

**LOWER ST. JOHNS RIVER (LSJR) TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING**  
**Wednesday, July 13, 2022**  
**2:00 PM – 4:00 PM**  
*Via Teams*

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Attendees**

Jessica Beach, City of St. Augustine	Tricia Kyzar, Wildwood Consulting
Katie Bizub, Jacksonville Energy Authority	Kevin Ledbetter, CCUA
Derek Busby, SJRWMD	Melissa Long, City of Jacksonville
Tiffany Busby, Wildwood Consulting	Lori McCloud, SJRWMD
Doug Conkey, SJRWMD	Ying Ouyang, USDA (Mississippi)
Ed Cordova, JEA	Amanda Peck, DEP
Randy Fink, SJRWMD	Cassidy Reichert, City of Jacksonville
David Frady, DEP	Dennis Ragosta, CCUA
Madeline Hart, FDACS	Vincent Seibold, SWIG LLC
Nathan Jagoda, DEP	Steve Swann, City of Atlantic Beach
Tom Kallemeyn, DEP	Riley Timbs, SJRWMD
William Karlavige, City of Jacksonville	Jimmy Tomazinis, DEP
Kerry Kates, Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association	Nick Trippel, FWC

**Welcome and Introductions**

Tom Kallemeyn, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. This was followed by introductions from everyone. Tiffany asked folks to let her know of speakers for the next meeting and to be on the lookout for a poll for the next meeting date.

**Unenrolled Agricultural Producer Enforcement, David Frady, DEP**

David Frady, DEP, with the began by reviewing the Clean Waterways Act with focus on the requirement for agricultural parcels within basin management action plans (BMAPs) to enroll in one of two programs intended to monitor and improve water quality. David went on to explain how the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) was going to proceed with enrolling currently unenrolled agricultural producers. This would include methods such as identifying those who have an agricultural land use code from the Florida Department of Revenue or those who are getting agricultural tax exemptions. After identifying parcels with some agricultural identification, staff would need to ensure these parcels were actually producing agricultural goods for sale. If producers have not enrolled by a specified date, a warning letter is sent to notify them they are required to enroll in one of the two programs. If they still fail to enroll, a letter initiated by an attorney is the third step to compel them to enroll. David shared that most producers enroll early in the notification process. Though for those who continue to stall, there may be fines levied. He noted that more than 70% of the unenrolled parcels have enrolled and come into compliance. The majority of parcels still unenrolled are less than 10 acres and these may be private residents with a few animals such as cows but are not commercial

agricultural producers. Accurate identification of the production status of these parcels is happening by in-person visits to confirm the producer or non-producer status of the parcel.

Tom asked David how many of the less than 100-acre parcels are still outstanding. David noted that there are about 804 parcels still outstanding, with less than 20 of those over 50 acres. Tiffany asked if there was a lot of coordination with FDACS on the parcel identification activities and David responded that there was a lot of coordination because of the legal requirements set forth in the legislation.

Madeline Hart shared the website for the Office of Agricultural Water Policy (OAWP) annual report which tracks the number of parcels unenrolled at <https://www.fdacs.gov/ezs3download/download/104912/2726091/Media/Files/Marketing-Development-Files/09124-FDACS-OAWP-Annual-Report-2022.pdf>

Tiffany asked if David had received any referrals for the biosolid disposal organizations who are now required to enroll. David provided that most of those are proactively enrolling since the new requirement and emphasized that most of the “unenrolled” parcels are those who are not, or do not think of themselves as, actual producers.

Kerry Kates noted it was helpful and appreciated that the distinction was made between true producers and small homesteads with a few farm animals.

### **Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Tool and Public Education Materials, Nathan Jagoda and Amanda Peck, DEP**

Nathan Jagoda (DEP) presented on new tools that have been developed by the DEP-Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration (DEAR) for GSI. He explained that GSI is helpful for treating stormwater running at its source before entering soils and moving down into groundwater resources. A website has been created (<http://GSI.FloridaDEP.gov>) which contains resources and examples of GSI that can be used to treat stormwater runoff to prevent pollutants from entering groundwater resources. The website includes technical resources including design and maintenance information; resources from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on both GSI and low impact development (LID), and funding opportunities; information of regionally specific GSI and LID manuals; and community engagement resources.

Nathan reviewed in more detail the community engagement pages which included how to discuss GSI with different stakeholders including municipalities and developers. Nathan also reviewed funding source information on the website as well as the display of successful projects and also asked for folks to send him information about successful projects to get them on the map. Nathan mentioned that communications are available in English and Spanish. Amanda Peck added that they also accept in-progress projects as well as unsuccessful projects so these can be shared as lessons learned.

Next, Nathan reviewed the grant funded GSI pilot projects. He explained that these are aligned with different best management practices (BMPs) and that they hope to start water quality monitoring on these projects to understand the achieved benefits. He noted that funding is available through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 319(h) Nonpoint Source

Grants, the State Water Quality Assistance Grant (SWAG), and the State Revolving Fund Program. Nathan outlined the funding requirements for these programs. Funding opportunities are available on the DEP “Protecting Florida Together” website and interested municipalities can also contact Connie Becker for more information. He noted that applications can submit out of cycle but are not guaranteed for review.

Amanda added that they are sponsoring the “Flip my Florida Yard!” television program on PBS (<https://www.flipmyfloridayard.com/>) and they are currently accepting applications for Season 3.

Amanda added that wastewater grants are currently accepting applications on the “Protecting Florida Together” website.

Tom asked to whom the SWAG grants are open, and Nathan and Amanda noted that these are open to municipalities, special districts, and public universities located in Florida.

### **Technical Updates and Announcements**

- City of Jacksonville – Melissa Long shared that they finished the first neighborhood in the septic-to-sewer phaseout program. There was 84% participation from homeowners to convert to sewer in this first area. They hope to see improvements in nitrogen concentrations and bacteria counts in nearby waters. It was also noted that the next Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board Environmental Symposium has been scheduled for October 14 and they are looking for exhibitors.
- St. Johns River Water Management District Update (SJRWMD) – Derek shared that the Cost Share Program had 38 projects submitted and funded 24 of those, including five water quality projects for the Lower St. Johns River. He added that there may be changes in the next cycle and would like to speak at the next LSJM TAC meeting on these adjustments. Some important projects the district is working on are taking place in Lake Jesup and the Upper St. Johns River Basin which will ultimately affect the Lower Basin. Riley Timbs shared an update on some of the projects including chlorophyll-a (Chl-a), total phosphorus (TP), and harmful algae bloom (HAB) monitoring. For submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) monitoring, Riley noted that it is still early in the season, but monitoring sites are showing signs of new growth and larger area coverage. Some specific sites will be monitored quarterly. They are partnering with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to study 12 enclosed sites with 12 control plots. Enclosed plots are showing clear signs of persistence in most recent sampling (June 2022), underscoring the level of predation from consumers. Derek added that they do have a couple projects underway with Clay County Utility Authority (CCUA) in Doctors Lake, including a septic-to-sewer project that should be complete in December 2022, and the SWIG project at the Fleming Island Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). This is showing some progress. They are watching Crescent Lake and have a couple project ideas, but the needed property is in private ownership.
- DEP Update – Tom mentioned that the Lower St. Johns River BMAP project for Naval Station (NS) Mayport and Naval Air Station (NAS) Jacksonville, which has been under consent order, has not met their step-down goal but have been working on actions to meet their goals. Increases in material costs have played a role in delaying meeting their goals at NAS Jacksonville by preventing portions of projects from moving forward. At NS Mayport

WWTF, the funding that was provided after years of waiting for approval, proved to be inadequate for funding the upgrade. Recently, a contract was signed to transfer management of the facility to a new entity and that entity will be working with the DEP Northeast District Office to meet the upgrade requirements in the BMAP. Tom added that for all the facilities which discharge to the St. Johns River and are affected by Senate Bill 64 (SB 64), they have submitted plans to meet requirements of the bill. Most folks are trying to meet their goals through reuse or underground injection wells. Tiffany shared the BMAP Project Collection Portal timeline for project submission to the portal, noting that folks need to have registered with the portal by July 31<sup>st</sup>. Trainings will be held in October.

- Local Updates –
  - Ed Cordova, JEA – JEA’s plans for meeting requirements in SB 64 plans have been approved by the DEP Northeast District. These include expanding reuse; starting indirect potable reuse; and creating a number of deep injection wells (aka underground injection control/UIC). They expect this will reduce discharge to about 10% of total flows. Their plans also include a one million gallons per day (1 MGD) demonstration project for indirect potable reuse. This project is in permitting.
  - General discussion moved to reuse projects. It was noted that it is likely the timeline and budget for these projects will be much longer and more expensive than has been suggested so far and so there may be changes to these projects and plans in the future. Melissa noted that this topic would be discussed in a breakout group at the Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board Symposium.
  - Jessica Beach, City of St. Augustine – they have several septic-to-sewer projects underway and under design. Funding has been secured for several projects, including the increased groundwater monitoring wells. They are conducting a back bay feasibility study (in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) to improve resiliency and the stormwater master plan projects that will also incorporate water quality and resiliency.
  - Doug Conkey asked what level of treatment was required for UIC. Tom responded that the requirements vary, depending into which underground aquifer was being discharged. Ed added that they are installing exploratory wells to see where these injections can actually be performed. This is driven by the policies in SB 64.
  - Kevin Ledbetter, CCUA, noted that their wastewater plans required per SB 64 have been approved, including reuse projects. Septic-to-sewer projects in the Doctors Lake watershed are wrapping up. Jimmy Tomazinis asked where exactly the Doctors Lake septic-to-sewer conversion was taking place. Kevin responded that the conversions are on the north side of Doctors Lake.
- Next Meeting Date: Tiffany reported that September 2022 is the target date, depending on speaker schedules; Tiffany asked everyone to let her know if there were any large conflicts that may impact multiple attendees. She also requested information on any presentation suggestions, job announcements, conference notices, or other news that is relevant to the TAC membership.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.