

St. Marys River Management Committee Reports
March 13, 2023

Attendees:

Baker:

Nassau: William Cochran, Paul Lore

Charlton: Merrill Varn (secretary), Chip Campbell (GA chair)

Camden: Rick Frey, John Meyers, Jay Smith

Other: Emily Floore (SMRK), Douglas Conkey (SJRWMD)

Housekeeping:

A quorum was not present so no official business was conducted

Treasurer: Balance in account \$6980.03

Old Business

Land Use

- Baker County
 - Boat Ramp, Shoals Park - No report
- Camden County
 - Blue Bridge Access - The land acquisition has been referred for mitigation
 - Temple Creek Landing - No update
 - Spaceport - The ruling against Camden County is the subject of upcoming Georgia City and County Management Association Conference
 - Raydient Development - At the request of the City of St. Marys, the county approved a TAD, which will set aside tax earnings to support the development. The county's 5% tax hold back will be used to fund required fire and rescue needs. The School Board has not taken any action yet. The county sent a copy of their wetlands ordinance and requested that the city adopt a similar regulation. At the next meeting with a quorum, SMRMC should consider a letter to the city copied to EPD supporting actions to protect waters of the U.S
- Charlton County
 - Camp Pinckney Land - Alexander Land has approved a 3 acre donation to the county and the county is currently drawing up a contract
- Nassau County
 - Port- The Fernandina Ocean Highway and Port Authority has decided not to pursue a cruise ship terminal
 - City Marina- Dredging is now under control of the Community Redevelopment Authority rather than the Marina Board. It is still a public entity but with different priorities. Several new lodging projects are under consideration.

Water Quality

- NPDES Permits– no new or renewing permits for the state of Georgia; Twin Pines permit is still pending. No report for Florida.
- Spanish Creek (Clay Branch project) – Homeland has edited and returned draft 3 and the drawdown for the Scope of Work. EPD is considering increased funding to accommodate cost increases for supplies.

- Septic Think Tank Follow Up (bacteria) – The committee is still trying to get on agenda for Black River Homeowners Association to do a short septic system maintenance presentation.
- E&S Spreadsheet (sediment) – Scott Brazell has sent spreadsheet to Katie Peay, senior stormwater engineer for Nassau County, to complete
- GA EPD Comprehensive Nutrient Permitting Strategy (N,P) - No update

Water quantity

- Four County Stormwater Management
 - Charlton County Map Layer - The county has not made any recent attempts to contact the South Georgia Regional Development Center about the revised bare earth base layer map required for the map layer.
 - Camden County Resiliency Plan - Several of the building contracts have been let and work is underway on the low voltage contract. The project was scaled back because of increased supply costs.
- Water councils
 - Coastal Georgia Regional Water Council – Coastal has not set their next meeting
 - Suwanee Satilla Regional Water Council – Suwanee Satilla meeting is March 14, 2023. The council will consider the final draft of the plan to be submitted to EPD. Chip and Merrill will attend.
- NFRWSP 30 year water plan – Bill Cochran has not been able to contact Lori Berkley, the new lead for the plan
- Twin Pines comment letter - The letter was sent and is attached to the report for reference

Regulation/Comprehensive Plans

- Nassau County
 - No Wake Zone - By returning the application and requiring the repair of nine deficiencies, the Nassau County Attorney's Office is implying that SMRMC is the applicant for the permits. Paul Lore will attempt to clarify the role of the committee as advisor not applicant. The committee will continue to work on the efforts to get no wake zones across from Georgia boat ramps as this is the sort of interstate cooperation that is a major purpose of SMRMC. It may be necessary to get a resolution from Charlton county to proceed.
- Charlton County
 - 100 foot overlay - The 2001 Satilla and St. Marys River Corridor Ordinances have been combined into a single ordinance but are not yet in municode.

Administrative

- Annual report distribution– Approved by committee. Admin will put on letterhead and distribute to BOCCs
 - Baker- Chip Campbell will call Ed Barber to be sure delivery of report is on agenda for the upcoming Baker BOCC meeting.
 - Nassau- Paul Lore will attend the March 15 Nassau BOCC meeting to answer questions. The Annual Report was included with packet for the meeting as a point of Information.
 - Camden- John Myers is on the agenda to present the report at the next Camden BOCC meeting.
 - Charlton- Merrill Varn presented the report to Charlton BOCC February 23.

New Business

- None

Partner Reports

- SJRWMD – No report
- Riverkeeper – Florida HB 1197/SB 1240 has just been filed. It has not been assigned to committee but SMRMC needs to contact Baker and Nassau. The bills would disallow counties and municipalities from making any water quality rulings in excess of state regulations. City of St. Marys is considering a resolution concerning Twin Pines Mine. Riverkeeper is presenting at Baker and Nassau counties to oppose Twin Pines mine and support the proposed UNESCO designation of the Okefenokee Swamp. March 4 and 11 Boat Tours launching from Traders Hill are both sold out. The 2023 River CleanUp is scheduled for April 15 9-11 with lunch to follow at White Oak. SMRK is drafting a comment letter concerning Twin Pines mine.
- GA EPD - No report

County Reports

- Nassau County - Paul Lore reported that small plastic pellets are rubbing off the dock pilings at City Marina. The Marina Board knows about the problem and says it is normal wear and tear not requiring any mitigation.
- Camden County- Rick Frey reported that the City of St. Marys had passed a resolution concerning Twin Pines Mine and supporting potential UNESCO designation of the Okefenokee Swamp

Public Comment None

Reports ended at 8:47 pm