

\*Minutes were reviewed and approved by SMRMC on August 7, 2017.

## **St. Marys River Management Committee**

68 Kingsland Dr., Suite B ATTN: SMRMC  
Folkston, GA 31537-2872

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**June 5, 2017**

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its noticed meeting on June 5, 2017, at the Callahan Volunteer Fire Department conference center in Callahan, Florida.

Committee members in attendance by county:

**Baker** – Commissioner James Croft, Chris Gazes (Co-Chair)

**Camden** – Commissioner Ben Casey, John Myers (Co-chair)

**Charlton** – Commissioner James E. Everett, Sam Williams (Treasurer), Merrill Varn (Secretary), Chip Campbell

**Nassau** – Commissioner George Spicer, Dean Woehrle

**Non-voting Members – Others Present** - Geoff Sample, SJRWMD

A quorum was present.

#### **Call to Order and Housekeeping**

The discussions began at 7:00 PM. The agenda for June was reviewed and approved. The minutes from May 5, 2017 were reviewed and approved. Treasurers Report: \$500 received from Charlton and Nassau for total of \$1000. One disbursement to Shelley for \$226.72. balance \$5922.15. Invoices to Baker and Camden will be delivered when reports to Commissioners given.

#### **Old Business**

FEMA project on Nassau River- Commissioner George Spicer contacted Congressman John Rutherford as well as state Senator and Florida Department of Environmental Protection regarding felling of healthy trees on the banks of the St. Marys River in Nassau County. They are trying to get to the bottom of the problem. We appreciate Mr. Spicer's efforts.

Annual Report to the Commissioners- (to request funding and discuss \$500-750 for 2018)

Baker- Ed Barber will present to Baker at finance meeting June 20

Camden- John Myers will present to Camden June 13

Charlton- Merrill Varn will present to Charlton June 15

Nassau- Dean Woehrle will present to Nassau June 12

#### **New Business**

No new business was discussed

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## **Subcommittee Updates**

**Government/River Issues:** GA EPD has been testing of Spanish Creek (Charlton County) in 2017. There are three branches of Spanish Creek that join just west of the 121 bridge. The branches are Long Branch, Hatchers Branch, and Clay Branch. Long Branch and Hatchers Branch are through rural areas. Clay Branch drains Homeland and Folkston. The Folkston Water Treatment Facility is also on Clay Branch. Test sites on Long Branch and Hatchers Branch are clean as are the two northern sites on Clay Branch. The only test site with high fecal coliform numbers is 121 Bridge. These results indicate that the contamination is coming from a site downstream of where streams cross Gibson Post Rd. This year is the first time that results have exceeded 5000 colonies/100 ml. 5000 is used as the level at which contamination is usually human fecal. Both test dates that exceeded tolerance levels were two days after heavy rains. Folkston has contracted to have the settling ponds pumped which should reduce the solid content by 60%.

SMRK received 319 funding for replacement of 30 septic tanks in Browntown area. Camden County is partnering with St. Marys River Keeper by providing fill for the state of the art above ground systems.

### **County and Agency Updates:**

Baker- The final workshop for the mining ordinance will be held June 6. Thereafter the county will begin drafting the ordinance. Shoal's Park has not been able to do 2017 thinning that was in their Timber Management Plan because prices are depressed due to excess wood from the plantations burned by the West Mims Fire. The harvest delay will also postpone planned work at Shoals Park.

Camden- Camden County is trying to acquire the roundhouse property just east of the 17 bridge to improve the boat ramp and provide additional parking for river access. The county tried unsuccessfully to draft a solution to the rezoning of 1000 ac fee simple property on Cumberland Island at the mouth of the St. Marys River. The discussion has now turned back over to the land owners and National Park Service. John Myers mentioned that HB 271 was not passed by GA legislature. That is Marine Shoreline Protection Act.

Chalrton- no additional updates. See above under committee reports.

Nassau- Residents in Kings Ferry area Florida side are interested establishing a No Wake Zone. George Spicer has been in contact with the county attorney to see if it is possible. The Georgia side has existing no wake zones 100 ft on either side of any dock, boat, house etc.

GDNR- Sam Williams said that with recent rains the hotspots, reburns, and new fires have significantly decreased in the West Mims fire. If significant rain falls this coming week, the response will be further downgraded and more personnel and equipment will be moved off. If there is another dry spell the fire could very quickly resurface. Sam said that there should be no detrimental effects on water quality. GFC is already putting in waterbars on burned properties. Burns near the river are necessary to provide potash which periodically increases the pH of the river slightly. Prior to the 2007 fires the pH of the river was 3.2, so low that many fish species were not able to survive. After the fires, it was 4. The higher pH readings do mean that bacteria will be more likely to survive.

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SJRWMD- The Governing Board will be meeting June 13. It is likely that they will continue the water shortage warning until the aquifer is recharged.

**Outreach and Education:** Charleton H.S. has started their Water Quality testing.

**Public Comments**

No comments

Meeting was adjourned at 8:09 PM.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2017\*\*