name _____

Business _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ FAX _____ E-MAIL _____

YOUR PRIVACY WILL BE PROTECTED, ADDRESSES ARE NEVER SOLD

Indicate Membership Level

Individual	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Merchant/Group	\$100	<input type="checkbox"/>
Life	\$1000	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Contributions

Welcome!
\$ _____

How Can You Help?

Special Events	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publicity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Area of Expertise:	_____

Please Make Checks Payable to: **Withlacoochee Area Residents, Inc. or W.A.R., Inc.**

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Please visit our web site
www.warinconline.com
for current information on events as well

**Withlacoochee Area Residents Inc.,
a 501 (c) (3) Corporation**

About the Withlacoochee Area Residents

Withlacoochee Area Residents, Inc is a 501(c)(3), not for profit charitable organization incorporated in 1984. Our underlying principal is promoting the social welfare and common good of the residents of our communities. Current focus is on coordinating with other public advocacy groups that share our interests in preserving and restoring the quality of the Withlacoochee River and associated ecosystems. Withlacoochee Area Residents, Inc. is engaged in improving state decision making oversight practices that continue to contribute to degradation and depletion of increasingly scarce potable groundwater that is the foundation for the survival of our communities. Withlacoochee Area Residents, Inc. is responsible for the designation of the Withlacoochee River as an "Outstanding Florida Waterway", and contemplates future actions to provide an umbrella of Federal protection over the river basin and associated estuary.

Withlacoochee Area Residents, Inc.

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