

*Minutes will be reviewed by SMRMC on May 3, 2021

St. Marys River Management Committee
68 Kingsland Dr., Suite B ATTN: SMRMC
Folkston, GA 31537-2872

MINUTES OF MEETING
April 12, 2021

The St. Marys River Management Committee (SMRMC or committee) held its noticed meeting on April 12, 2021, via a Microsoft TEAMS due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Committee members in attendance by county:

Baker – Commissioner James Croft, Ed Barber

Camden – Commissioner Ben Casey, John Myers, Elizabeth King, Rick Frey, Jay Smith

Charlton – Merrill Varn, Chip Campbell

Nassau – Keith Tindall

Non-voting Members – Geoffrey Sample

Others Present – Shelley Beville, Scott Brazell

A quorum was present.

Presentation

Land Disturbance Camden County - Scott Brazell Camden County Erosion and Sedimentation Coordinator

Erosion and Sedimentation Act of 1975 relegated the oversight of most land disturbing activities to Georgia EPD or certified local issuing authorities (county staff) .

The purpose of regulations for erosion and sedimentation is to keep sediment out of the state waters. Currently, 22% of freshwater fish, 28% of mollusks and 36% of crayfish are imperiled because of sediment and other contaminants in the state waters.

A permit is required from the county if the disturbance is more than 1 acre in size, within 200 feet of State waters, is part of a common plan of development, or requires a 25 foot buffer to State waters or salt water marshes.

Disturbances that require permits from other agencies include:

- 1)Surface Mining which is permitted by EPD for more than 1.1 acres with material sold.
- 2)Shoreline protection including marsh development and docks are permitted by Coastal Resources Division of GA-DNR. In some cases, marsh development could require a permit from the county as well as the state.
- 3)All land disturbance associated with farming is permitted by USDA/NRCS
- 4)Timber harvesting activities are controlled by Georgia Division of Forestry through their Best Management Practices.

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Certifications for developmental land disturbance practices are issued to inspectors, developers, and designers by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

If you see any land disturbance that appears to not be permitted, please call the Erosion and Sedimentation Office in Camden County 912-510-4320.

Rick Frey asked Scott why is there so much sediment in the St. Marys? Where is it coming from? Could it be from forestry practices. Based on his experience with oysters in the St. Marys there is sedimentation happening.

Scott explained that there is some historical sediment in the River, all forestry is regulated by Georgia EPD and the Division of Forestry and they are working to keep any sedimentation under control. He added that based on the work the county has been doing in the River, it is other contaminants such as chemicals and fecal coliforms that are playing a bigger role in the health of the River. He recommended public education on what people are putting on their yards and golf course maintenance for the health of the river.

Chip also added that from the Sturgeon and Shad studies the turbidity of St. Marys is much lower than many rivers in Georgia.

Jay Smith asked if the county is able to monitor projects inside Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. Scott answered that he is very active in permitting the work on Kings Bay and mentioned that as a Federal agency they are not required to meet local guidelines but are electing to do so.

Call to Order and Housekeeping

Following the presentation, the meeting was called to order at 7:17pm. The March agenda and February minutes were approved as amended. The treasurer delivered the report via email and it was taken as a point of information.

Old Business

Land Use (including public access)

Baker County Boat Ramp is currently out for bid.

Water Quality

Horsepen/Temple Creek 319 – The repair and replace stage of Phase 3 has begun on the first of approximately 20 units.

Spanish Creek Nine Point CIG Project- The watershed management plan was presented to Charlton County March 4, City of Folkston March 8, and City of Homeland March 11. Merrill and Chip attended all meetings to answer questions. Rob Brown made an in-depth presentation to Coastal Resources Division March 24th. He submitted the final report to EPD April 7th. The report has been accepted. The Citizens Advisory Council decided to focus on Clay Branch first and to pursue funding for additional eDNA sampling to confirm presence of human E coli before applying for a 319 grant to rectify the problem. In addition, the county and cities need to schedule presentations about illegal dumping regulations and sessions to provide community education about illegal dumping, septic maintenance, invasive feral hog management, and livestock exclusion from waterbodies.

NPDES permits- There was nothing listed in St. Marys River Basin, but there was a groundwater permit for Twin Pines Mineral, listed in the Satilla River Basin. Chip will investigate the cause of the apparent error.

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Water Quantity (Flooding and Water Removal)

Nassau and Charlton County Stormwater- Nassau County has a meeting scheduled for April 28th . There is no update on the Charlton project.

Georgia Water Council – the Suwanee-Satilla Council has scheduled an April 15th meeting both Chip and Elizabeth will be attending

Federal, State and Local Regulations and County Comprehensive Plans

Update on No-Wake Zone Signage Nassau County- Sam and Dean will be in communication and get the application from John.

Annual Reports to Boards of Commissioners- The Annual Report needs to be presented to the County Board of Commissioners for each county.

Baker, Camden, and Charlton presentations are complete; Nassau - Dean will present on April 14, 2021

Governing Documents- Interlocal Agreement discussion. The Committee discussed changes changes from Charlton County, St. Johns River Water Management District and committee members. The changes will be merged and re-presented to the committee at the next meeting for approval and then presentation to the BOCCs for their consideration.

New Business

Request for statement of Twin Pines – a motion was approved for Chip to draft a response letter and circulate to the committee before it is sent out.

Katie Hill sent out a request for participation by the Committee on a mariculture project she is working on. This falls more under the purview of the Riverkeeper, but Shelley will respond to Katie letting her know the Committee will help in any capacity they can based on guidance from the Riverkeeper. Shelley- I noticed that the email was addressed to Anna so I emailed Katie to see if she had intended it for SMRMC or for the riverkeeper. It turned out that Katie had sent it to us by mistake thinking our email address was the one for the riverkeeper.

Partner Reports

Riverkeeper – No update provided

UGA- No update provided.

SJRWMD – No update provided.

EPD – No update provided.

Administrative

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Jim Wildes submitted his resignation letter to the Committee.

Camden County appointed Jay Smith as the new Camden County representative on the Committee.

Public Comments

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47pm.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2021 via TEAMS meeting**

DRAFT