

St. Marys River Management Committee Minutes

May 5, 2025

Attendees:

Baker - Commissioner Ronald Mann

Nassau - Bill Cochran, Commissioner Alyson McCullough

Camden - Commissioner Ben Casey, Jay Smith, Cassie Turpin

Charlton - Chip Campbell (GA Co-Chair), Commissioner James Everett, Merrill Varn (Secretary)

Other - Claire Feazel (SMRMC Admin), Cori Hermle (SJWMD, virtual), Trish Tripp

- Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was present.
- The May Agenda was approved.
- Minutes from the March Meeting were approved. Reports from the April Meeting were accepted.
- Treasurer's Report: \$10,375.95

Old Business/Reports

Land Use (including public access)

Baker -

- Boat Ramp - Regulatory requirements are complicating the rebuilding process. In the meantime, Baker County has planned a temporary measure to improve river access
- Shoals Park - No update in May
- Development Projects - No update in May

Nassau -

- On Island
 - Brett's Waterway Cafe - No update in May
 - Bioethanol plant - No update in May
 - Waterfront Park - City of Fernandina Beach is working on a parking feasibility study
 - Marina - No update in May
 - Atlantic Seafood Property - No update in May
- Mainland
 - Townhouse Development - No update in May

Camden -

- Blue Bridge - Still awaiting decision on property finalization
- Raydient Development - Taylor Morrison has begun construction on *Esplanade at St. Marys*, a residential subdivision and golf course - concern remains surrounding adequate water retention on site

Charlton -

- Charlton Camp Pinckney County Park Boat Ramp - No update for May
- Raydient - No update for May

Water Quality

- NPDES- No new or renewed permits in Camden County or Charlton County
- Spanish Creek 319- Twenty-nine septic tanks have been pumped. Two systems were repaired (pump and distribution box), and two were replaced. Another replacement is planned for October. A newsletter was distributed, and the WQMP has been resubmitted. The upcoming quarter (Q8) will focus on water quality studies, including planned eDNA analysis. A report is needed on elevated readings after Tropical Storm Debby
- Septic Think Tank - Project is currently on hold, but there is still a need to do septic tank maintenance talks with any HOAs on both the Florida and Georgia sides of the river and its

tributaries. There is a need to improve communication and education to help property owners understand septic tank maintenance needs and issues

- E&S spreadsheet
 - Florida requires a 25' buffer for wetlands, but not for surface waters. The committee continues to work towards a 25' construction buffer for Florida
 - Georgia does not have Nitrogen and Phosphorus (N/P) regulations
 - White Oak will host a Golf Course Best Management Practices (BMP) manual workshop on May 6. Local golf courses were invited
 - Tim Hiers with White Oak is scheduled to meet with the golf course developers for the new course at the Esplanade at St. Marys
 - Educational flyer for landscapers
 - Shared with Ace Hardware for distribution in Charlton County
 - Shared with Ace Hardware and Hometown Feed & Seed for distribution in Camden County
- FL TMDL Planning - No update in May
- Georgia EPD Comprehensive Nutrient Permitting - No update in May
- Folkston WasteWater Treatment Plant - No update in May

Water Quantity

- Four County Stormwater
 - Baker County - Drainage concerns in multiple locations throughout the county. Preliminary Vulnerability Study was presented in early 2025, but it is not finalized
 - Nassau County - Applied for a grant to assist with resiliency planning/BLE Maps. The Vulnerability Study done by the Balmoral group will be sent to the Board of Commissioners in March - No update for May
 - Camden County - Stormwater grant for unincorporated Camden County - held kickoff meeting in late February - Still in the data gathering phase
 - Charlton County- Vulnerability and Stormwater- EPD's Base Level Engineering Map is completed and is being uploaded to the online viewer. Updates are slowly being added to the St. Marys River Watershed
- City Stormwater rehab -
 - Folkston Stormwater improvements - No update for May
 - Macclenny - No update for May
 - Updates needed for Hilliard, Kingsland, and St. Marys
- Georgia Water Councils - No update for May

Regulatory/Comp Plans

- Nassau County No Wake Zone - No update for May
- Charlton County Comprehensive Plan - Draft plan is complete, but a meeting to discuss it has not yet been scheduled
- Fishing Tournament/ Want Waste Regulations FL - Next tournament scheduled for May 24 at Temple Landing - will review to see if recommendations are warranted

Administrative

- 2024 Annual Report
 - Presented to Baker County - February 18, 2025
 - Presented to Camden County - February 18, 2025

- Presented to Charlton County - February 20, 2025
- Presentation to Nassau County pending

County Projects

- Boating Safety signs at Boat Ramps
 - Approval received from both GA-DNR and FWC
 - Updated draft sent to Charlton County in mid-April, but SMRMC is still waiting on a response
 - Need members to submit to their counties for review to before printing and installing signs

New Business

- No new business in May

Partner Reports

- St. Marys Riverkeeper (SMRK) -
 - Co-Chair Chip Campbell is no longer a member of the Board of Trustees, but will continue to collaborate
 - Work continues with the NFWF grant
- St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) -
 - Moving forward with a N/P feasibility study, including identifying potential projects to be ready if funding becomes available
 - Shared information for the Florida communities about Smart North Florida. They assist with resources for monitoring technology and data collection equipment

Committee Member Reports

- No reports in May

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Next Meeting June 2, 2025 Callahan Fire Department.