

*Minutes were formally approved at SMRMC meeting on April 1, 2013.

St. Marys River Management Committee

P.O. Box 251 Folkston, Georgia 31537

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 4, 2013

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its noticed meeting on March 4, 2013, 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 and Housekeeping Items

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chairman Chip Campbell at 7:04 p.m. Members and visitors introduced themselves. The draft agenda was reviewed, amended to include a discussion about committee vacancies, and approved. Previous meeting minutes from February 4, 2013, were reviewed and approved. John Myers, committee Treasurer, presented the treasurer's report for February: the committee's main account has a balance of \$2,969.72.

EZ Base Discussion

The SMRMC invited JEA to attend a meeting to discuss production and application of EZBase byproduct.

Presentation

Scott Schultz, Director of Byproduct Services with JEA, gave a presentation to the committee about the production and use of EZBase byproduct material. (* A copy of the presentation can be found on the committee's website, www.saintmarysriver.org, under Meeting Documents for March 4.)

During the presentation, Mr. Schultz explained that JEA's northside generating station is the source of EZBase material; he said when the units are operating at full capacity, they produce 500,000 tons of byproduct yearly. The byproduct, which is a combination of bed ash and fly ash, is mixed with water to create a slurry that is further processed to create EZBase.

Mr. Schultz said that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has issued a permit to JEA for use of EZBase. He explained that JEA assessed the use of EZBase in a Phase II Beneficial Use Demonstration area on the St. Marys Shoals property in Baker County. Mr. Schultz also explained the procurement process for other entities to use EZBase.

Mr. Schultz explained that EZBase is still being evaluated by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GEPD - within the Georgia Department of Natural Resources). JEA and GEPD are working on a joint project--a five mile test road--in Charlton County on Rayonier property.

Mr. Schultz clarified that, if approved, the proposed product uses of EZBase are: non-residential; limited public access; forestry; silviculture use.

Committee Discussion

Following the presentation, there was a period of questions, answers, and general discussion among committee members, JEA, and Mechling Engineering.

--Keith Tindall asked if EZBase was used in floodplains. Mr. Schultz said it was not.

--Chip Campbell inquired as to how the product weathers. Mark Mechling, with Mechling Engineering, said it is a good substitute for traditional construction materials and that seven years worth of data shows the product does not impair groundwater or surface water.

--Jesse Crews (Charlton County Commissioner) asked about monitoring wells on the property. Mr. Mechling said his company monitors the wells and collects the samples; the samples are sent to independent labs for analysis. Sampling results are sent to GEPD.

--Winifred Stephenson asked what happens to the ash byproduct if not put into EZBase. Mr. Schultz said it would end up in a landfill.

--Dean Woehrle asked why the product isn't used for residential purposes. Mr. Schultz said because if the product is misused or misapplied, it can raise public concern. He said JEA has voluntarily discontinued residential application of EZBase.

--Steve Nance questioned if there are heavy metals in the product. Mr. Mechling said they have tested for heavy metals; he said that heavy metals are naturally present in local soils.

--Winifred Stephenson asked about testing to monitor dust from EZBase. Mr. Roach (with Rayonier) explained that the EZBase surface is sealed with natural soil, which helps contain any dust. Mr. Schultz said the dirt cover does not always stay in place, but that the dust has been analyzed and found not to be harmful.

--Stephenson said the St. Marys River is a clean river and expressed concern about testing the EZBase product near the river.

--Al Crace, Charlton County Commissioner, expressed concern about the ability of EZBase to withstand much public traffic; Mr. Schultz said installation of EZBase is key to its success. Dan Roach (Environmental Manager with Rayonier) said EZBase is good for forestry roads. He said Rayonier needs a road surface product that can withstand use by heavy forestry trucks.

Rick Frey, chairman of the RiverWatch committee of the St. Marys EarthKeepers, read a statement to the committee, expressing the EarthKeepers' concerns about the safety and use of EZBase. (*This statement can be found on the SMRMC website, under Meeting Documents for March 4.)

Dan Roach, an Environmental Manager with the Forestry Division of Rayonier, said Rayonier was pleased to work on the test road project with JEA. He explained that there are turn-outs on the test road, which are used to keep sediment in place, especially during rain events. Mr. Roach said the road is built in accordance with state Best Management Practices (BMPs). He also said the wetlands near the test road are buffered and that no EZBase was applied to wetlands. Mr. Roach said Rayonier has been doing business in Nassau County for 75 years and that they are third-party certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) standard. Mr. Roach said Rayonier is also independently audited by the Georgia Forestry Commission and SFI auditors on their road building process (as well as other aspects of forestry operations).

2013 River Cleanup & Celebration

Dean Woehrle said he was finalizing site captain volunteers and trying to fill three vacant spots. Russell Barber volunteered to be the site captain for St. George. Jim Wildes said he will find someone to be site captain for the US 17 bridge area.

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There was discussion of how to move the collected tires to designated pick-up spots. Baker, Camden and Charlton Counties will handle tire collection in their respective counties. Collection spots need to be determined in Nassau County; Dean said Todd Duncan (with Keep Nassau Beautiful) is working on that.

Alice Vick and Merrill Varn will set up an information table at Trader's Hill to display septic tank information.

Sponsor Letter

John Myers, Treasurer, asked members involved with the river cleanup to keep a list of all sponsors (funding and/or in-kind donations) for 2013 so the committee can issue receipts and also write a letter of thanks to each sponsor.

Committee Vacancies

There is an "at-large" vacancy in Camden County. There is a vacancy in Charlton County that can be either at-large or property owner, based on current Charlton County membership. Charlton County Commissioner Jesse Crews said he may have a possible candidate for the Charlton County position.

Subcommittee Updates

Water Quality Subcommittee

Merrill Varn informed the committee that a date for the "Poopstock" event (sharing septic tank information) has not been set yet, but the subcommittee is aiming for May or June.

Varn said the soils have been analyzed for the Temple Landing drain field site, but unfortunately the soils are considered "problematic." The soil scientists on the project are currently investigating different engineering opinions to determine what type of septic system will function best under those problematic conditions. They hope to have the system in place by June. The optimum location for the drain field is considered to be in the northwest corner of the clearing about 600ft northwest of the shelter.

The University of Georgia River Basin Center (UGA-RBC) has contracted with Eric Engle of Superior Septic to do the inspections and pumpouts in the Browntown area. The inspections started February 18 and should be completed around March 1. Superior Septic says they have already come across a number of problem systems that need addressing. Once the inspections are complete the University of Georgia will price the repairs and prioritize according to the grant's budget.

Varn said that UGA-RBC has begun to draft project recommendations that include: future financing of additional inspection and repairs for failing septic systems, a future inspection and maintenance program, and handling of increased septage volumes.

There was general discussion among members about septic tank inspections and the pump-out process.

Alice Vick, GEPD, said there is a separate 319 grant that involves mapping all the septic tanks (in Charlton, Brantley and Wayne counties) and doing basic, visual inspections of said tanks.

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Committee Member Reports and Public Comments

There was more general discussion among members about the EZBase product. Concerns were expressed about the safety of the product, about heavy metals within the product, and about the overall lack of data.

--Mike Griffis said Baker County used EZBase in the past but has since discontinued use of it.

--Charlton County Commissioner Jesse Crews expressed concern about the product and the county's previous experience with the use of it.

--Al Crace expressed concern about quality control issues with EZBase and its installation. He expressed concern that it won't hold up to heavy traffic and suggested it might be better used as a base layer, with a top layer of asphalt.

--Kevin Shell said in his experience as an engineer that he had seen it used as a base layer, not a surface layer.

--Rick Frey said the St. Marys EarthKeepers have requested information and analysis from GEPD, when it becomes available.

Chip Campbell reminded the committee members about the importance of civil discourse during meetings.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

St. Marys River Management Committee Attendance Log – March 4, 2013

Baker County Members

James Croft, Commissioner
Chris Gazes
Mike Griffis
Kevin Shell
Greg Sheppard

Nassau County Members

Walter Boatright, Jr., Commissioner
Cory Black
Winifred Stephenson
Keith Tindall
Dean Woehrl

Camden County Members

Tony Sheppard, Commissioner
Karen Chisholm
John Myers
Jim Wildes

Charlton County Members

John Meyer, Commissioner
Russell Barber
Chip Campbell
Merrill Varn

Non-voting Members

Alice Vick, Georgia Environmental Protection Division
Geoff Sample, St. Johns River Water Management District

Administrative Assistant – Melinda Granlund

Visitors

Gale White
Al Crace, Charlton County Administrator
Steve Nance, Charlton County
Matt McClure
Mark Mechling
Scott Schultz, JEA
Ebony Simpson
Mark Lyons

Tina Horitz, Baker County
Rick Frey, St. Marys EarthKeepers
Jesse Crews, Charlton County Commissioner
Dan Roach, Rayonier